



WORLD SPIRIT FORUM AROSA

To tackle the question of spirituality means asking three simple questions:

How shall I live?
How shall I love?
How shall I die?

These are questions people can only answer for themselves or at least search for answers. This search for the higher self and the meaning of one's own existence will be my first topic.

Thankfully you and I are, however, not the first human beings endeavouring to undertake this journey. There have always been people who knew better than others how to find the path to oneself: shamans, prophets, Messiah, monks, gurus, poets, philosophers, scientists and psychologists. Looking at these different personalities we realize at once that we cannot draw a sharp line between scientific or esoteric knowledge or knowledge gained by experience, nor would such a distinction be sensible and sustainable.

Alchemy for instance was the leading science during the 17th century and to it we owe many discoveries before it was replaced by the much more restricted chemistry. Many outstanding scientists would see themselves as alchemists. It is interesting that the term "brandalchemy" is becoming increasingly popular in US marketing literature. And perhaps it is not an accident that one of the most successful books of our time is titled "The alchemist" – and Paolo Coelho certainly knows precisely what he is doing.

Science does not need mysticism and mysticism does not need science. For mysticism is the extreme specialisation of intuition, but science is the extreme specialisation of the intellect. People, however, need both – intuition and intellect.

If you rely, in all your decisions in business or private life, solely on your intellect, you are very likely to fail like so many of the managers, who relied too much on their intellect when they engaged with full enthusiasm in the initial boom of the New Economy, have failed. For example, in the height of which, the value of Yahoo was higher than that of the entire steel industry of the United States. In the end some of them may have understood that reading tarot cards may involve more rational concepts than many New Economy business plans.

For me it is not always easy to answer the question whether a business plan has its proper place under the heading 'mysticism' or rather belongs to the concept of intellect. None of the big organizations like the Catholic Church, the Red Cross, or nowadays Coca Cola was the result of a business plan. In the beginning there was always a man with an idea and the energy to follow it through despite all opposition. So much concerning intellect and intuition.



But what is approaching us now?

A number of studies by international trend researchers prove that the *age of information* will be followed by the *age of consciousness*, which will identify itself as an *aware society* in which people search for a self-determined life that allows inner growth and economic success.

In the age of information raw material data and information was transformed to knowledge and made use of. In the age of consciousness we will have to learn how to tackle the enormous chances and hazards of western scientific progress in order to live a life in accordance with one's own principles and values. On the one hand our society is highly educated; on the other hand it is deprived of the protection by traditional values so that often we cannot cope with the demands of a multi-optional society.

My central idea is therefore that today more and more people are still confronted with the question of meaning earlier in their lives. What does this mean for each individual person?

Success is the difference between the person you are and the one you could be.

This leads us to the Western principles of success: You can achieve everything if you set yourself clear goals and if you have the necessary energy and motivation and use the right techniques.

The most striking difference between Western and Eastern thinking is the importance of having a goal. Western thinking conveys the idea that improvements in your living standards (money, power, love) will automatically bring about more satisfaction. Eastern thinking seeks happiness in the moment and in the act of searching.

Although I appreciate the charm of Buddhism as a path to inner life and the merits of meditation as a point of relaxation in our restless time, I do not believe that Buddhism as a life philosophy can solve the problems of our world. It is not enough to simply transport Eastern wisdom to the Western world. Just as little as all the knowledge stored in the libraries of Harvard University will solve the material problems of the world, all the wisdom of Tibetan monks will answer the questions of meaning for all people.

The solution is not the one or the other but much more likely the one as well as the other. The path to greater fulfilment does not lie with material success alone, nor can we find it in the life of a hermit.

The project "Waldzell" therefore endeavours to encourage people in their quest for more meaning in their lives. To achieve this goal we must benefit from the latest scientific findings as well as from the old wisdom of humankind. We still have the old problem as Voltaire says:

"Men who seek happiness are like drunkards who can never find their house but are sure that they have one."

The common creed of all doctrines of wisdom is therefore: "Know thyself."

But we are social creatures

... and it is not enough to find one's own meaning in life and live according to it. Therefore people have created organisations and in the western societies they have built big enterprises with great power and responsibility.

What is the question of meaning for an enterprise?

Let us go back to our original three questions and try to find out what they mean for a business:

How shall I live?	→	What shall I produce?
How shall I love?	→	What is my relation to my customers and my staff?
How shall I die?	→	What shall I create, what shall I leave behind?

Our original theme was that more and more people seek a self-determined life which allows inner growth combined with a personal career.

At present our societies still favour instrumental activity, but do not allow intuition and self-determination. The relevant criteria are still profitability and measurability. By improving only efficiency, however, organisations create obstacles in their search for the best people, and they will never succeed in giving their business a long-lasting and viable purpose.

While in their private lives many people have set off in pursuit of happiness, this has not yet established itself as an important issue for businesses or social organisations.

Thus an organisation such as the WSF, as well as our present meeting, assumes an even greater importance.

For companies the search for meaning raises the following questions:

- How can a company keep the best people and offer them an interesting challenge as well as a fulfilled life?
- How can a company bring together urgent economic constraints and social responsibility?

Corporate citizenship in the age of consciousness

In the age of consciousness the task for businessman will be to make accessible to their staff and customers these stories, which are deeply rooted in the collective subconscious of all human beings. In this effort a company will develop magnetic strength. This means:

- Highly motivated and loyal customers who are ready to pay for products and services more than their calculated value.
- Staff who is proud to work for your company and take part in its higher mission



If we consider the three organisations universities, businesses and political parties, I believe that businesses have the best chance to transform themselves in this sense.

Despite some positive exceptions universities on the whole are still involved in the administration of the knowledge of the past. And there is no denying of the fact that politicians and political parties have a long way to go before they have a chance to find the path to practical wisdom.

Therefore I believe that businesses and organisations will be the pioneers in creating new structures for the awareness-society. Nowhere else people give so much thought to building new social architectures. Companies don't do that because of their high moral principles. Much of what you find in old economic theories are empty formulas, and also many new types of organisations only aim at treating their staff more effectively through clever manipulation.

But many companies already recognize the fact that they will only be able to find the best people if they let them take part in a bigger game, a game that makes sense:

Sense for the people who work for the company, sense for the customers and sense for the society as a whole.

Finally we come to the third and most difficult level of spirituality

What does it mean to transform the world, to reduce the difference between the world in which we live and the one in which we would like to live?

Here I feel the urge to restrict all my statements about spirituality:

Anyone who speaks about spirituality and the higher needs of humankind must accept the fact that this issue must seem highly superfluous to those people in our world who cannot satisfy their daily hunger and have to fight against war, terror, suppression, sickness and environmental devastation. They have no need to discuss questions of self-fulfilment.

Meanwhile the problems and riddles of our world still grow. The moment we think we have cast a glance behind the curtain, the bigger become our questions:

According to Steven Hawking the latest findings of natural science do not unveil the mysteries of our world and the universe; they only display even deeper mysteries. Anton Zeilinger recently said: "Our view of the world is nothing fixed, we have just begun to reflect on it."

Let us return to our three questions:

- How shall I live? → Which world would make sense?
- How shall I love? → How can people live together instead of living alongside each other or even against one another?

How shall I die? → How can we make the 'Project Humankind' to a meaningful one?

I will only deal with the last question, as this one has a chance for a positive outcome.

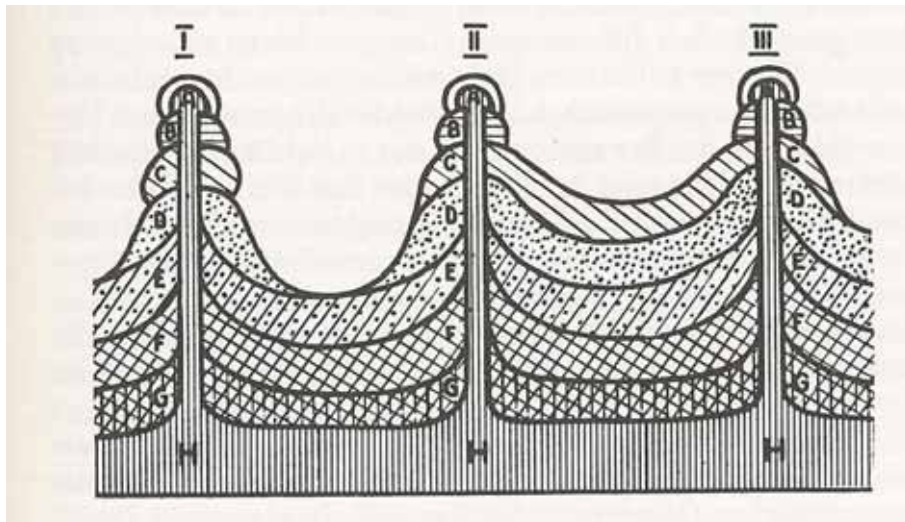
Following the theory of the collective subconscious it seems that the 'Project Humankind' was made to be a good story, a story that makes sense.

We are all mortal. But the experience of all our individual lives is condensed in stories which are accessible to the evolutionary development of humankind. Every human being therefore is carrier and heir of the entire human knowledge and has a part in its expansion. We are highly receptive to 'good' stories which give sense, orientation and significance to our life.

The phenomenon Paulo Coelho:

„When you read one of my books, you will surely say: „I could have written that book, he writes about things that I once knew, but that I had forgotten again.“ We call this the Collective Subconscious.“

„The collective subconscious“



Most of the researchers in future scenarios have come to the conclusion that our society urgently needs more meaning for the common good. Future generations must develop more of a "we" sense instead of the present concentration on the "I".

WALDZELL

I N S T I T U T E

Finally a few words on the “Waldzell” Institute

The mission of the “Waldzell Institute” is to develop tangible and real projects for the spiritual further-development of people in the Age of Consciousness using the knowledge and experience of outstanding personas. Waldzell proves itself an inspiring meeting place for this task.

The purpose of Waldzell will be to send out impulses which create a platform for lasting spiritual development contributing to an increased number of people living in harmony with their pursuit for spiritual development and organizations becoming more successful and socially responsible.

The start of the project “Waldzell” will take place from 10th to 12th September in the form of an international conference under the patronage of the Brazilian author Paulo Coelho and 12 outstanding personas from science, economy, politics and spirituality, from the United States, from Europe, Asia and Africa. From 2004 “Waldzell” meetings will be held annually.

The location for this meeting will be the Melk Abbey in Lower Austria.



This convent was a donation of Count Leopold II to the monks of St. Benedict in the year 1089. It is home to one of the most important libraries in the world. It was no coincidence that Umberto Eco begins his renowned novel “The name of the Rose” in the library of Melk Abbey.

The Waldzell meetings hope to benefit from the spiritual power of this monastery, but will at the same time remain open to other religious and spiritual traditions of the world.

These meetings bring together extraordinary people who will give and take inspiration in helping to solve the most urgent problems of humankind. They will not attempt, however, to provide ultimate answers, but hope to provide a source of inspiration for humankind’s search for wisdom.

*“We must never stop dreaming. Dreams provide nourishment for the soul,
just as a meal does for the body”
(Paulo Coelho)*

www.waldzell.org