

The Physiology of the Noosphere: Segment 5

David Sloan Wilson: How well does this story that we're telling, the so called Third Story, how well does it accord with modern science? And there, I think that I really like what you've said, Marta. In fact, it's only during this conversation that I've warmed to it.

And we could say that humanity in its current form is a really imperfect individual. It's an individual that needs a lot of work, in order to get it to be more cooperative, but still, let's call it an individual. That's the unit there were selecting, and then the question becomes how do we do this? How do we actually work these improvements to get us to be more cooperative at the scales that we are? And at that point, I think that I'd like to do... There's about three things that I want to do, let's begin with appealing to your management background. So when you're a manager, or even you said that you did scouting as a young person, and they're presumably you were taking a group of people out into the wilderness, in the woods or something like that, and then you have to do the right things in order to... You're not going to die. But in order to set up camp and get to where you're going to go.

People have to do the right things, and they have to be led in some sense. But do you need an autocratic leader? Maybe not, there's some governance that's needed. But actually, maybe not that kind of governance, maybe it needs to be a more open governance, maybe more participatory, maybe more distributed. But some governance is needed, it's not going to just come together. And so, I think that one thing we can say from a practical management perspective, is that two things typically are not going to work. One is pure laissez-faire, if everyone just does what they want to do without any coordination, or any kind of governance or regulation or anything. No please, that's not going to work.

And the other thing that's not going to work is centralized planning. No, it's not going to work for some group of experts to figure out the grand plan, and the whole soviet experience speaks against that. In fact, every strong socialist experience has failed for two reasons, actually. One is the failure of centralized planning. The world is too complex for anyone to understand to that degree, and also, whenever power is concentrated in the hands of a few elites, then they just run things for their benefit. They don't run things for their common good. And so, we lead to a conclusion that some form of governance is needed, laissez-faire doesn't work.

So some form of governance is needed, but it can't be top down command and control governance, it's got to be something else. That's where we get to and you can call that humanistic if it's for the benefit of the people that are in this organization, and that's what it's for, then it's humanistic management. And maybe the way we might think about the Noosphere and Teilhard and the global brain, is basically... It's the humanistic management project on a grand scale and nothing more or less than that. So, your comments please on that?

Marta Lenartowicz: Thinking and going back to your question about function, it seems to me that, at least that was my line of theoretical development for a while, that one of the strongest governing structures which are operating on our planet are actually narratives and you can describe and add descriptions of any organization as a narrative structure, and any, either political or economic and so on, that they are narratives. And I understand the search for the Third Story of the Noosphere, also has that. What kind of story organization of meaning can be proposed such that it will have power of coordinating those different functions and different positions in a society?

And you see the whole idea about the Noosphere being the development of consciousness and a cognitive structure, thus suggests and thus point to this very distributed nature of different points of cognition and different points of functional power that this story needs to be simultaneously appealing to, simultaneously motivating towards a greater coordination. So, to my mind this question about... Okay, so what do we do or how do you govern or how do you envision the governance structure of something that would work more like a Noosphere than how it works now. To me it's always a question,

okay, but with whom we are speaking. Is the future president of the world asking or is the manager of one company asking, or is a school kid asking?

Because you see, each such person does influence the whole structure. It doesn't mean that the whole structure is just a loose interdependent mess of different factors. Because once you have a coherent story, motivating story, this organizing structure is present. But it will anyhow appeal and motivate differently depending on to... Whom do we have in mind? What kind of function in a society, we are considering relative to this narrative? So, I don't know if this is coming anyhow as a response to this, but I know that governance questions, questions about political structures, economic structures, reforms, political systems, and so on, those are the biggest questions, obviously, yes.

But it's not the case that the rest of humanity are just passengers and until people in those positions don't ask the specific type of questions, and want the specific type of answers, the Noosphere cannot get better every day, and every action, every step. So, governance... I have proposed we have written a paper together with a few people also Francis at the Global Brain Institute, which is called the human takeover. And it was a little bit more like a joke title responding to the threat of the AI takeover, but to my mind the more important part was the takeover of the individual mind relative to the meaning structures that are imposed on this mind. How do you do that and free the mind, as this humanity take over.

But there we have a whole section which is called what is governance? And it's a little bit I know controversial and daring but there we formulated the question that the answer is that the governance is the structure of decision making in a system, however it is constituted. So if there is one world king sitting somewhere, that would be the governor, but when there isn't, it doesn't mean that there is no global governance. The global governance is precisely this particular structure of decision making, which makes the world go. So, it can be a bad governance, if it's so messy and distributed that nothing can change, or it can be a little bit better, and so on and so on. It is as it is. It is where decisions about particular things are taken on a daily basis.

And it's never as clear in charts that you can draw about the formal decision making structure, that when you have the President and you have United Nations, and you have this, and you have this, this is our governance, yes, it's institutions of governance. But where is decision making happening, and when, and who is making those decisions? Many decisions are distributed, basically taken by cultural narratives. Yes, because when you speak to a CEO or a general...general, maybe not, it's not a good example. But any politician, many of them will tell you that they are so constrained that they don't really have much decisions to take.

And then you ask, okay, so who is making decision? They will say media. You will go to... This is something in the systems functional approach, is called functional differentiation of the society, that you have those functions, you have the function, for example, the global media network has a particular function, which, for example, for the official governors, which is the politicians, is the stronger power than that.