

Table 6-1. Characteristics of non-western philosophies

PHILOSOPHY	TIME CONCEPT	CIVILIZATION DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT	MAIN INTEREST	LEADING PARADIGM	HELP OF WISDOM IN RESCUING CIVILIZATION
INDIAN	Cyclical Reincarnation <i>Samsara</i>	Local Involvement, <i>Nirvana</i> via Enlightenment	Truth , Reality, <i>Nirvana</i>	No violence	Scaling down large-scale undertakings
CHINESE	Circular	Steady and controlled	Morality, Social order, Family	Middle of the road	Political authority and economic flexibility
JAPANESE	Circular	Advances humanity	Zen Nature <i>Shinto</i>	Harmony	Crush and change
ISLAMIC	Linear	Development should strengthen community ties and faith	Faith	Submission	Strong critique of Western civilization

Social Awareness as a Source of Wisdom of Civilization

Social sciences, such as sociology, political science ecology and others perceive that civilization in the 21st century is at a crossroads. In religion there is a common belief that civilization is predetermined (“destiny”) and in science that it is unpredictable and uncontrollable.

Table 6-2 summarizes the awareness of different scientific communities and their plans of coping with declining civilization.

The presented summary of programs is not complete, but illustrates quite well the human effort in understanding problems of civilization. In the intellectual sense, these programs characterize profound knowledge and care about the well-being of civilization. In the practical sense, these programs are segmented, dispersed, and implemented according to availability of financial support, mostly provided by private donors.

The implementation of these programs is long-term, not synchronized with a short-term

political cycle lasting between 4 and 8 years. Hence, these programs are not high priorities of politicians, whose survival is assured by short-term undertakings. For them, “civilization” is an abstract term that has nothing to do with daily life and its challenges, particularly in developed countries where the life is still good.

The politics of rescuing civilization will become more active when civilization enters a very serious crisis, but then it will perhaps be too late to avoid catastrophe.

TOWARDS ECO-PHILOSOPHY

Civilization in its adaptation to nature and technology achieves steadily more complex solutions and passes from one conflict and crisis to another. These crises may be classified in the following manner¹:

- Current crisis – as a result of world political dynamism

Table 6-2. Characteristics of awareness of needs for humankind survival action

SCENARIO/ MODEL	YEARS	CHARACTERISTICS	TAKEN ACTION	IMPACT	FURTHER ACTIVITIES
Doomsday Predictions by the Druids, the Teutons, the Hindus, the Hebrews the Cosmologists	For millennia Cosmic Catastroph- ism	Sins and penalty The Universe dynamics	In prayers None, due to a lack of tools	Awareness Some research is launched (NASA)	No solutions Wait and see
Accelerating Crises Oswald Spengler's "The Decline of the West"	1918-22	All cultures grow and decline, prevention of wars	His view influenced the Nazis	Wide spread Warning	Debated in social sciences' research
Club of Rome Models Aurelio Peccei and Dennis Meadows et al, Erwin Laszlo	1969-1972	"The Chasm Ahead" "Limits to Growth" "Mankind at the Turning Point" "Goals for Mankind" Economic well-being, social justice, ecological stability	Resources saving and recycling policies	Good but limited in time and scope	Credits in further research and publications, and in social new behavior
World Order Models Saul Mendlovitz Jagdish Bhagwati Ali Mazuri and others	1974-1977	World Law Fund "Economics and World Order" "Africa and World Affairs" Alienation and identity crisis	Creation of research centers publishing recommendations for future actions	Intellectua- lization of the issues	Credits in further research & publications influencing the Third World's policies and awareness
Sustainable Development World Bank	1980s+ 2000	Many foundations and NGO centers Millennium Development Goals by 2015	Awareness and projects Policies	Intellectualizations and practice Financing	Networking among leaders Project implemen- tations
United Nations	2000 2001	Millennium Development Goals Global Agenda for Dialog among Civilizations	Millennium Declaration Resolution adapted by General Assembly	Focus on critical issues of education, poverty and health in the Third World Supports interactions among people from different civilizations	On-going program On-going program
Non-governmental foundations on the future of the World and Humanity	1960+	Many reports on the future of humanity	Gradual implementation of segmented solutions	Mostly Intellectual	On-going programs
Dialog and Universalism J. Kuczyński et al Universal- Complementary Civilization, A. Targowski	1980s 2004	Conflict minimalization by wise and good people Common Civilization for the common Planet	In the academic circles	Support of Philosophy of Action and Philosophy of Survival	In planning

- Short-term crisis – the “death Triangle of Civilization” composed of the Population, Ecological and Strategic Resources Depletion Bombs in years 2050-2500
- Mid-term crisis – depletion of resources’ potential reserves in years 5,000+
- Long-term crisis – the end of Sun radiation within about 4.5 billion years

Minimizing these crises is a task for politicians, citizens, and scientists. As we have already noticed, it is a huge task, sometimes looking unfeasible. On the other hand, the world needs a new injection of wisdom at the level of schools, universities, work, and social and family life. This kind of wisdom should be developed by an eco-philosophy with the mission to support the survival (sustainability) of civilization, oriented towards defining solutions for these predicaments. For example, in France, the youth have an examination in philosophy during their baccalaureate examinations. The French triggered the Enlightenment, which gave reason priority over faith, and nowadays they want to keep the Human Project alive. Why not follow them?

A leading philosopher of our times, Jurgen Habermas, thinks that the Modernization Project since the Enlightenment should be kept alive with the application of communicative action and critical theory of society (Habermas, 1984). In other words, this great philosopher has a tactical solution for our civilization problems. His philosophy is very helpful in wisely solving current conflicts and to some degree should help to soften short-term crises. He claims that “modernity” is a *project* rather than a historical period, and that this project is not yet completed. This project is a cultural movement (or perhaps rather “civilization” one) undertaken in response to particular problems thrown up by the process of modernization (“industrialization”) and since it is not finished it cannot be called a post-modern movement. Why is the project “unfinished?” Because, according to Habermas, the problems it addresses have not

yet been solved. He also argues that alternatives to modernity and modernization are worse. One of such bad alternative is anti-modernity.

In the strategic sense, one may raise the question whether the Modernization Project can save the Human Project.

From that kind of perspective, our life takes place on a floating cake of ice, which sooner rather than later will melt, and before we reach the shore. Does it make sense to study the world, or it is wiser to concentrate on an existence driven by a strategy of *carpe diem*?

In such a case, how should we look at social life, when the maximization of existence (measured as fun and immediate satisfaction) can threaten the social order? If existence is most important, and the social order should be maintained at an acceptable level, the growing role of religion should be emphasized, since it can mitigate the human tendency towards wrong actions.

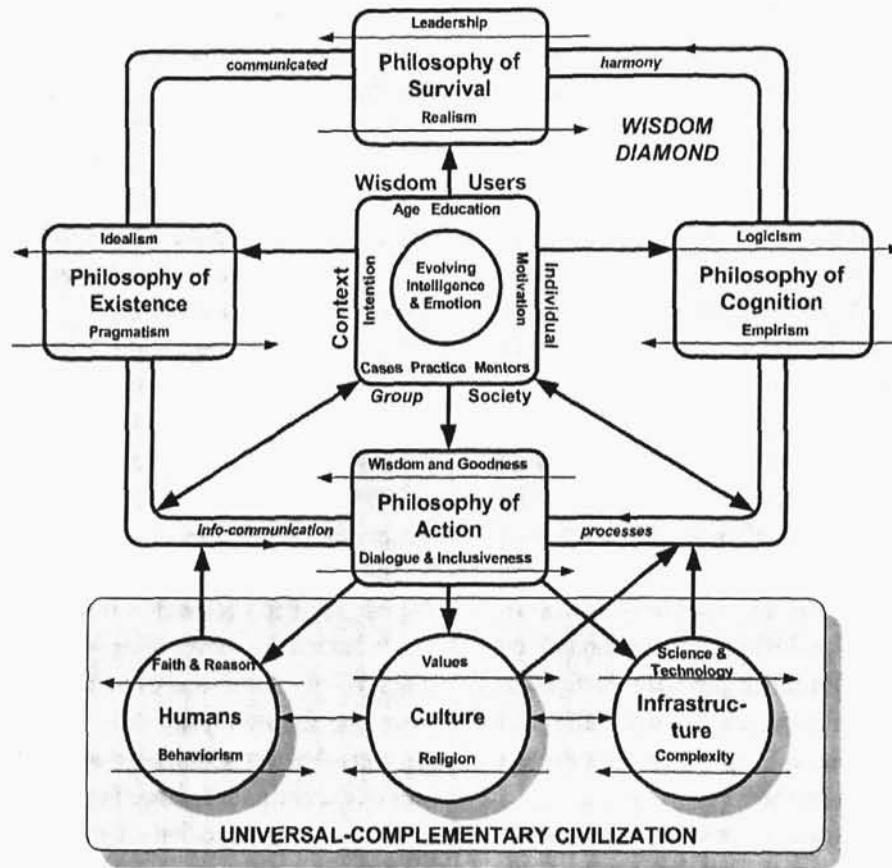
What is a derivative of such human wisdom at the level of a nation and even family? Are patriotism and family loyalty wise? Should scientific projects aimed at colonizing the universe be moved out of the realm of science fiction?

If we can believe that all potential reserves of strategic resources will last only another 3,000 years if the current pace of the civilization development is maintained, then the strategic resource vision for the Human Project is as pessimistic as one based on the dying Sun. How should humans behave, knowing their declining chances of civilization survival?

Should we pretend that there is no such issue or should we begin working on a new wisdom? What should be our social wisdom, arguing for improving democracy or improving chances of survival, which can require more authoritarian governance? The latter can support more scientific research leading to synthetic energy and materials and less reproductive humans.

Finally, how can we prevent the short-term crisis caused by the Population and Ecological Bombs within 50 years? The Population Bomb

Figure 6-2. The development and application of the Wisdom Diamond in universal-complementary civilization within the framework of eco-philosophy



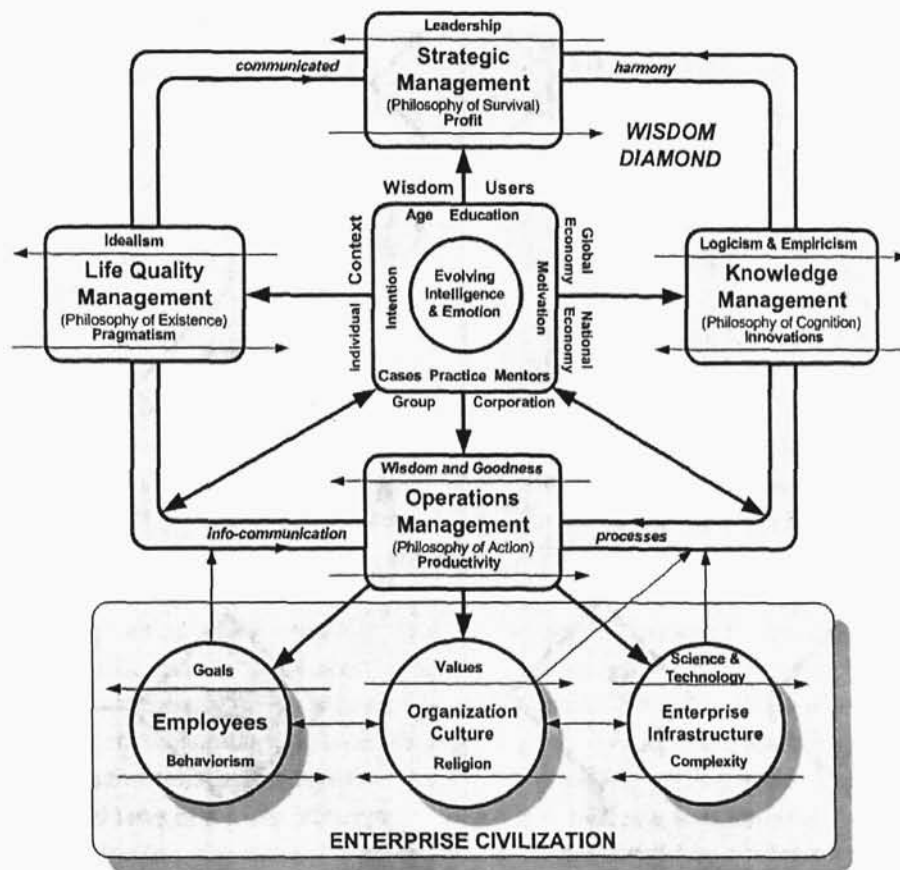
is very probable, since nothing almost is done to stop it and furthermore, the growth of population is recommended by the churches and poverty is tolerated, which is one of the main sources of population growth.

Philosophy of survival should support philosophy of action—how to act today and think about tomorrow. Does our actual life make sense if it does not have the physical chance to continue civilization as we know it today? However, if life makes sense, what sense does it make? Do we humans, who discovered knowledge, have a chance to survive its premises and apply them for our benefit?

Hence, the challenge for civilization is to manage the Modernization Project in such a manner as to sustain the Human Project forever. This challenge can be softened by the development and application of the Wisdom Diamond of civilization in the framework of meta-philosophy (eco-philosophy) as it is depicted in Figure 6-2. The idea of this philosophy is based on the following premises:

1. Eco-philosophy is life- & nature-oriented, seeking wisdom in respect to “How to live” and “What is it all about,” which are different

Figure 6-3. The development and application of the Wisdom Diamond in enterprise civilization within the framework of new management



issues from the question “How to do things” (Skolimowski, 1981).

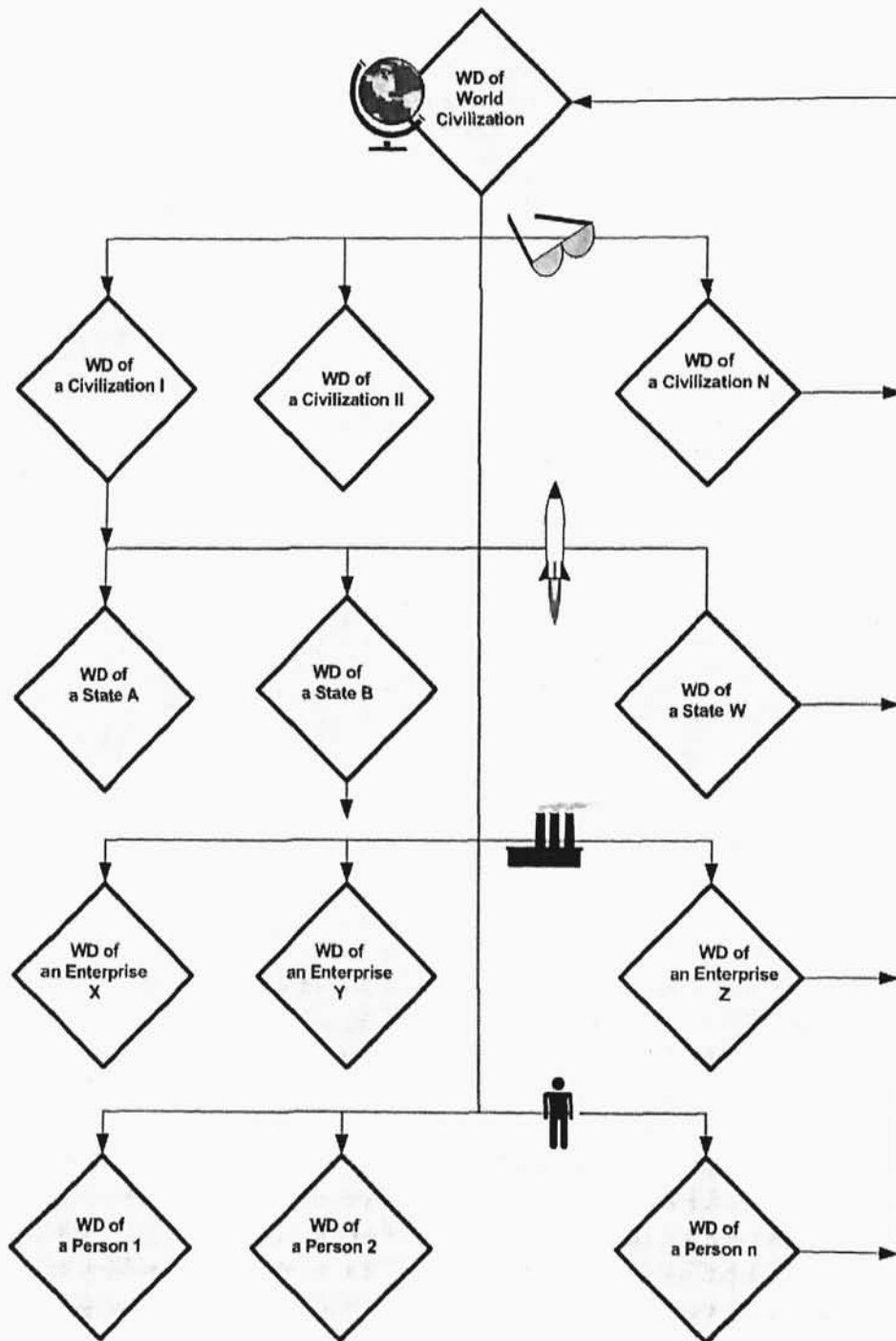
2. Eco-philosophy is comprehensive and global (Skolimowski, 1981) and communicating harmony. The development of philosophy has been based on formulation of many if not too many important or interesting ideas, but there have not been among them relationships, since each philosopher promotes usually only his or her own philosophy. Many philosophical ideas and solutions are not contradictory and therefore their wisdom should be harmonized and communicated better, aiming at betterment of humans in

accord with the idea of the Wisdom Diamond.

3. Eco-philosophy is concerned with the wisdom of civilization survival. In the situation of many civilization threats, one must develop a philosophy of survival, which should direct other philosophies of existence, cognition, or action toward the harmonized communicated wisdom of Universal-Complementary civilization².

The premises of a new philosophy should force philosophers to the great task of validation of actual human wisdom and elaborate new wisdom for humans and our civilization. Whether they

Figure 6-4. The hierarchy of Wisdom Diamond (WD) of major components of the world civilization



will do it remains to be seen. Time will show whether they will continue the wisdom business as usual with a stoic piece of mind, asserting that civilization has already passed through many crises and will pass through others. Of course, the development of a meta-philosophy will not stop civilization catastrophes but it is a condition *sine qua non* to introduce civilization wisdom into schools and colleges' curricula and later into political programs in a more effective manner than is done today.

THE WISDOM DIAMOND

The application of the Wisdom Diamond (WD) should take place at all levels of the social ladder. Hence, its application at the level of an enterprise is illustrated in Figure 6-3. As illustrated in the model, business practice applies two elements of the WD: strategic management and operation management. At the end of the 20th century, knowledge management is mounting along with applications of data warehouses and data mining to define rules and laws of a given business.

On the other hand, management of quality of life is lacking in the current practice of enterprise management. To the quality of life controlled at the enterprise level one may add the quality of offered products and services and their impact on the customers' quality of life. It can be perceived in the framework of a given enterprise, region, nation or the globe. To these sets of issues, one may add among many other things the following: a) the application of hostile technologies towards humans and nature, and b) the applications of technologies which increase work productivity enormously and reduce employment. To avoid these kinds of consequences, it is necessary to define a new theory of management with a close relationship with a new meta-philosophy.

The application of the WD should take place at all levels of civilization hierarchy, as shown in

Figure 6-4. It is important to notice that all levels of the WD should be harmonized among themselves in order to minimize civilization conflicts and crises. The enemies of this idea may say that the "wisdom" it leads toward is totalitarian. The author does not think this way, asserting that true wisdom will avoid the trap of totalitarianism.

CONCLUSION

The rescuing of civilization from future catastrophe is the great task for everyone, organizations, politicians, and even philosophers, who should work on a new meta-philosophy in agreement with the Wisdom Diamond. If this task is unfeasible, then what kind of wisdom should we apply in the temporary current civilization? This question is directed to philosophers who are in charge of wisdom in our societies. Perhaps, our knowledge, wisdom and intelligence are not yet able to solve the civilization dilemmas. While we are becoming more knowledgeable, we are not necessarily getting wiser. Therefore, is religion the only remaining hope for humans? Do we have another hope?

A. Further Research Directions

- Investigate why western philosophy is not strongly involved in research on wisdom and its impact on the human action in all facets of civilization.
- Investigate philosophies other than western and explore whether wisdom has some impact on human activities in other civilizations.
- Investigate how the Wisdom Diamond (philosophical) can be applied in other scientific and practical disciplines, and what can be expected from its applications.

B. Research Opportunities

- The research opportunity is in reaching for wisdom as the highest cognitive process, which is so far neglected and limited to knowledge.

C. Additional Ideas

- The purpose of the Human Project is perhaps a test of humanity and whether we can be wise enough to continue our civilization development or whether we are not wise enough to survive, mostly as victims of our inability to be wise and good. This project could also estimate our chances for survival or extinction.

D. Rationale

- The only hope for mankind's survival is in human wisdom, which is the ability to generate and choose the right concepts/solutions. This ability varies among civilizations. In some it is a subject of great concern; in others it is neglected and left to divine interventions. Surprisingly, western philosophy has only in the last 20 years undertaken some empirical study of wisdom, and therefore cannot yet be a bastion of knowledge about the wisdom which can be learned and popularized in a society. The presented wisdom diamond can be applicable in many theoretical and practical disciplines, and therefore it can be considered one of the most modern tools of wisdom, worth investigation and application in all facets of knowledge and practice of civilization. At least it is important to find out whether the Human Project can be successful or will fail because we are not wise enough. Then, what kind of the future we should expect and how should we plan for it?

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ More on these topics is provided in Chapter XVII.
- ² About this civilization we write in Chapter VII.