

LOVE, FEAR & THE DESTINY OF NATIONS

The Impact of the Evolution of
Human Consciousness on World Affairs



RICHARD BARRETT

Excerpt from:

Love, Fear and the Destiny of Nations:

The Impact of the Evolution of Human Consciousness on World Affairs

By

Richard Barrett

A Brief History of Development

Throughout human history, individuals and societies have always focused their energies consciously or subconsciously on a central key idea that could, if sufficient energy and effort were devoted to it, help them move towards a more idealized future—a future that would in some way make their individual and/or collective life experience better and assuage their fears.

This central key idea has come to be known as “development.” At this point in our human history, the central key idea—the vision that we have collectively accepted that will lead us to a more idealized future is *development as economic growth*. This is the story that leaders of our nations and the global financial institutions are telling us, but it is not what is in the hearts and minds of the people.

The basic argument of this book is that *development as economic growth* is an outdated idea. We need a new central key idea to guide human development—one that transcends and includes development as economic growth, and puts what it means to grow and develop as a human being at the centre. We need to redefine development. The thesis I present in this book is that the time has come to replace the central key idea of *development as economic growth* with the central key idea of *development as evolution*; or more precisely, *development as the evolution of human consciousness*.

One could argue that development has always been about evolution. This is true. But unlike mainstream (Darwinian) scientists who see evolution in terms of species evolution, I see another

side to evolution: I see evolution in terms of *consciousness* evolution. Evolution could not have progressed if consciousness (awareness and the ability to make meaning of what is happening in the environment of a living entity and react or respond appropriately) had not evolved in parallel to species evolution.

As the different species evolved, their internal (individual minds) and external worlds (the physical environment and their social constructs) became more and more complex, requiring continual improvements in the structures that support awareness (perception and the brain) and improvements in the development of strategies that support survival (consciousness and the mind). We can trace this evolution of awareness and perception in the development of the animal world through the chain of evolution that led from sea creatures, to reptiles, to mammals and now to Homo sapiens.

The Genesis of Homo

It is thought that the genus Homo first appeared on Earth around 2.3 to 2.4 million years ago. The first examples of the genus were descendents of an erect ape-like creature known as an Australopithecus which inhabited the Eastern part of Africa. After many twists and turns through at least 12 different lineages, Homo sapiens (knowing man or wise man)—a species which is anatomically the same as modern humans, appeared on Earth around 500,000 years ago and reached its full modern functionality about 50,000 years ago as Homo sapiens sapiens¹ (the second “sapiens” referring to our self-reflective consciousness—a knowing man who knows himself).ⁱ

The most significant distinguishing feature of Homo sapiens is the size of its brain: the cranial capacity of Homo sapiens is more than twice that of its original ancestors. I believe that this single fact alone brings human consciousness onto the developmental agenda. I am not alone in this conjecture.

In *Origins Revisited*,ⁱⁱ the world renowned paleoanthropologist, Richard Leakey suggests with the arrival of Homo sapiens, evolution took a new direction. He considers that human consciousness represents the latest phase of biological evolution: the first phase was the origin of life itself from carbon-based molecules cooperating to form the first rudimentary cells; the second phase was prokaryotic cellsⁱⁱⁱ cooperating to form eukaryotic cells^{iv}; and, the third phase was eukaryotic cells cooperating to form multi-cellular organisms.^v

My position, based on integral^{vi} and quantum theory^{vii}, which I will explain in more detail later, is that evolution has always had a consciousness perspective. Furthermore, consciousness may have been the primary motivating force behind everything we see in our physical world. The reason why our scientists have not recognized this is not because consciousness was not present in our physical world, but because they hold too narrow a concept of consciousness, only associating the idea of consciousness with the concept of human self-consciousness.

Even if it is a stretch for you to believe that consciousness was a significant factor in evolution up to arrival of the genus Homo, I find it impossible to believe that anyone could deny its fundamental

¹ From this point on, for the sake of ease of reading, I will refer to Homo sapiens sapiens as simply Homo sapiens.

importance now. Human consciousness is, I believe, currently, the most powerful evolutionary force on Earth. I will show in subsequent chapters that the evolution of human consciousness has not only had a significant impact on the whole of human history, but is the principal motivating factor that currently influences world affairs.

If we look back over time, at the history of *Homo sapiens*, we see that the central key idea around which human societies organized themselves has always been evolving. Our ancestors did not pursue something they called “development;” what they pursued, consciously or subconsciously, was a central key idea, which for them constituted an idealized world which enabled them to minimize the amount of fear in their lives. Even though the central key idea (the development goal) and the idealized world they envisaged kept evolving, it always focussed on the same outcome—maintaining or improving the level of internal stability and external equilibrium of the individuals within the social group (band, tribe, city-state or nation) and the viability and status of the social group they belong to in the external world.

As you consider each of the developmental goals that belong to different periods of human history laid out in the following pages, including *development as economic growth*, you quickly realise that they each central key idea was a reflection of the primary level of consciousness that was prevalent at that point in time. The proposal I put forth in this book is that we stop focusing development on the issues that represent each rung of the human evolutionary ladder as they arise and start focusing on the whole ladder—the full spectrum of human evolutionary development.

This statement begs the question, how could we possibly know what the full ladder of human evolutionary development looks like. Isn't evolution haphazard and undetermined? The answer I humbly place before you is, no, it is not haphazard: it is predetermined, and I have ample evidence to prove it.

I will put before you information that suggests there is a fundamental repeating pattern to evolution that has guided the development of every plane of being—the atomic plane, the cellular plane, and the plane of creatures. This pattern is now guiding the individual and collective development of the most advanced creature on the planet, *Homo sapiens*. Furthermore, I will put before you evidence that suggests that the pattern of evolution that guides individual human development is exactly the same pattern that guides the development of human societies. For the moment, however, let us focus on the central key ideas that have guided human development to date.

Development as Survival

If we could go back around 10,000 years and get into the minds of our nomad hunter/gather ancestors, we would probably find that “development” for them was any form of progress that enabled them to improve their chances of survival. This included not only the discovery of (portable) fire, and the fashioning of rudimentary tools, but also the social rules that gave priority to equality and supported inter-band marriages—thus lessening the potential for inter-band feuding. The central key idea in *development as survival* was to minimize the energy that you and your band had to devote to staying alive. The focus of fear at that time was the potential animosity of the spirits that people believed controlled their external world. Keeping the spirits happy through ritual and respect was the only way you had of alleviating your fears. Being a shaman, who could intervene with the spirit world, was a position of high standing and influence in a band.

Development as Safety

During the time of the sedentary agriculturists, when tribalism was the dominant form of social organisation, we would probably have found, if we could have looked into their minds, that “development” for them was any form of progress that enabled them to improve their chances of protecting (and expanding) the patch of land (territory) on which they were dependent for survival. This included innovations in agriculture and animal husbandry, as well as the formulation of social rules that emphasized belonging (kinship) and the sharing of the fruits of one’s labour with relatives. Safety displaced survival on the “development” agenda. The central key idea in *development as safety* was that the more you were able to bond together with your kin the safer you would become. This idea reinforced ethnicity as a key identifier. Ethnicity and safety became intimately linked. The focus of fear at this time was attacks from other tribes and ethnic groups. Building self-protection through mutual reciprocity and loyalty to the group enabled you to alleviate your fears. Being a tribal chief responsible for the protection of the tribe and the well-being of people was a position of high respect.

Development as Power

As human societies flourished, they created city-states.^{viii} By this time, neither survival nor safety were significant issues, especially if you belonged to the patrician elites or provided services on which the elites depended to satisfy their cultural and religious needs. The key issue for at this time was respect through strength. Societies thrived by expanding their territories through conquests. In this manner they increased their treasures, provided themselves with more slaves, and benefitted from the taxes they demanded by controlling regional trade.^{ix} Development as power led us to create societies with small groups of powerful elites (the haves) and large groups of exploited poor (the have-nots). The central key idea in *development as power* was that the more strength you demonstrated the more you would be able to dominate others and the more respect you would get. The city-state in which you lived became your key identifier. The focus of the fear of the elites was on not appearing to be strong enough. It was important not to appear weak—it was important to be respected. Being strong, and becoming powerful, was the means by which you could alleviate your fears. As a leader, maintaining and growing respect, meant that you had to continue to conquer and dominate the world around you—a huge demand on your energies and the resources of the state.

Development as Righteousness

Development as righteousness arose out of the chaos that *development as power* created. It made the ruling monarch God’s direct representative, giving him the right to rule and administer justice as the ultimate authority. This was the heyday of religious institutions in the Western world. During the time of *development as righteousness* poor people learned to put up with the suffering they experienced under the hands of the elites by adopting the belief that if they lived an exemplary life in this world they could claim future rewards in the next. By controlling your impulses, caring for those who were poorer than you, and making sacrifices, you would have a better life in eternity. Everyone had his place in the world. All you had to do was obey those in authority, and follow the rules.

The central key idea of *development as righteousness* was that the closer to God you were seen to become the more authority you would get (and the more influence you would wield). It mattered greatly what religion you followed. During this period of history nations and religions became

intimately interlinked and emerged as significant identifiers. The belief was that God would protect the nations that served him. The focus of fear was still on not being respected, but the manner in which you achieved respect shifted from power through strength, to authority through righteousness. Becoming more righteous was the pathway to development and the means by which you could overcome your fears. Being a religious leader or someone highly placed in the religious hierarchy was a position that held great influence and was held in great respect. Religious leaders joined the powerful in the band of the elites.

Development as Economic Growth

Development as economic growth arose out of the wealth generating capacity of the industrial revolution. Up to this point in time, colonial expansion and agricultural or trade had been the only manner in which nations could become prosperous. Now, with an innovative idea and a little capital, wealth could be created through the manufacture and sale of products and services. Anyone with a little money to invest had the possibility to establish themselves as one of society's elites. Wealth allowed people to satisfy their survival and safety needs and at the same time bought status, influence and respect. Material abundance superseded spiritual abundance on the developmental agenda.

We began to measure development at the societal (nation) level by Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita—the market value of all final goods and services produced within a country per year, and Gross Domestic Income (GNI) per capita—GNI is similar to GDP but also includes income from overseas investments. Under *development as economic growth*, GDP per capita and GNI per capita became the preeminent measures of people's standard of living. The more we were able to earn, create and consume the more significance and influence we had in the world. The focus of fear was still on not being respected, but the manner in which you gained respect shifted from authority through righteousness, to status through wealth. Those who created wealth (industrialists) and supported the creation of wealth (economists and bankers) became highly respected and joined the powerful and the religious leaders in the band of elites.

One of the main problems with *development as economic growth* is that it focuses on the nation, not on the people. The other problem is that beyond a certain level of GDP per capita (per annum), estimated by some economists to be around US\$15,000, increases in GDP do not lead to commensurate increases in reported happiness or well-being. It appears that once we have enough income to satisfy what Abraham Maslow called our deficiency needs^x our focus shifts to satisfying our growth needs^{xi} for which higher levels of income are not necessary.

Development as economic growth is a story invented by economists^{xii}—professionally trained individuals in a branch of the social sciences that analyzes the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services for the purpose of increasing wealth. Economists, just like the religious leaders before them, the monarchs and emperors before them, and the shamans before them, became endowed with the “magical” powers that enabled people to pursue the prevailing central ideal of development.

In our present day and age, building the global and national economy is seen as a way of increasing prosperity so that we can afford to pay for the goods and services that we want—goods and services that we believe will improve our individual and collective lives. Whilst this approach, combined with

the concept of democracy, has done much to improve our lives, it has also led to consumerism—a desire to purchase goods and services in ever greater amounts. Consumerism has led to environmental pollution—needing somewhere to discard what we no longer want, and global warming—relying on fossil fuels to generate the energy we need to keep our global materialistic economies functioning.

The other outcome of the sustained pursuit of economic growth has been to create significant inequalities between the rich and poor, both nationally (the educated and less uneducated) and internationally (the rich nations in the North and the poor nations in the South). These inequalities, which widened the gap between the elites and the masses, began to jeopardize the nascent concept of democracy. The rich elites were using their status and influence to hijack democracy so that they could continue to increase their wealth at the expense of the poor.

Around the turn of the last century, the World Bank, listening to its critics, began to recognize that its key policy—the pursuit of economic growth through structural adjustment loans^{xiii}—was severely compromising the ability of billions of poor people around the world to improve their lives, while having little impact on the rich. Not only was this approach widening the inequality gap, it was also threatening the growth of the fledgling concept of democracy, which had been shown, beyond any doubt, to be the most effective way of nurturing economic growth.

Newly democratized nations were unable to implement the social policies that their leaders had promised because the development assistance they sought from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was conditional on cutting the budget expenditures that favoured the poor. The poor, and underprivileged having fought tooth and nail to bring democracy to their countries, very often with the loss of many lives, found that the budgetary discipline imposed by the World Bank and the IMF prevented them from realising the improvements to their lives that they believed democracy offered. As a consequence, the World Bank, but not the IMF, shifted its development agenda to focus its efforts on development assistance for the poor. By focusing on the poor they could be seen to helping to reduce the inequality gap and at the same time supporting the growth of democracy. Despite this shift in thinking, the World Bank still defines progress through measures of economic growth.

Development as Human Well-Being

Shortly before the World Bank began to give more emphasis to eradicating poverty in the mid 1990s, the United Nations, with the help of Nobel Prize winning economist Amartya Sen,^{xiv} had begun to measure development through a human development index comprised of a series of “outcome” indicators—measures such as life expectancy, literacy, child welfare, health care, education and standards of living, all with the focus on the well-being of the population of a nation.

The first global Human Development Report was devised and launched by Mahbub ul Haq in 1990. The express purpose of this publication was “to shift the focus of development economics from national income accounting to people-centred policies.” For the first time, international development experts and economists began to consider that the purpose of development might not be economic growth but could be human well-being. This made sense to most people because as I have already stated it had been shown that above a certain level of GDP per capita, around

US\$15,000, the people of nation do not experience any further increase in happiness or well-being with an increase in wealth (GDP).

In other words, there was a growing recognition that it was more important to measure outcomes (the impact on people) rather than outputs (GDP or GNI). Outputs facilitate outcomes but in the end they are not what motivate people. People are motivated to produce outputs not for the purpose of economic growth but because they see this as a way of earning income to satisfy their human needs—to get more of what they value.

Development as Democracy

In his book, *Development as Freedom*,^{xv} Amartya Sen questions the concept of *development as economic growth* by arguing that “identifying development with growth of gross national product or with the rise in personal incomes, or with industrialization, or with technological advance, or with social modernisation”^{xvi} is a narrow view of development. He argues that “viewing development in terms of expanding substantive freedoms directs attention to the ends that make development important, rather than merely some of the means that, inter alia, play a prominent part in the process.”^{xvii} In my interpretation Sen is saying two things: he is saying that in order to experience freedom we need to see *development as democracy*, and second, he is saying as I stated in the previous paragraph, that measuring outputs is no real substitute for measuring outcomes.

The most fundamental human freedom we all yearn for from our teenage years on wards is self-determination—the ability to be fully accountable for what we can make of our lives. In order to achieve self-determination we must live in a society that enables us to satisfy our basic (deficiency) needs—freedom from poverty, freedom from hunger, freedom from sickness, freedom from ignorance, and freedom from threats and violence. Sen calls these unfreedoms. The principal violations of freedom or the source of our ‘unfreedoms’ Sen argues, arise from a denial of political and civil liberties by authoritarian regimes and imposed restrictions on the freedom to participate in the social, political and economic life of the community.

The point I want to make is that democracy does not necessarily equate to freedom. Democracy, as I will argue later, is a continuum: at one end of the scale there is pseudo-democracy which is little better than an authoritarian regime with limited voting rights, and at the other end of the scale there is liberal democracy which gives everyone the rights they need to pursue self-determination, become all they can become in alignment within their individual capabilities and the framework of restraints that protect the common good.

Development as Freedom from Fear

Closely associated with the subtext of all forms of development, throughout human history, is the idea of *development as freedom from fear*.

Whatever the central key idea has been, the pull to a new future has always been the hope of a realizing a more idealized life with greater internal stability and external equilibrium, and the push to a new future has always been the fear that if things remained the same we might no longer be able to survive.

I would suggest that the real impact of Sen’s “unfreedoms” on individuals is anxiety and fear: the anxiety and fear that arise when people are not able to meet their deficiency needs—feed their families, find appropriate shelter, and live in healthy conditions, as well as the fears that prevent

people from openly pursuing their growth needs—freedom of speech, access to higher education, and the ability to pursue their religious or spiritual development. These unfreedoms arise from not just from the denial of self-determination, but also from the denial of self-expression.

This is why all measures of subjective happiness appear to reach a plateau once the level of GDP per capita in a country reaches around US\$15,000 per year. This is the level GDP at which a majority of people in a nation are able to satisfy their basic deficiency needs. As long as their deficiency needs are not met they feel anxious or fearful, and when they are met they feel happy—further increases in income have little effect on increasing their happiness (reducing their anxiety or fear), because their deficiency needs have been met. Many people experience increased happiness when they get richer by being able to obtain more possessions that give them a greater feeling of comfort, an increase in their sense of belonging to a social group or give them more status, but this happiness quickly dissipates as normality of the new status quo returns to their lives.

When people are able to satisfy their deficiency needs (when development as economic growth has created the conditions that allow them to satisfy their deficiency needs) they naturally move on to consider how they can meet their growth needs; first, the right to self-determination (democracy), and second, once self-determination has been achieved, the right to self-expression (personal growth).

As the level of democracy increases, the level of inequality decreases and people become more trusting of each other. As a consequence, the level of fear decreases. Thus, people feel an immediate and significant increase in their level of happiness when they are able to meet their deficiency needs and then a more gradual increase in happiness as the level of democracy improves so they are able to satisfy their growth needs.

Development as Happiness

Development as happiness is an approach that has been pioneered by the Bhutanese Government with much success. According to an international survey carried out by Business Week magazine, the people of Bhutan, despite living in a fledgling constitutional democracy, and having a low level of GDP, are amongst the happiest and most content citizens in the world.

This finding aligns with the result of our own surveys, which are based on a reformulation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Maslow theorized that human happiness is the outcome of meeting two sets of needs—deficiency needs, which include our physiological, safety, love/belonging, and self-esteem needs, and growth needs, which I have reformulated as the need for self-determination, the need to find personal meaning in your life, the need to make a difference, and the need to be of service.

The results of the survey we carried out in Bhutan show how successful the Bhutanese have been in their pursuit of development as happiness. Even though the Bhutanese people have a Gross National Income per capita of less than US\$2,000, the level of cultural entropy—the level of anxiety and fear that is present in the current culture of Bhutan due to unmet deficiency needs is extremely low, and the level of cultural alignment—the level of agreement between the values of the people and the values they experience in their daily lives in the culture of Bhutan, is high.

The following graphic compares the level of cultural entropy in fourteen nations—all liberal Western democracies except Bhutan, Brazil and South Africa. The year in which the surveys were carried out is also shown.^{xviii}

You can see from these results that Bhutan has the lowest level of cultural entropy, followed by Denmark, Switzerland and Canada. A more detailed analysis of the values assessment for Bhutan can be found in Chapter 8 (as well as Iceland). A more detailed analysis of the values assessments for the other countries can be found in Volume 2.

In a widely cited study, *A Global Projection of Subjective Well-being: A Challenge to Positive Psychology?* Published by Adrian G. White of the [University of Leicester](http://www.le.ac.uk/~gaw1) in 2007, Bhutan ranked eighth out of 178 countries in Subjective Well-Being, a metric that has been used by many psychologists since 1997 to measure happiness in nations. Bhutan is the only country in the top 20 “happiest” nations that has a low GDP.

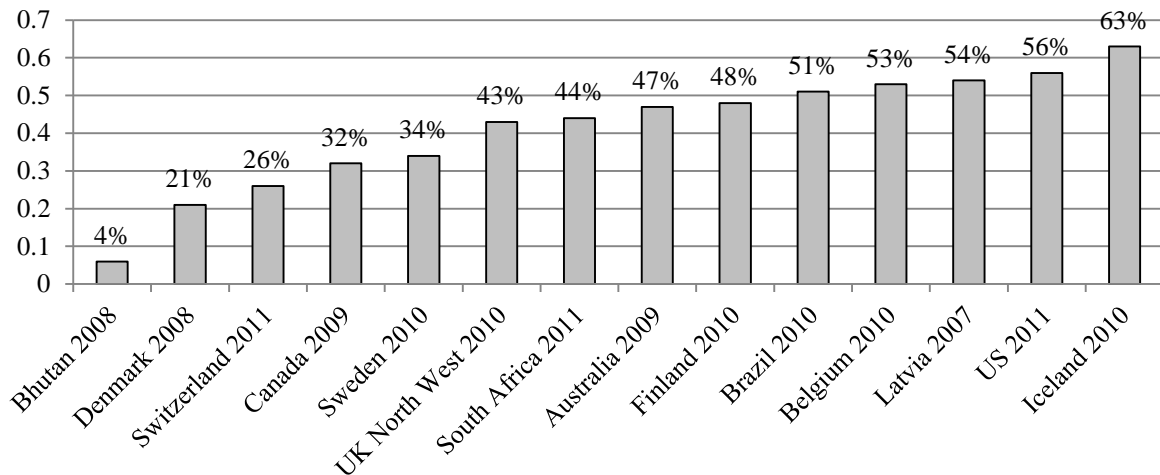


Figure F1: Cultural entropy in fourteen nations

It is interesting to note that the US, one of the leading exponents of *development as economic growth*, has been experiencing high levels of cultural entropy, not just in 2011, but over the past three years. Issues of accountability and blame are causing a deep malaise throughout the nation. Despite its great wealth, there are huge inequalities, and the government of the nation is failing to meet its citizens deficiency needs—employment opportunities, effective healthcare, caring for the elderly, caring for the disadvantaged and educational opportunities.

Iceland had a similar level of cultural entropy to the US in mid-2008, just before it went bankrupt (see Chapter 8 for details). Since that time, the situation in Iceland worsened, and then stabilized as citizens worked together to reformulate their constitution. In Latvia, the high level of cultural entropy resulted in major public demonstrations over the national budget and the government was forced to resign. In Belgium the high level of cultural entropy is a reflection of the cultural split between the French speaking and Flemish speaking parts of its territory. As a result of these conflicts, Belgium has been unable to form a government for more than a whole year. The high level of cultural entropy in Brazil is relatively normal given that it has a level of Gross National Income per capita below US\$10,000 and a large proportion of relatively poor people.

The term “gross national happiness” (GNH) was first coined in 1972 by Bhutan’s then King, Jigme Singye Angchuck, who opened Bhutan to the age of modernization soon after the demise of his father. With the assistance of Canadian experts, a sophisticated survey instrument was devised to measure the population’s general level of well-being. The GNH findings serve as a unifying vision for Bhutan’s five-year planning process as well as the documents that guide the economic development of the country. All proposed policies in Bhutan are subject to a GNH impact statement, similar to the environmental impact statements used in many Western nations.

The Bhutanese grounding in Buddhist ideals suggests that beneficial development of human society takes place when material and spiritual development occur side by side so they can complement and reinforce each other: in other words, when focus and energy are given to satisfying people’s

deficiency needs, as well as their *growth* needs. This aligns with my proposal that we should think of development, not one rung of the ladder of human development at a time, but as the full spectrum of human evolutionary development needs.

The four pillars of GNH include the establishment of *sustainable development*, the preservation and promotion of *cultural values*, the conservation of the *natural environment*, and the establishment of *good governance*. These four pillars translate into eight general contributors to happiness—physical, mental and spiritual health, time-balance, social and community vitality, cultural vitality, education, living standards, good governance, and ecological vitality. Although the GNH framework reflects its Buddhist origins, it is trans-cultural in nature, and is solidly based on empirical research into happiness, positive psychology and well-being.

Bhutan, although perhaps the most advanced nation in pursuing *development as happiness*, is not the only country that measures the happiness (subjective well being) of its citizens. Many other countries are now using measures of subjective well-being to measure how well they are meeting their citizen's needs.

One of the leading pioneers of happiness research, Dr. Ruut Veenhoven, of the Erasmus University Rotterdam in the Netherlands, criticizes quality of life measures such as the UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI), because they do not distinguish between means and ends, nor would I say, do they distinguish between outputs (life expectancy) and outcomes (*happy* life expectancy (HLE)—a concept developed by Veenhoven). Whilst measures of HDI showed Canada, USA and Japan as the top scorers in 1996, HLE measures showed Iceland, Netherlands and Sweden as the top scorers in the same year.

Interestingly, just over a decade later (2008), we used our culture assessment tool in Iceland to measure the level of cultural entropy—the level dysfunction and fear present in the current culture due to unmet deficiency needs, and the level of cultural alignment—the level of agreement between the values of the people and the values they experience in their daily lives, just a few weeks before the country went bankrupt. The results showed extremely high levels of citizen entropy (anxiety about unsatisfied deficiency needs) and low levels of cultural alignment (see Figure F1 and Chapter 8).

Development as the Evolution of Human Consciousness

Based on these results (Bhutan and Iceland), and the twelve other national assessments we have undertaken, as well as the thousands of cultural assessments we have carried out in Corporations and Organisations all over the world, I am convinced that human progress is intimately linked to the evolution of human consciousness which leads directly to an increase in contentment, happiness, joy and in some very specific moments, bliss.

Before exposing these ideas more fully let me first explain, briefly, why development that focuses on *development as economic growth*, and *development as democracy (freedom)*, are in my opinion insufficient, and why, *development as human well-being* and *development as happiness* are promising approaches, but either do not get to the real motivations of human development or are ineffective tools for identifying and managing human change.

Causal, Output and Outcome Indicators

The problem with all four of these approaches is that the indicators that are used to measure development are all *output* or *outcome* indicators. None of them get at the real motivations for development—the needs that people are trying to satisfy and the values they are seeking to have more of in their lives. These are what I would describe as causal indicators.

Output indicators tell you how efficient or how productive you have been. They tell you about performance. They measure things like efficiency or productivity—how much energy you expend per

unit of production. Outcome indicators on the other hand tell you what you achieved or how well you did. They measure how well you scored. Thus, when we say life expectancy (human well-being) or the level of happiness increased we are measuring improvements in outcomes, and when we use GDP per capita as a measure the number of people living in poverty, we are measuring improvements in outputs.

Neither of these types of measure tells us what we were really setting out to achieve—they only tell us about the conditions of the journey, not whether we satisfied our needs. This is comparable to calculating the number of kilometers per litre you use on a journey in your car, or the total journey time or average speed. You know how efficient you were in getting to where you wanted to go, and whether you got there more quickly than the last time, but you have no idea if you succeeded in achieving the purpose of your trip. Did you get to meet the friend you were intending to meet; did the meeting go well or did you get into an argument and vowed never to talk again. Did you get to meet your need for friendship by increasing your sense of connection? Or, if you were going to a business meeting, was it successful, did you get to meet your need for survival by increasing your income?

Whilst measures such as income per capita, life expectancy, literacy rates, child malnutrition, health care, morbidity, etc, are useful general indicators of economic growth and human well-being, they do not tell you to what extent people feel their needs are currently being met in the context of their current life conditions. Neither do they tell you the level of fear or anxiety people are feeling about the current state of their community or nation and the extent to which they are able to meet their deficiency needs and growth needs.

This is why there is more and more interest in *development as happiness*. The belief behind this approach is that if people's needs are being met, then they will be happy. Whilst seeing this approach as a useful addition to the array of other output and outcome indicators that are used for measuring *development as economic growth*, *development as human well-being* and *development as democracy*, I believe there are three basic problems with this approach: definition, bluntness, and context.

The Problem of Definition

The first issue I have with this approach is *definition*. What is happiness? How is happiness different from contentment, joy and bliss? What causes happiness? What causes sadness? Why are some people happier than others? There is so much we don't know about happiness. One of the things we do know is that happiness increases up to a certain level of income, and as I will show later, fear decreases (and presumably happiness increases) as the quality of democracy (level of trust between people) increases.

The causal indicators of happiness are very different depending on the level of consciousness you are operating from. I believe that *happiness arises from being able to experience what you value*, and what you value at any moment in time depends on the level of consciousness you are operating from: your personal state of evolution. People naturally evolve from one state to the next as they pass through the seasons of their lives. Sometimes, people become arrested in their evolution, when they encounter significant blockages which prevent them from meeting a particular set of needs. Based on my own research, and the research of others, I have identified what I believe are the seven most important needs that all human beings value. These are survival, safety, respect, freedom, meaning, making a difference and being of service.

Happiness as the satisfaction of needs

If you are operating from the *survival level of consciousness*, happiness arises out of not having to worry about putting food on the table for your family, not having to worry about keeping warm, and

not having to worry if you have enough money to pay the bills: in other words, not having to worry about your physiological needs (not having enough).

If you are operating from the *safety level of consciousness*, happiness arises out of not having to worry about being accepted, not having to worry about feeling safe in your community, and not having to worry about feeling lonely: in other words, not having to worry about your relationship needs (not feeling secure enough or not being loved enough).

If you are operating from the *power, authority and status level of consciousness*, happiness arises out of not having to worry about not feeling respected: in other words, not having to worry about your self-esteem needs (not being enough).

These three groups of needs represent our deficiency needs. We get anxious and fearful if these are not met, but once they are met, the anxiety and fear go away and we achieve a “normal or basic” level of happiness or contentment.

If you are operating from the *self-determination level of consciousness*, you are happy when you feel a sense of freedom to lead your life the way you want to, without interference from others: in other words when you live in a democratic regime that supports and challenges you in exploring your potential and allows you to find a balance in your life.

If you are operating from the level of consciousness where you *want to find meaning in your life*, beyond the satisfaction of your deficiency needs, you are happy when you can occupy your time with work that you are passionate about: in other words, when you find a sense of internal cohesion—your passions align with work that satisfies your income needs.

If you are operating from the level of consciousness where you *want to make a difference* in the world by actualizing your sense of meaning, you find joy in being able to collaborate with others on meaningful projects that support other people in improving their lives or improving the state of your community or nation: in other words, when you find a sense of personal fulfillment.

If you are operating from the level of consciousness where you *want to be of service* to humanity or the planet, you find joy and occasional moments of bliss when you give yourself wholeheartedly in service to others.

These four groups of needs represent our growth needs. We do not get anxious if they are not met, but once we have tasted their fruits we become increasingly committed to pursuing these needs.

The point I wish to underline is that if you want to measure happiness then you need to be able to measure *the degree to which people are able to experience what they value—the extent to which their needs are being met at the principal levels of consciousness at which they operate from*. The current methods of measuring happiness do not do this.

Current methods of happiness measurement tend to focus on: life quality relative to expectation; the quality of pleasure, net of pain, in the stream of subjective experience; how well life is going; and happiness—a general state of mind that goes beyond quality of life and quality of pleasure. There seems to be little agreement among researchers about which of these approaches truly defines happiness.^{xix}

The UK, for example, like many other countries, uses survey questions along the lines of “Rank each of the following statements on a scale of 1 – 10.” The questions are as follows:

- How satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
- How happy did you feel yesterday?
- How anxious did you feel yesterday?
- To what extent do you believe the things you do in your life are worthwhile?^{xx}

The key findings from the UK survey were:

- 76% of adults in Great Britain rated their own life satisfaction, with a score of 7 or more out of 10. Similar proportions also rated the things that they do in life as worthwhile and their happiness over the previous day at 7 or more out of 10.
- In terms of how anxious people felt, over half those asked rated their levels at below 4 out of 10 with a quarter reporting zero, i.e. 'not at all' anxious during the previous day. 73% per cent of adults responded with 7 or more out of 10 when asked how worthwhile the things they do are.
- On average, people who were unemployed reported lower levels compared with those who were employed.
- It turns out that married people are happier than single or divorced people, and teens and pensioners are more content with their lives than those in their late-30s.

These results lead me to define the second problem.

The Problem of Bluntness

When governments announce, through the Office of National Statistics, that they are going to measure something, they give a signal to the general public that whatever they are going to measure matters to them. What matters to the World Bank is economic growth, so that is what they measure. What matters to the UNDP is human development, so that is what they measure. When the government of a country decides to measure happiness, it signifies to the people that their happiness matters to those in power. There is a strong suggestion that the government is exploring the possibility using happiness as the key central idea of development. Why else would you measure happiness if you didn't want to improve it?

If that is true, how the Government uses the results of the survey to improve the level of happiness becomes an important question. Herein, lays the problem. Knowing how happy or unhappy people are does not tell you which levers to push or pull to increase happiness. You can't create a policy that encourages everyone who is single to find someone to marry, nor can you suggest that late 30 year olds should accelerate their aging so they can get happier.

If the interest in happiness is sincere, Government's should design survey instruments that yield a level of detail and insight that allows them to craft worthwhile policies that are designed to improve happiness—what people value. Most surveys do not do this. Consequently, the survey instrument suffers from bluntness—inabilities to provide insights that allow actions to flow that can directly improve the situation. What we need are surveys that determine what people's needs are and the extent to which they are being satisfied. We need to meet people's needs by giving them what they want more of and what they value.

The Problem of Context

The third problem is the problem of context. Consider for a moment how different the responses would be if you asked one of the five following questions.

- How happy/satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
- How happy/satisfied are you with the way your organisation (the place where you work) operates/is run?
- How happy/satisfied are you with the way your community operates/is run?
- How happy/satisfied are you with the way your nation operates/is run?
- How happy/satisfied are you with the way the World operates/is run?

I suspect the level of happiness/satisfaction would be very different for each of the different levels of context. I know this to be true from the values assessments that we have carried out with the same population sample—measuring the level of cultural entropy and the level of cultural alignment they experience in their nation, and the level of cultural entropy and the level of cultural alignment they experience in their work. Similarly, we have compared the level of entropy and alignment people feel within their community and within their nation. These are often significantly different.

What worries me about the current approaches to measuring happiness in communities and nations is that the results can easily be abused politicians. If you assume, which is easy to do, that the answers to the first question above, how happy/satisfied are you with your life nowadays?, is used to reflect people's happiness with the way in which the nation is being run, then this would constitute a gross manipulation of the data.

My point is that context is important when you are attempting to measure happiness.

Personal happiness, at least in affluent liberal democracies, where people's physiological deficiency needs are usually assured, is a function of how well you are able to cope with managing the whole of your life.

This in turn depends on your upbringing and your education—what you were taught by your parents, what you learned about how to fit into your culture (the culture of your kin), and the quality of the relationships you have with your spouse, with your children, with your relatives, with your co-workers and your boss, as well as the opportunities you have to gain respect, to become educated, to be challenged intellectually, to make a difference in your world, and be of service to those around you. In other words, personal happiness depends on the degree to which you have developed the capabilities necessary for you to satisfy your physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs: in short, it depends on how well you are able to respond to, and meet your deficiency needs *and* your growth needs.

The beliefs and values that are present in the contexts in which you operate (your framework of existence) can either limit or support you in meeting your needs. These include the beliefs and values you find in your family (kin), your organisation, your community culture, and your national culture.

Personal happiness in poorer authoritarian regimes is harder to attain for several reasons. First, because your physiological needs—survival, safety, access to clean water, wholesome food, and health services may not be guaranteed. Second, the political regime you live in may be extremely authoritarian and repressive—you will not be free to express your opinions, seek higher education or be represented by someone you elect in a national government. In other words, your rights to self-determination and self-expression may be limited. Third, the culture of the community or nation you live in may operate with beliefs that prevent you from becoming fully who you are, especially if you are a woman or belong to an ethnic or religious minority.

Thus, there are at least four contextual dimensions to happiness. There is the personal dimension to happiness which is influenced by the beliefs and values you learn from your parents and close friends and relatives. There is a community dimension to happiness which is influenced by the beliefs and values of those with whom you live in close proximity. There is national dimension to happiness which is influenced by the beliefs and values of your nation; and there is an organisational dimension to happiness which is influenced by the beliefs and values of the leaders of the organisation that you work for.

Simply asking,

- How satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
- How happy did you feel yesterday?
- How anxious did you feel yesterday?

- To what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?

will tell you practically nothing that could yield to actionable outcomes that would affect your level of happiness. It just provides information. This information might be considered useful in comparing happiness levels in different countries, or combining and comparing levels of happiness with other attributes such as gender, age, income level, trust, ethnicity, social standing, etc. but as a survey that produces actionable information for policy formulation, it is not as useful as surveys that focus on causal indicators—what people value and the degree to which the needs associated with what they value are met. In other words, it is important to focus on what motivates people—the degree to which their deficiency and growth needs are being met.

Motivation

Motivation arises from the conscious realization that you have an unmet need—a lack of something you value—not enough security, not enough safety, not enough love, not enough respect, not enough knowledge, not enough meaning, not enough fulfillment, not enough care for the global environment.

Needs arise when changes happen that disturb the internal stability or external equilibrium of a human being or a human group structure such as an organisation, a community or a nation. Before the change or perturbation occurs, you or your group structure (organisation, community or nation) are in balance with your internal and external environment—you are in a place of being. This state is what I referred to earlier as cultural alignment—all your needs are being met or at least being met to a level that you consider to be satisfactory.

If the change or perturbation increases something you value, you feel happy, and remain in a state of being. If this happens to you consistently over an extended period of time, then you experience a state of flow—everything is working to support you in meeting your needs.

If on the other hand, the change decreases something you value, you may feel stressed (fear or anxiety) or challenged because your needs are no longer being met. You are now motivated to move into a state of doing so you can take actions that enable you to return to a state of being (normal state of alignment).

In order to return to a state of being, you must be successful in your doing, so you can get to a state of having (what you need and value), so you can move back to a state of being. This process applies to the satisfaction of all levels of needs. When you have lost internal stability or external equilibrium, and then regain it, you feel an immediate sense of happiness, which dissipates as you settle back into a place of being which results in contentment.

There are two ways in which this normal cycle of need satisfaction (motivation) gets modified. First, if you are operating from one of the first three levels of consciousness, survival, relationship and self esteem, and you are arrested at one of these levels—you are blocked by circumstances from satisfying this need, or you have a subconscious learned belief that you don't have enough, you are not loved or safe enough, or you are not enough (low self-esteem), then satisfying this need may become a lifelong challenge. You will be in a semi-permanent place of doing, because you cannot get enough of what you need to be in a place of being. You will also be living in a semi-permanent state of anxiety or fear about not being able to meet your deficiency need which will impact the level of your internal stability.

The second way in which the normal cycle of need satisfaction (motivation) gets modified is when you evolve in consciousness—when you have learned how to satisfy your deficiency needs, and then, naturally begin to explore the satisfaction of your growth needs. The feeling you have when this happens is something akin to wanting more from life—you are not trying to satisfy a felt need, you are exploring the feeling of something inside which is missing or something that wants to emerge. The impact of these emerging needs is to disturb your internal stability. When what wants

to emerge is blocked by not paying attention to it or not being able to satisfy it in the family, community or nation where you live, then the level of internal instability increases. The choice you have when this happens (as an individual, an organisation, a community or a nation) is either *evolution* or *revolution*.

This state of instability in a human group structure is what I have been calling cultural entropy. The equivalent, in an individual human being, is personal entropy—the degree to which your conscious or subconscious anxieties or fears influence your personal behaviours in unproductive ways.

When an individual or a human group structure is in a state of being or flow, the level of entropy—the degree of disorder within the system—is close to zero. Entropy arises when there is a state of disorder or dysfunction in a system due to unmet needs brought on by not having enough of what you value. Personal and cultural entropy is a reflection of the level of conscious or subconscious fears and anxieties that you, or your organisation, community or nation is experiencing.

Entropy causes happiness to decrease by increasing the anxiety and fear you experience about not being able to meet your deficiency needs. In order to reduce the build-up of entropy you have to take action. You have to *do* something to *get* something that is going to meet your unmet needs—something you value that you have either lost or never had, but you can no longer do without.

Conclusions

The thesis I am exploring in this book, and its companion volume, is that human development is an evolutionary continuum. This first volume deals with the evolution as it applies to human consciousness and its impact on world affairs. The second volume deals with the practical side of measuring the evolution of human consciousness and the results we have obtained from mapping the values of numerous nations and communities.

The continued progress of 14 billion years of evolution is now dependent on the evolution of human consciousness. If we want to accelerate our evolution we need to shift from unconscious evolution to conscious evolution. We must stop measuring how well we are doing at the stage of evolution we have now reached (*development as economic growth*) and start measuring how well we are doing against full spectrum of human evolutionary development (*development as the evolution of human consciousness*).

The shift in the focus of our measurements from *development as economic growth* to *development as human well-being* and more recently to *development as human happiness* is to be welcomed but it is not enough. What I am suggesting is we need to move to directly to *development as the evolution of human consciousness*. This would align human development within the context of 14 billion years of evolution—all the “development” that has ever taken place since the “Big Bang.”

The manner in which I am suggesting that we do this is to measure what is fundamentally important and at the heart of all our motivations—human values: our personal values, the values we see in our organisations, our communities and in our nations. By making these measures we can evaluate the degree to which our values are in alignment with the values of the human group structures to which we belong (clans, tribes, city-states, nations and organisations), and the degree to which these group structures satisfy our deficiency needs.

The measurement process, and techniques I am proposing, have been tried and tested over 14 years. They have been used in more than 3,000 organisations, more than 15 nations and most recently in several communities.

ⁱ Jared Diamond, *The Third Chimpanzee: The Evolution and Future of the Human Animal* (New York: HarperCollins), 2006, p. 35.

ⁱⁱ Richard Leakey and Roger Lewin, *Origins Reconsidered: In Search of What Makes us Human* (New York: Doubleday), 1992, p. 310.

ⁱⁱⁱ Prokaryote: A simple cell with no membrane-bound internal organelles or a nucleus.

^{iv} Eukaryote: A complex cell with membrane-bound organelles and a nucleus.

^v Multi-cellular organisms: Organisms that consist of groups of cells cooperating together to form a living entity such as animal or plant.

^{vi} Integral Theory is a philosophy posited by Ken Wilber (an American author who has written about mysticism, philosophy, ecology, and developmental psychology) that seeks a synthesis of the best of pre-modern, modern, and postmodern reality. It claims to be a “theory of everything,” and offers an approach “to draw together an already existing number of separate paradigms into an interrelated network of approaches that are mutually enriching.”

^{vii} Quantum theory is a branch of physics providing a mathematical description of much of the dual particle-like and wave-like behaviour and interactions of energy and matter.

^{viii} A city-state is an independent or autonomous entity whose territory consists of a city which is not administered as a part of another local government. Historical examples include the oldest known Sumerian cities of Mesopotamia and Ur, the Phoenician cities of Canaan (such as Tyre and Sidon), the Berber city-states of the Garamantes, the city-states of ancient Greece (Athens, Sparta, Thebes, and Corinth), the Roman Republic which grew from a city-state into a great power, the Maya of pre-Columbian Mesoamerica (including sites such as Chichen Itza and El Mirador), the central Asian cities along the Silk Road, Venice, Croatian city-state of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) and many others. The Viking colonial cities in medieval Ireland, most importantly Dublin, have recently been classed as genuine city-states.

^{ix} The last society to focus on development as power was the United Kingdom which created an empire of dependencies that increased the wealth of the British elites (and their ability to thrive) at the expense of the populations of their colonies.

^x Deficiency needs: A term used by Abraham Maslow to refer to our physiological needs (our physical survival needs), our belonging needs, and our self-esteem needs. These are the needs that appear in the bottom half of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs.

^{xi} Growth needs: A term used by Abraham Maslow to refer to our higher order needs (meta motivations) which lead to self-transcendence (moving beyond the ego) and self-actualization (becoming all you can become). I have defined these concepts as finding meaning in life, making a difference in your world, and being of service to others.

^{xii} The professionalization of economics began around 1900. The term economics comes from an Ancient Greek word meaning “management of a household administration.”

^{xiii} A Structural Adjustment Loan is a loan made to developing countries by the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund for the purpose of improving the country’s fiscal situation. A key element of structural adjustment loans is eliminating government subsidies which for the most part target the poor. Other elements include, broadening the tax base, allowing the market to determine interest rates, privatization of public assets, liberalization of inward foreign direct investment, and deregulation—abolishing regulations that impede market entry or restrict competition.

^{xiv} Amartya Sen won the 1998 Nobel Prize for his work on welfare economics and social choice theory, and for his interest in the problems society’s poorest members. In 1999 he published a book entitled *Development as Freedom*.

^{xv} Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1999.

^{xvi} *Ibid.* p. 1.

^{xvii} *Ibid.* p. 1.

^{xviii} For information and results on all the national values assessments carried out to date, please go to: <http://www.valuescentre.com/sectors/?sec=nations>.

xix For a well argued discussion that challenges the use of happiness measures in the evaluation of public policy consult Policy Analysis by the CATO Institute, No. 590, April 11, 2007, In Pursuit of Happiness Research. Is It Reliable? What Does It Imply for Policy? by Will Wilkinson.

^{xx} <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2011/dec/01/happiness-index-david-cameron>