Human Development and Humane Consumption: Well-Being Beyond the "Good Life"

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In pursuit of the "good life," less affluent societies focus on the material—that is, consumption and economic development. The author discusses human and environmental consequences of this focus. She suggests alternative emergent ideologies, structures and processes, and practices to enable the enhancing potential of goods and thus move toward well-being, which she proposes to entail humane consumption embedded in human development.

In China, "officially and in popular imagination, the numbers of the newly rich ['ten thousand yuan' rich households] became the chief rationale for and criteria in measuring the efficiency of the reforms" (Croll 1994, p. xiii). "'Get rich quick,' 'You too can become rich,' and 'Riches for all' became the gist of many a popular saying and official slogan" (Croll 1994, p. 135). To the villagers, questioned about their ideas of the "good life" and their dreams of heaven, "Heaven was enjoying a new house, quality furniture, including sofas and sideboards, electric goods such as colour television, refrigerator, sufficiency of food, a supply of good cigarettes, and in a few cases a bathroom" (Croll 1994, p. 222). In remote villages with no electricity, tens of batteries stretch the length of the table on which a radio or television is set, or a television awaits a supply of electricity.

In Sri Lanka, "blurring the line between a political act and a consumption decision," there are several national lotteries that pay for development, and Tamil terrorists sell their own lottery tickets (Kemper 1993, p. 393). These lotteries depend on Western production. For example, tickets for the "Development Lottery" are shipped in from the United States once a week. One Development Lottery ad, "Housemaid to Millionairess," plays on the dreams of a woman who left the island and went to Kuwait to help her family (Kemper 1993, p. 387). Goods mingle with the emergence of national identity and citizenship.

In Turkey, the political slogan of one prime minister was to provide two keys—home and car—to everyone. The name of the Islamic fundamentalist party has a double meaning: welfare and affluence. This party recently has been growing, more due to its promises to increase and spread affluence levels than to a religious appeal. A wealthy man is proud of the simultaneous availability of cellular phones in Turkey and abroad and takes that as a sign of development. Newspapers give away goods such as electronics and china for sales promotion. Bought for such

goods rather than to be read, they advertise these promotions as their contribution to bridal trousseaus and to a better life.

The world increasingly belongs to goods and images of goods, which are eminently displayed in shopping malls, by the media, and by people. Although people in affluent societies interpret "well-being more and more exclusively in terms of their relative success in gaining access to high levels of consumption" (Lury 1996, p. 49), the image of the good life in less affluent countries[1] is one of being a successful participant in a consumption-oriented society (Wein 1992). There is a widespread desire for the goods that prominently surround people in the less affluent world (Arnould and Wilk 1984; Belk 1988; Ger and Belk 1996; Ger, Belk, and Lascu 1993; Shultz, Belk, and Ger 1994; Sklair 1991). As people seek the good life in consumption, societies seek it in economic development. The consumer mentality is reflected in the views of what development entails—material progress.

Development speaks to individual aspirations for a better life, and it proposes to satisfy interests at various levels—governments, donor countries, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), transnational corporations (TNCs), and local businesses. It generally is conceived as a unilinear evolutionary process of modernization or Westernization (Dube 1988; Joy and Ross 1989; Joy and Wallendorf 1996). The emphasis is on the economy—a higher gross national product, increasing exports, a developing industrial base, and greater consumption. The means usually are seen to be technology and know-how transfer, marketization, and privatization—innovations brought in mostly from the outside (Henderson 1991; Schafer 1994). Although there is a discourse of quality of life, social indicators of development, development as realization of human potential, and concern with ecology and sustainability of development, the actual priorities and practice of development still rest with the material. Funding institutions, such as the World Bank, USAID, and International Monetary Fund (IMF), and

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[1]I borrow the less derogatory term *less affluent* from Ger and Belk (1996) to refer to the transforming, modernizing, or industrializing societies, and as contrasted to the more affluent and dominant "West" and other centers. The terms *developing* and *Third World* are rejected because every society is always developing and the Second World has disappeared. This terminology is not to disregard the specificity of the local and the diversity of the global systems that I discuss subsequently.

national governments insist on economic criteria of measurement of progress and economically based operational definition of development (Henderson 1991). Even the United Nation's own statistical office has not yet adopted UNDP's (United Nations Development Program) relatively progressive Human Development Index (Henderson 1991). The focus remains on material production and the individual person as a producer and a consumer. Hence, at individual and societal levels, progress toward the good life has emphasized "having," to the neglect of the total human being, accompanied by a common assumption of the spread of Western capitalism. Yet the aftermath of this focus has been mixed (see Ger 1995).

In this article I discuss the enhancing potential of consumption and the damaging effects of a focus on the material in the less affluent world. I provide illustrative examples of more enhancing and less damaging processes and consequences of development and consumption. On the basis of global and local power relations and uniqueness of local contexts, I propose an alternative to the existing consumption-development nexus: humane consumption embedded in human development. I deliberate emergent ideologies, structures, processes, and practices that can generate humane consumption embedded in human development. I conclude with some public policy suggestions and argue for the agency of people.

Power of Consumption

Because development includes modernization and marketization, the increased availability, display, and advertising of mostly foreign products fuel aspirations for the good life and raise consumption expectations. Consumption is alluring, and the hope of it energizing. Shop windows glitter, and people with full shopping bags walk out with radiant faces. The ideology that the meaning of life is to be found in buying things motivates people to become consumers in fantasy and in reality. Moreover, this is seen in films and commercials. For example, a major Turkish bank promotes its services in a soap opera–like series of advertisements on all 13 national television channels. As the story unfolds, the viewer sees the hero, a helpless middle-class Ömer, saved by his "Common Sense"—a magical man who is visible only to Ömer. On Common Sense's advice, Ömer gets consumer credit and buys a car, electronic appliances, and new furniture. Seeing his new goodies, his girlfriend, who was about to leave him, stays with him. The story goes on as he gains more confidence, does better in his job, and becomes a more happy and fulfilled person, partially by consuming more and using more of the bank's services. But, unlike Ömer, for most of the audience, these scenes remain fantasies. Consumer fantasies can be pleasurable and fun (Campbell 1987) but could be more so if the imagined consumption is within the realm of possibility.

It is not only the advertising but also the goods themselves as they are being selected and used that make consumption tempting. Especially after years of lack of consumption opportunities, the recent presence of choice in less affluent countries makes newly possible consumption fun, exciting, and empowering. The novelty of consumption provides feelings of freedom and enablement, due to the removal of a previous barrier or restriction and the new-

found opportunity to be able to decide on one's own (Belk and Ger 1994; Ger, Belk, and Lascu 1993). A Chinese woman feels beautiful in her new nylon stockings, going to have a drink at the new Hard Rock Cafe in Beijing. Although this is a transitory pleasure, it is real when and as experienced. Even if not novel, consumption can be fun and instrumental to pleasurable experiences (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981; Holbrook and Hirschman 1982; Schudson 1991; Williamson 1986). Consider the pleasures of giving gifts: When a child plays with toys, parents feel content and empowered that they can give him or her that chance. Pleasures of an evening unfold through objects: Victoria's Secret, Joy perfume, and Remy Martin for some; pan, incense, and lotus extract for others.

Objects, by creating settings conducive to learning, also can be instrumental to self-cultivation and help unfold human potential and creativity (Ahuvia 1992; Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981; Tuan 1986, 1993; Williamson 1986). A gourmet prepares food using elaborate utensils and feels good as a creative cook and host, having a good time with friends, and when guests compliment the food. Music lovers feed their souls with music from compact disc players. Travelers expand their horizons in Xian and learn about the ancient Chinese imperial power through the terra-cotta soldiers. Homemakers learn, create, and enjoy through home decoration, do-it-yourself projects, and gardening. A diver explores the undersea life and himself in an expensive wetsuit. An athlete reaches the runner's high in her latest jogging outfit. A loner finds freedom, beauty, and self-reflection in the quiet woods that a car or a bike takes him to. A family shares a picnic by the river and enjoys and learns from the ducks, birds, and plants.

Consumption can be liberating and empowering by creatively affirming identity and/or by expressing resistance through recontextualization of the meaning of goods. Consumption is used to establish and express personal and social identity and to create and mark social bonds or distinctions (Douglas and Isherwood 1979; Featherstone 1991; Lury 1996; McCracken 1988). When consuming persons engage in self-production, they are active participants in an ongoing process of construction of symbols (Miller 1987). Consumption patterns also can be active acts of resistance to dominant parental, village, or national culture. For example, youth subcultures in more and less affluent countries assert their identity by their secondhand fleamarket clothes and body piercings. Tying a headscarf in a particular way asserts political identity—Islamic fundamentalist. Altering and playing with meaning of goods is an assertion of consumer power (Abercrombie 1994; Hebdige 1988). For example, motorscooters have been recontextualized by youth subcultures to express an oppositional style not intended by the producers (Hebdige 1988), and American television shows are given a local "reading," that is, appropriated, reintegrated and reinterpreted, and worked into existing cultural patterns, in Belize (Wilk 1993). Whether reconfiguration of products and their meanings can take place with a sense of coherence and without confusion in the less affluent world seems to depend on feelings of relative deprivation and the strength of the sense of identity and pride (Ger and Belk 1996).

Consumption practices that involve sharing experiences can contribute to social relations (Holt 1995), and goods can be used even to create small-scale social peer groups.

[Among working class Norwegian women in Bergen,] mass consumption goods are used to create the context for close social networks of which they are an integral part. They help to provide equalizing and normative mechanisms promoting solidarity and sociability.... [Thus,] consumption may also be seen as a key instrument in ... the creation of an inalienable world in which objects are so firmly integrated in the development of particular social relations and group identity as to be as clearly generative of society (Miller 1987, pp. 199, 204).

Alienatory consequences of consumer culture can be overcome by building social networks and leisure activities around pursuits such as hobbies, sports, and ecology.

Therefore, consumption has the potential to please and delight, enrich and cultivate, liberate and empower the self, and construct and maintain groups—four ways of enhancement. As the examples cited previously imply, the greater the participation, activity, creativity, and defiance on the part of the consumer in the act of consumption, the more enhancing (personally and socially) the consumption will be. Miller (1987) argues that the degree to which persons are able to produce themselves through goods and give meaning to their lives depends on resources such as skill, knowledge, and the time available to work on these things and control their own cultural environment. Furthermore, being an active, creative, independent, and defiant producer in the consumption act depends on self-confidence. And being able to choose among goods depends on the choice being real—affordability of alternatives. Therefore, to the extent that a consumer has self-confidence, affordable choice, time, skill, and knowledge and to the extent that sociability can be built around consumption, consumption is enhancing.

However, consumption also has the power to frustrate, alienate, disband close social relations, and damage the social fabric, culture, health, and environment (see Belk 1985; Cross 1993; Richins and Dawson 1992; Tuan 1986, 1993). With envy, greed, and discontent, consumption is not always at the service of self-esteem or happiness. A work-and-spend life brings boredom. Goods can get in the way of enjoyment of time and people. Consumption comes to define citizenship. Material culture has a tendency to aggrandize at the expense of the human and the environment and reduce the meaning of life to the material and a passive destructive dependency on that material. Goods tend to overwhelm rather than contribute to self-cultivation, social relations, and relations with the cosmos. An elaboration of the harmful effects of consumption in less affluent societies follows.

Why Go Beyond Consumption and the Material?

Goods in and of themselves do not bring the yearned-for heaven to consumers in the less affluent world. Materialism and stress accompany the rush to catch up with the Western good life (Ger and Belk 1996). Consumers in societies in transition feel overwhelmed by the variety of new products suddenly on the market and by the difficulty of getting reliable product information (Feick and Price 1993; Shultz,

Belk, and Ger 1994). They face confusion and frustration due to the dubious quality of the much sought-after products; disparity between quality and price; unfair business methods; doubtful advertising promises; marketing of defective or even dangerous products; lack of warranties, service facilities, or local-language manuals; and fraudulent pricing practices (Buitelaar 1991; Köhne 1991; Kozminski 1992). Neither the domestic fly-by-night operations nor the TNCs, dumping third-rate goods, care.

Although a few in less affluent societies consume, most cannot (Dholakia, Sharif, and Bandari 1988; Ger 1992). For example, though there is no piped-in water in many homes in Turkey, Mercedes-Benz cars roam the newly built world-class roads and pull into luxury hotels for an afternoon at the swimming pool. When the women tire of changing bikinis every half hour, a night of gambling awaits them at these pleasure spas. While these nouveaux riches shop in fashionable new boutiques, many who had to quit school at 12 years of age to support themselves and their families, salivate in front of shop windows in their after-work hours. Twelve-year-old boys, rented for $100 per month by their parents for summer work in the fields of rich peasants in some Black Sea villages, also watch such unattainable consumption scenes on television. Slum youth, whose consumption hopes go unfulfilled, raid shops at a protest or throw small rocks at cars speeding on a highway by the hills they inhabit. Worse landscapes exist in many other less affluent societies. Poverty is experienced as a relative material and social deprivation, powerlessness, and incapability. These experiences perpetuate poverty and create withdrawal, frustration, and a reduced sense of self-worth; all of which, in turn, are conducive to delinquency, aggressive behavior, and crime.

In the name of development and economic liberalization, the differentials between the rich few and the poor masses have been rising (Choguill 1994; Dube 1988; Verhelst 1990). Economic reforms in Eastern Europe, and to a much smaller extent in China, are reported to have had uneven impacts and to have expanded regional and social inequalities (Cornia 1994; Croll 1994). Even in China, where poverty rates have been reduced, there are rising regional imbalances in income distribution and access to health care; there are 50 million "floating poor" who flock to the cities for temporary work (Croll 1994, p. 158). Free market liberalism and consumer culture give primacy to private production and consumption at the expense of public needs. This approach not only increases social inequality but also tends to neglect dangers to health and environment (Heap and Ross 1992; Sherry 1987).

Health, especially of the poorest, suffers severely in less affluent countries. "In many [developing] countries 'diseases of development,' such as AIDS, stress related diseases, and those of 'underdevelopment,' such as tuberculosis, malaria, cholera, intestinal infections, exist side by side" (Zwi and Mills 1995, p. 307). Economic activities proceed rapidly at the expense of public health expenditures and without adequate regulations and accelerate urbanization, creating spontaneous slums. Urban services such as distribution of water and collection of sewage, which are taken for granted in the West, are inadequate in the less affluent world: In Lima, Peru, 7% of the slum population have access to drinking water and sewerage facilities (Choguill

1994). Diseases related to water shortages and contamination such as dysentery are common and a major cause of infant mortality. Industrialization and automobilization create air pollution, many times more than in Western cities, which leads to respiratory, skin, and eye diseases. Finally, consumers themselves sacrifice health and nutrition by cutting down their already meager food expenditures to be able to afford the tempting foreign cigarettes, jeans, and candy (Belk 1988, 1993; Ger 1992). "Innumerable surveys in east Africa point to the conclusion that increased cash income in a family does not result in more spending on nutrition and health. Consumer goods are accumulated and elder males acquire new wives" (Fruzzetti and Östör 1990, p. 149).

Environment also yields to consumption and production. Consumption and production patterns of affluent countries are responsible for most transboundary problems, such as ozone layer depletion, ocean pollution, and chemicalization of the habitat (Helman 1995). Less affluent countries also suffer from exhaustion and degradation of forests, topsoil, flora, and fauna, on which they are immensely dependent (Dreyer, Los, and Los 1989). For example, Nepal and India suffer severe floods due to deforestation of the Himalayas, and the area subject to annual flooding has tripled since 1980 (Oodit and Udo 1992). Loss of agricultural and grazing land to desertification has led to famine south of the Sahara. Deforestation (cutting of trees to clear land for agriculture, industry, and tourism) has increased scarcity of energy supply for the poor—fuelwood and charcoal. Garbage hills surround cities ready to explode, if they have not erupted already.

Such effects accrue from the intermingling of global dependencies—colonialization, tourism, international trade, and technology transfer—with development efforts. Colonialization created most of the deforestation in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Dreyer, Los, and Los 1989; Oodit and Udo 1992). The more innocent tourism is not always environmentally friendly. Himalayan forests have been cut down for fuel for tourists and the personnel serving them, and cans and plastic bags fill the parking places (Belk 1993). International trade victimizes the less affluent world with the toxic leftovers of the consumption of the affluent. Escaping stricter regulations at home, firms from more affluent countries export wastes, dangerous industries, and banned pesticides to less affluent countries. Dole's use of pesticides (banned in the United States) in pineapple and banana plantations in Central America and Borden's shipment of poisonous mercury-laden wastes to South Africa are some examples (Mokhiber 1994). Because more snakes are being killed for purses and shoes, the rodent population in India has risen; they now pose a major threat to stocks of grain: Rodents eat up more than 15 million tons of grain, almost as much as what India imports every year (Dreyer, Los, and Los 1989). Export orientation, encouraged by TNCs, gives rise to monocrop agriculture. Monocropping creates ecological problems such as the emergence of new types of pests, morbidity of plants, chemicalized environments, salinization, and soil erosion. It also creates human problems (Dreyer, Los, and Los 1989; Dube 1988; May 1992; Verhelst 1990). While producing export crops, the country could be forced to import food at prices not affordable to the poor, thereby spreading famine and malnutrition. And, though agriculture is intensified with agrotechnical mea-

sures (e.g., fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, exported seeds), the poorest farmers cannot afford such farming; they migrate to the cities and become unemployed squatters.

Finally, transfer of technology developed for other conditions has contradictory effects for health, environment, and the sociocultural aspects of human lives (Dreyer, Los, and Los 1989; Oodit and Udo 1992). For example, large hydrotechnical structures are constructed to provide power for industrial development and/or make agriculture possible in infertile lands, which thus reduces the dependency of a nation on the outside for energy. But undesirable consequences have been observed when they are built without a consideration of local conditions: unpredictable change of climate and flora and fauna, topsoil erosion, salination, burial of archeological treasures under the water, and forced resettlement of inhabitants to areas with other conditions. For example, the Kariba, Volta, Kainji, and Aswan dams propelled major resettlements to less suitable or unknown environments (Bennett 1993). This necessitated agricultural intensification requiring capital and technology beyond the capacity of the local people and their governments. Diseases linked to new aquatic conditions, such as sleeping sickness through the tsetse fly in fisheries, and poisoning from picking unknown food followed. Relocation of the Tonga people for the Kariba dam culminated in the disorganization of its culture: Breakdown of social organization because of the move reduced the previous emphasis on distribution of shared resources, delayed the reestablishment of effective agricultural regimes, and contributed to the need for food relief. Another example is the Roseiris dam in Sudan (Fruzzetti and Östör 1990). It enhanced trade and production; but the nomads had to alter their migratory patterns, entrepreneurs started agriculture in nomads' grazing lands, and forests were cleared to allow agricultural expansion. Tapping the gum forests, which was previously part of the nomads' livelihood, has been dying out. Merchants in Roseiris now believe that gum-arabic would be a good source for foreign exchange. Conflicts between nomads and agriculturists erupted: Nomads entered cultivated fields and let their animals eat the crops or burned the fields, farmers killed the nomads, and in turn nomads killed the farmers. And nomads who were relocated in urban high-rises complained that the elevators were too small for their animals.

Furthermore, as these examples imply, import of market mechanisms, development projects, and technology can have cultural damages. The abrupt exposure to global technology and its products brings a fascination with and a naive trust in the novel and the foreign. The desire for global goods breeds an inability to respect domestic products or notice their potential and a cultural dependency on foreign things and images (Ger 1995; Sklair 1991). Inquired about their dreams of heaven, "heaven is abroad" was a common response among rural Chinese technicians, which illustrates the new images of the good life deriving from Europe, North America, and Southeast Asia beamed out on television throughout China since the Open Door Policy (Croll 1994, p. 222). This belief accompanies a "widespread absence of a dream or a concept of future as a point of reference in contemporary China" (Croll 1994, p. 222). The dominant feelings in China, as in Eastern Europe, were sadness and anger at the devaluation of the past and uncertainty and doubt

rather than hope and worth. Even at more basic levels, consumption can hail the foreign culture. For example, in Zumbagua, Ecuador, white bread symbolizes the dominant culture, whereas Indian ethnic identity is associated with barley gruel, now considered inferior by the dominant culture, and thus Indian children (Weismantel 1989). Eating bread threatens indigenous identity and strength of family: Because barley gruel is a symbol of home, hospitality, and female productivity, women react very emotionally to their children's request for bread. Such processes strip people's identity and reduce self-respect, self-confidence, and self-determination (Miller 1996; Verhelst 1990). Sociocultural deprivation and alienation from cultural roots can be as damaging as material deprivation (Kleymeyer 1994). Having a negative social or personal identity, people participate less actively and perform poorly. Moreover, self-fulfilling negative stereotypes of the poor further disempower the poor and reinforce a culture of poverty—helplessness, dependence, and a sense of resignation.

In summary, focusing on the material involves consumer frustration and confusion, satisfaction of material appetites of the few at the expense of many, health problems, environmental devastation, and grievous human and cultural consequences. There is a growing understanding that development does not work when the focus is primarily on the material (Banuri 1990; Dube 1988; Etzioni and Lawrence 1991; Henderson 1991; Kottak 1990; Marglin 1990; Schafer 1994; Verhelst 1990). And it is not just the less affluent people who are disserved by the Western-based emphasis on the material; the affluent world faces alienation, homelessness, decay of cities, drugs, crime, and terrorism. And, in the Age of Interdependence (Henderson 1991), the global assets of ecological and cultural diversity are at risk; also, the problems of the less affluent world travel and hit the core: Immigrants and refugees carry their problems into and create new problems in the core, tourists and cosmopolitans from the core get sick in the periphery, and TNCs' profits depend on the stability of the peripheric countries they operate in and market to.

Fortunately, there are examples of more effective and less harmful development efforts. Kottak (1990) reports that locally grounded transition and change with stability (reassurance and peace), rather than overinnovation, make the process smooth and the desired outcomes sustainable. The gradual Chinese approach reduced poverty rates and is considered to be far more efficient and equitable than that which followed Eastern Europe's accelerated 'Western approach' to transition (Cornia 1994; Croll 1994). The Chinese way gives a much smaller role to foreigners in foreign-funded projects, places a greater emphasis on training than is the case in many other marketizing countries, and reflects Confucian ideology. Hungary's increased political tranquility and lesser social costs in the process of transition has been attributed to a hybrid system of market-approaching reforms and political transition (Neuber 1993). Following are some progressive approaches on a smaller scale.

Some Examples of Well-Being Enhancement

Kleymeyer (1994) reports grassroots development projects that empower self and local culture. Self-designed and self-managed projects use cultural expression such as music, language, folk tales, dance, and crafts to restore self-respect. By inverting the symbols associated with shame, these means create a kind of "cultural capital" (Kleymeyer 1994, p. 46). For example, Aymara Indians in Bolivia reanimate the centuries-old fables of the Aymara people using the radio, reinforcing traditional values of shrewdness and hard work. Seven young Aymara make up the Ayni group and refer to themselves as "promoters of popular development." They are all of peasant background and have been educated in leadership training programs to work on rural development projects, such as teaching weaving, tailoring, and electric repair. Initially, the Ayni gathered tales by traveling to the highland communities; later when they went on air, tales poured in by mail. Most of the nonformal educational activities engage people in a context of leisure and fun, with music and participative theater, to create effective learning.

Community infrastructure schemes in Honduras illustrate the success of indirect state involvement in stimulating community participation to meet its own goals (Choguill 1994). The government's role is only in providing sensitive advice, arranging training needs, and assisting, when requested, to build organizations at the community level. To meet the growing water needs of Tegucigalpa, where 60% live in peripheral areas known as barrios marginales, the Honduras National Water and Sanitation Agency came up with innovative solutions in a project funded by the two foreign governments and UNICEF. A community must request help for the construction of a water system. When the request is received, the water authority conducts a study to determine which approach best serves the community and whether the community is sufficiently organized and enthusiastic enough to construct and administer such a system. The community itself builds a water cistern, and central water authorities fill it with water from the municipal system. The water then is sold by the community to public taps throughout the neighborhood at a rate far lower than that charged by unregulated water vendors. Therefore, the city acts as a wholesaler of water to the community, which in turn acts as a retailer. The central authority owns the water source, designs the system, covers many of the initial costs, and provides technical assistance. The community forms a water association, supplies the manpower to construct the facilities, purchases some of the materials, and is responsible for operating and maintaining the system.

One of the most interesting aspects of the project is that the communities are realizing that they can make changes in their lives.... Some already have plans to add sanitation systems.... Thus, the water schemes appear to be serving as a catalyst for further community development ... this step toward the solution of water problems can be seen as the first step in a model of progressive infrastructural improvement.... Evolution of this type takes time. What is required is patience, tolerance, creativity and, most of all, understanding (Choguill 1994, pp. 940, 943).

An alliance that employs forces of capitalism while respecting and valuing indigenous knowledge and ecosystems has been yielding financial benefits. "Forest peoples and progressive international entrepreneurs willing to invest venture capital in new markets for tropical forest products recently emerged as partners in the struggle to preserve indigenous cultures and biodiversity in the Amazon region"

(May 1992, p. 226). The rubber-tappers movement (linked with socialist political currents) proposed the "extractive reserve" concept, temporal property rights to sustainable resource products, and permanent public control and responsibility to conserve the forest. They were supported by Cultural Survival, a small people-oriented organization, which contacted and persuaded progressive entrepreneurs such as Community Products, Ben and Jerry's, Loblaws, Ralston Purina, and the Body Shop. They started selling Brazil nuts to North American consumers interested in environmentalism and used profits to help bring new products into the marketplace. This provided publicity for the entrepreneurs and lucrative markets for both sides This could be a model of global cooperation to manage the threatened common pool of resources, but it also shows the challenges. Chico Mendes, labor leader–environmentalist who represented forest peoples in their struggle to halt deforestation, was slain. Another problem could arise if demand dwindles—if it is no longer "chic" to serve rain forest products over cocktails.

India provides illustrations of the role of fashion, art and advertising, and product design in mingling local culture with modern business. "*Churidar-kurta* (...knee-length shirt worn on top of a pajama), a dress once confined only to the women of north India, has in the last decade become popular all over India as a fashionable *and* indigenous dress for young girls.... [Girls] mark their distance from womanhood by ceasing to wear the sari" (Nag 1991, p. 106). Therefore, traditional Indian clothes were made youthful and fashionable. Painter Jamini Roy reinvented a Bengali style of sketching an indigenous female figure as a modern-traditional style of painting, borrowing from the almost-extinct craft practiced by the scroll-painters of Kalighat (Nag 1991). This sketch was used in a sari advertisement: Art converged with advertising in the emergent reinvention of tradition. India's National Institute of Design created socially desirable and culturally appropriate products such as a small efficient gas stove, a solar cooker, wood-conserving cable drums, and an electronic voting machine (Whiteley 1993).

These illustrations and the preceding discussion suggest that a search for a new approach to well-being in less affluent societies must take into account and be based on several dynamics.

Dynamics of Power and Local Context

Global and Local Power Relations

Power structures the interactions in the local and global marketplace, shaping development processes and consumption patterns (Dholakia and Sherry 1987; Etzioni and Lawrence 1991; Fırat, Dholakia, and Bagozzi 1987; Friedman 1994). For example, there are international bodies such as the IMF imposing economic regimes that disband social welfare and turn them into export-processing zones that provide cheap labor, and TNCs dumping third-rate goods and toxic waste (see also Miller 1996). Foreign donors are more concerned with marketization and investment opportunities, an environment more conducive to TNCs than to local equity (Zwi and Mills 1995), local culture, or local ecology. Since 1992 changes in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) greatly benefit TNCs and subordinate

the environment to international trade (Hawken 1993). "Countries face the ominous dilemma of losing sovereignty for the sake of remaining internationally 'competitive,' because if they choose to resist such global integration they will find themselves in economic backwaters" (Hawken 1993, p. 96). For example, of the 200,000 Bhopal victims, a majority still suffers physically and most have received no compensation. The Indian government kept a low profile so as not to scare off foreign investment. Even the more recent environmental and sustainable development projects have been more beneficial for the already affluent world rather than mutually beneficial for all involved and have neglected local concerns (Helman 1995).

Relations between local and global systems are plural, characterized by symbiosis as well as struggle, and related to histories of domination (Ong 1987; Spivak 1988). In the current global complexity, there are opposing forces of globalization/localization and heterogenization/homogenization that fragment and weaken the power of the formerly monolithic Western capitalism (e.g., Appadurai 1990; Friedman 1994; Miller 1996). The scale and speed of the global flows of people, money, technology and information, media images, and ideologies cause disjunctures (Appadurai 1990). Altered core-periphery relationships involve interplay, mingling, and give and take (Hannerz 1989). Both the core and the "other" have become more visibly diverse and differentiated.

However, within these complex dynamics, TNCs and the affluent core have a greater say than do the less affluent world in determining what is produced and consumed and what is deemed to be development. Even though the global flows are not unidirectional, with the partial exception of people flows, core countries dominate them. As with Wallerstein's (1984, 1991) capitalist world-system perspective on the flows of materials and labor, the production and control of popular culture resides in affluent core countries, particularly the United States. The "other" well could be more present and less generalized than an Orientalist (see Said 1979) caricature, but it is still being dominated by the more active and vocal core. Although the periphery is "allowed" to talk back, the conversation is not symmetrical. Taking notice of a less affluent culture is usually in terms of commodification of that culture (Spivak 1989) or commodification of difference (Root 1996): "The objects, events, and experiences that are commodified and marketed as cultural difference are dependent on concepts of cultural and aesthetic authenticity" (Root 1996, p. 69), which are defined by the core. Spivak's (1988, p. 107) argument about feminist marginality seems to apply to other marginalities as well: "The putative center welcomes selective inhabitants of the margin in order better to exclude the margin. And it is the center that offers the official explanation; or, the center is defined and reproduced by the explanation that it can express." Western institutions still are being marketed to the rest of the world "to create a world in which homo economicus is the dominant species and resources are allocated according to market imperatives" (Jones and Venkatesh 1996, p. 285).

Just as the less affluent society as a whole is excluded and left powerless in the global power relations, its local have-nots similarly are excluded. The elite in the less affluent society well could be integrated into the global culture, as the discussed internal inequalities imply, but not the masses.

Jones and Venkatesh (1996, p. 290) argue that elites in developed and developing worlds are linked by the TNCs, which bring Western business practices, technologies, consumption patterns, and cultural values to developing nations, and that the issue is "the exploitation by the 'haves' of the 'have-nots' on local, regional, national, and global levels." Both the unbalanced international trade and consumption patterns, which serve as exclusion from social links (Douglas and Isherwood 1979), leave the various have-not groups at different levels with relative lack of power. Such asymmetries in power relations must be recognized and reduced to levels less destructive for global well-being.

Local development and consumption patterns do not rest solely on asymmetrical power relations. These patterns also depend on how locals make sense of their daily experiences when faced with the new, complex world. The dialectic of globalization/localization cannot be understood unless we begin with how the local experiences that dialectic; that is, how the global and local "forces are constantly felt in the lives of those trying to get from one day to the next" (Friedman 1994, p. 193).

Specificity of the Local

The form of development that emerges in a society is shaped by the particular interaction of global forces with locally specific dynamics and history (Dholakia and Sherry 1987; Joy and Ross 1989; Sherry 1987). Change is not a transitional process of modernization or capitalism but involves disruptions, contradictions, and differential outcomes (Ong 1987). There is limited scope for transferability of ideas and technologies from the more to the less affluent worlds and more scope for sharing of approaches among less affluent countries. But ultimately, solutions lie in the local. Local context and strengths must be recognized and understood, and emergent development grounded in the local, capitalizing on its strengths (Fruzetti and Östör 1990; Joy and Ross 1989; Kottak 1990; Pareek 1990; Verhelst 1990). This includes an understanding of local social links and power relations, especially regarding solutions to diminish social inequality. The examples cited here indicate that development and ecology projects succeed to the extent that they take into account local social links and start from, rely on, and build local cultures. Contextual and historical continuity in identity is crucial for cultures to survive, create, and recreate (Kottak 1990). Therefore, development must be situated in the natural and historical environment (Schafer 1994). This entails understanding the local context and identity negotiation and building local cultures with a respect for the diversity of cultures within the local.

Even though the consumption ethos is globalizing, consumer cultures are multiple (Ger and Belk 1996; Venkatesh 1995). Local societies construct and reconstruct themselves and creatively appropriate and produce strategies that develop the possibilities given by local historical conditions (Miller 1995). Each local culture has its own consumption patterns, which vary across specific ethnic and social class groups. Identity, whether of nations or individual persons, is constructed locally (within the field of global and local forces), and consumption is used in that construction. Some of these consumption practices could be more personally, socially, culturally, and environmentally enhancing. The

extent to which consumption is enhancing has been suggested to depend on resources such as time, skill, and knowledge (Miller 1987). In other cultures, other resources such as reflection could be important too. Enhancing consumption also depends on conditions such as social links, self-confidence, and affordable choice, which are not always accessible to and viable for the masses in less affluent societies. Resources and conditions to enable the enhancing potential of goods must be provided, thus building and elevating consumers and reducing detrimental effects of consumption. Such resources and conditions must be extended widely to reduce social inequalities. In addition, how the material relates to and interacts with other life domains is critical to well-being beyond the good life. People do have other desires and other means to mark social bonds and distinctions, please the self, self-produce, and develop and cultivate self, all of which must be rendered salient. Therefore, local consumption experiences, practices, and opportunities across different groups must be understood, enhanced by furnishing resources and conditions, and embedded in other life domains; this must be done for more than the elite.

Therefore, the issue is to search for alternative approaches to reduce asymmetries in power relations and to build cultures and enhance individual persons as consumers and humans. From a political economy perspective, the TNC has been argued to be the primary agent of cultural change (Jones and Venkatesh 1996; Sklair 1991); but from the perspective of everyday cultural practices there are multiple agents. How can these multiple agents empower themselves relative to the dominant groups, and how can they construct and enhance themselves as cultures, consumers, and humans? I propose an alternative approach that is based on the previous argument that development and consumption practices can be understood better by combining the political economy perspective with the view that consumption is about sense-making and is used in locally specific identity negotiation.

An Alternative to the Material Good Life: Humane Consumption Embedded in Human Development

If people are all developing in a world of increasing interdependence, it is necessary to go beyond defining *well-being* as the quantity of material consumption and production. Recent progressive perspectives emphasize human development, perceiving it as a qualitative improvement rather than quantitative material growth and admitting multiple paths (Dube 1988; Hawken 1993; Henderson 1991; Kleymeyer 1994; Marglin 1990; Pareek 1990; Schafer 1994; Verhelst 1990). Human development is "the process of unfolding the unique potential and strengths of individuals and groups in a society" (Pareek 1990, p. 119). It involves both cultural and natural ecology and is based on utilizing the specific resources (nonmaterial resources, e.g., intelligence, imagination, history, cultural heritage) of each locality—self-reliance. It involves active reversing of environmental and cultural degradation and nourishing both natural and cultural ecological diversity. It embraces cultural

expression to contribute to a positive sense of personal and cultural self and to prevent cultural deprivation in the process of adaptation to new realities. Henderson's (1991) concept of "mutually assured development" emphasizes the interdependent nature of global human development and proposes mutual benefit in win-win relations. This also implies the affluent world's reliance on its own resources rather than on resources of the less affluent world. "Mutually assured development" calls for cooperation, when commons require win-win rules and creativity in rethinking the game itself, to prevent the tragedy of commons.

Here, I propose humane consumption as the individual equivalent of human development. Humane consumption involves creation of emotional and experiential quality in and through consumption, with an affection for people and the cosmos. It calls for cooperation and creativity in consumption practices. It helps make sense of the contradictions posed by paradoxical development and consumption contexts while preserving the continuity of personal and social identity and the environment. It entails creative, delighting, cultivating, empowering, and sociality-constructing consumption. It is integrated in the realization of personal, social, and ecological human potentials.

Can humane consumption embedded in human development become more than a vision? The problematic dynamics are complex and paradoxical and will tend to prevail. However, searching for possibilities, even for microcosmic changes, is worth pursuing if the alternative is, in Verhelst's (1990) terms, environmental and cultural rape. Human creativity can mobilize the constructive power of the material to some extent.

Toward Humane Consumption Embedded in Human Development

The proposed approach entails generating humane consumption and human development through emerging ideologies, structures and processes, and practices. Starting with the realities of power relations and the local context, the aim is to reduce asymmetries in power relations gradually, build the local culture, and enhance consumers, while making other desires and experiences salient and possible.

New Emergent Ideologies

Alternatives to the received notions of unilinear Westernization, consumer culture, and enterprise culture are emerging.

West is not it. The "failure" to catch up with "the ideal," on the assumed single unidirectional path of development and good life, is humiliating. Even the words "developed" and "developing" connote a received division of the world into two unequal parts, in which the former is the desired state. The discourses inside and outside are not empowering: Condescension is a characteristics of the Western text written for the "underdeveloped," whereas the text written from within involves protest and rage or quietism, self-hatred, and despair (Simms 1991). Not only development, but consumer culture also is seen generally to be one—the Western one. Consumer culture is widely suggested to have originated in the West, merely diffusing and being emulated now (see, e.g., Belk 1988; Joy and Wallendorf 1996). However,

[There is] historical evidence that the Third World played a major role in the development and production of consumer culture ... [which] is not "Western" but has always been global, such that the Third World has as much right as the First to its possession.... The discourse that implies that consumer culture is inherently "Western" is probably as insidious as the relative inequalities of wealth in sundering peoples from the goods with which they increasingly live (Miller 1996, pp. 157, 163).

The ideology and imagery that consumer culture belongs to the West, that is, to the core, furthers social and cultural powerlessness and identity problems for the less affluent societies.

An alternative ideology is the multiplicity of paths of development and consumer cultures. A cultural, rather than an economical, interpretation of history recognizes the vital contribution that all countries and peoples have made and continue to make to world progress (Schafer 1994). Progressive conceptual approaches, such as socioeconomics (e.g., Etzioni and Lawrence 1991) and human development, eventually could make an impact to the practice of development. The emerging perspective that consumption always has been global (Friedman 1994; Miller 1987, 1996) and that consumer cultures are plural (Ger and Belk 1996) eventually could make consumers in the less affluent world feel more empowered—that is, help them to "emancipate themselves from mental slavery," in late reggae singer Bob Marley's words. Furthermore, oppositional views, which point out the failure of the Western model to produce an acceptable way of life and good relationships among people or with nature, and the causal responsibility of the Western production and consumption patterns for the underdevelopment in the world and for most of the environmental degradation, are emerging, as discussed previously. Cushman (1990) goes to the extent of arguing that Western economy and power structures created the Western empty self, filled with social absences, feelings of lack of worth, and emotional hunger.

If the ideology of West-centeredness loses its power and all cultures are valued in more than a lip-service fashion, then less affluent countries, including their consumers, will improve the the self-worth and confidence of their peoples. People will have the motivation to look inward to learn about themselves and notice and appreciate local tacit knowledge and strengths. "Countries such as India have begun to view their cultural practices in a ... self-reflective fashion without using Western yardsticks" (Venkatesh 1995, p. 59). Less affluent countries will find means to contribute to global flows and generate and send out more products, images, and ideas. That is, they will "talk back" more (Hannerz 1989), increase their visibility and raise their voices (Simms 1991), and increase efforts to make a "voyage in" (Said 1993).

Love is it. As an alternative to the enterprise culture (see Heap and Ross 1992), which views the person as a self-interested consumer and producer, Frank (1988) and Henderson (1991) propose a love culture, and Belk and Coon (1993) propose a love model as an alternative to the exchange model of consumer behavior. People return lost wallets, donate bone marrow, donate money to charity, act selflessly in a love relationship, and relate to a larger group

or cause by volunteering to help the needy or the underdog. People have capacities for being altruistic, loving, committed, and cooperative, as well as egoistic, competitive, and self-interested. Some of these tendencies are emphasized at a particular time and space.[2]

If people's existing cooperation, commitment, and altruism, which have been ignored by the Western enterprise and exchange milieu, are recognized, ways can be found to make contexts fertile for such tendencies. The Japanese approach often is mentioned as an example. The self-interest model focuses attention and channels propensities differently than does a commitment or love model (Frank 1988). Love, argues Henderson (1991), is our most renewable resource. She calls for a redefinition of love as care for one another—in a global, interdependent, multicultural sense of the human family—and for a conscious effort to expand and exercise a person's capacity for loving, altruistic, cooperative behavior to survive in this Age of Interdependence. Altruism is now pragmatic in this interdependent world.

With a love culture, humans not only will fill the self rather than empty it, but also can make serious attempts toward the caring aspect of the practice of humane consumption and human development. For example, a cooperative affluent world can attempt to reduce asymmetries in power relations. Cooperative firms can go beyond customer satisfaction to caring for customers, society, and ecology and generate mutual benefits. Caring firms and governments can attend the desires of the poor. Consumers can be more committed, participatory and sociably oriented, and can share in consumption practices, turning their gazes to nonmaterial human experiences. If people value caring and cooperation, they can give up quantity for quality—that is, enjoy sociability in consumption restricted in quantity but enlarged in social quality. People also can search for love in nonconsumption—caring ways of being and doing, as civil humans. People can find power in their love to unite and struggle against dominant forces. For example, women of Uttar Pradesh united and struggled to protect the Himalayan forests by hugging the trees about to be bulldozed, just as they would hug their babies (Verhelst 1990).

Aesthetics is it. Love culture needs a complement: an aesthetic culture. Aesthetic experience involves the delighting sensations of smell, touch, movement, hearing, and sight, as well as an awareness and critical receptivity (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981). Wittgenstein, referring to art, states "the beautiful *is* what makes happy" (McGuinness 1988, p. 252). "Beauty expands our senses and minds: happiness is living more fully—eyes filled with the loveliness of landscape, ears filled with the sweetness of melody" (Tuan 1993, p. 220). Desire for aesthetic pleasures and aesthetic tendencies have existed throughout time and space (Tuan 1993). Smelling roses and enjoying sensual perfumes long have been advocated by poets such as Cavafy and Hayyam. Even the poorest desire and live with aesthetics—for example, cuisine and food presentation, home decora-

tion, watching the sunset. A peddler in India creates a work of art in the way he arranges the to-be-sold nuts and natural snacks on his tray. "In 1912, mill girls in Lawrence, Massachusetts, went on a strike under the banner, 'We want bread and roses too.' ...Bread and roses—economic and cultural development—are inseparable, and ... in fact the latter may well be a precondition to the former" (Kleymeyer 1994, p. 53). Examining several cultures historically, Tuan (1993, p. 226) argues that "the good and the beautiful, the moral and the aesthetic, are inextricably intertwined—doublets, deeply rooted in common human experience and yearning." Moral beauty is more likely to emerge and flourish in societies that encourage and appreciate it, and culture is "a moral-aesthetic venture, to be judged ultimately by its moral beauty" (Tuan 1993, p. 240), rather than its material affluence.

If it is recognized that Maslow might have been wrong, and that aesthetics is as basic as food and shelter, examining the aesthetic quality of development and consumption can begin. Then people can create alternative programs, structures, and production processes and design products and experiences that will be more pleasurable—that is, allow "flow experience," the holistic sensation of acting with total involvement, expressing responsibility and autonomy (Csikszentmihalyi 1975). A culture of aesthetics can motivate and enable creativity, cultivation, and flow in human development and humane consumption. Aggrandizement of material culture at the expense of the human and the environment can be curbed by an aesthetics culture. If people value aesthetically pleasing products, they might prefer the beauty in consumption restricted in quantity but enlarged in aesthetic quality. They might approach goods with an awareness and critical receptivity. They also might search for aesthetic pleasures in nonconsumption—aesthetic ways of being and doing, as artistic and creative humans.

However, there is a dark side to creativity: Destruction necessarily precedes construction. There is a dark side to aesthetics too: Taste discriminates. Aesthetics is not independent of power relations. But while destructive creativity and the value of alternative aesthetic choices are being negotiated, the love culture can allow room for wider participation.

These three ideologies can provide images of alternative desires and foci on alternative pleasures, awaken weakened emotions and sensitivities, and thus fuel development of underdeveloped human potential. New structures and processes can translate these ideologies to practice.

New Emergent Structures and Processes

Critical areas for human development include building decentralized institutions for sustained growth and its distribution and participative processes of decision making. Markets are good to set prices, not to recognize costs, and free market means big and powerful, not accountable (Etzioni and Lawrence 1991; Hawken 1993; Neuber 1993). Social and political institutions are necessary to pursue civil, political, and social rights and policies to regulate marketization to minimize social inequalities (Buitelaar 1991; Vann and Kumcu 1995). Transitional economies' experiences suggest that a gradual shaping of a new institutional framework, by combining the old and the new, as in China and Hungary,

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[2]My arguments are related to the premise that selfhood is culturally constituted and self emerges from social practices (see, e.g., Ames, Dissanayake, and Kinnear 1994; Roland 1988) and that different selves and cultures outside the homo economicus are possible.

could be more effective than an abrupt change. Emergent structures and processes will contribute to stability.

Participative decision making, networking, and collaboration are effective processes to form and sustain structures, policies, and programs. Enhancing societal participation in the transition process will empower a broad group of constituencies in the decision-making process, ensure equity, and engender widespread support and commitment (Croll and Parkin 1992; Dube 1988; Joy and Ross 1989; Kottak 1990; Pareek 1990; Vann and Kumcu 1995). The process of negotiating and consensus building must draw in key stakeholders and follow an analysis of political contexts, stakeholders, and networks of influence. A method of participation, which is suggested to be the most potent mode of change, is action research, which provides situational theory grounded in action (Pareek 1990). Enriched action research involves flexible and collaborative planning that is based on images of desirable futures (Babüroğlu and Ib 1992). We can envision a more enlightened enriched action research that involves broader constituencies such as advocates for consumers, ecology, culture, and society. Networking, alliances, and collaboration can draw in and empower underprivileged constituencies involved with development projects (Vann and Kumcu 1995) or other issues—ecological (Broad 1994), cultural (Kleymeyer 1994), and consumer activism (Jensen 1991; Köhne 1991), for example. Cooperation among various interest groups—local and global NGOs, governments, grassroots groups, and progressive firms, as in the previous examples, can facilitate projects and become a way of negotiating with local and international bodies. A love culture will nurture such cooperation, and technology, such as the Internet, can facilitate it.

Critical areas for humane consumption include building similar structures and processes. Consumer empowerment through consumer policy and consumer associations is a recent phenomenon in less affluent countries such as those in Eastern Europe (Köhne 1991; Kozminski 1992) and Latin America (Buitelaar 1991; Jensen 1991). It is particularly needed in the turbulent transition environments where consumer rights are abused heavily. Consumer associations can lobby for consumer protection legislation and enforcement, collect and create alternative and oppositional information, and inform and educate consumers (Winward 1994). By developing more demanding national consumers, they can make national businesses more internationally competitive (Buitelaar 1991). This in turn will raise respect for local production and products. Consumer organizations potentially can represent consumers in participative decision making regarding development or firm strategy. Although consumer organizations are instrumental for consumer empowerment and protection, they focus on information and the quality of products consumers use. The less affluent world also needs unions for consumer development that focus on the wants and options of people who are underconsuming (Buitelaar 1991). Consumer unions can provide a voice for and prevent the relative deprivation and vulnerability of those who are excluded from consumption. Just as public policy aided laborers to become aware and organized through unions, it can encourage consumer unions to make consumers radically critical, rather than informed, and to challenge the power relations (Ozanne and Murray 1995). Therefore, consumer

unions potentially can empower consumers and what we can call *nonconsumers* or *underconsumers*, like labor unions, which empower the employed as well as the unemployed.

However, consumer associations or unions can be perceived "as some strange activities reflecting European ideas" (Jensen 1991, p. 209). More locally acceptable ways and locally springing forms of consumer education, protection, and development could be generated. These can be linked to informal groups and communities, existing labor unions, or media. For example, "consumer corners" in newspapers and television channels, sometimes can be more effective than consumer associations. Organized citizen movements flourish in politicized civil societies, where political space is considered a natural arena for resistance and action (Broad 1994). Where a politicized civil context is inadequate, collaborative processes, using the mode of action research, can contribute to the creation of a political culture conducive to human development and humane consumption. Self-identification as citizens and humans in the cosmos can be aided by nonmarket mechanisms.

In summary, emergent decentralized structures, participative decision-making processes, and collaboration gradually can enable human development and humane consumption. Specific alternative practices of consumption and development will rest on the specific power relations and local context. I discuss relevant domains in the following section.

New Emergent Practices

Fueled by alternative ideologies and enabled by alternative structures and processes, the range of practices to reduce the discussed negative effects of development-consumption nexus and to enable humane consumption embedded in human development is limited only by human creativity. Such practice can spring from anywhere, within or outside the less affluent world, formal and informal organizations, firms, NGOs, governments, civil groups, and grassroots movements. Initiatives can be almost missionary, empowered by alliances and networks. Successful examples then can become models and motivators for others. Communication and negotiation can propel their diffusion. The media can play a role in spreading new ideologies and images of what constitutes progress and publicize alternative practices, even making them fashionable. Practice can be designed to be fun, self-actuating, and engaging and should strive for aesthetic outcomes; then it could diffuse like fashion. And some of the changes even could be institutionalized eventually. Some suggestions, alluded to in previous sections, to reduce asymmetries in power relations and to build cultures and humane consumers are elaborated subsequently.

One way to reduce asymmetries in power relations is for the core (global and local) to take a more responsible, receptive, and active stance. A love culture that channels international attention to global interdependence, loss of biodiversity, and cultural diversity can motivate such an attitude. The affluent world can compensate for its disproportionate usage of world resources and create or support new, mutually beneficial solutions for global problems (Hawken 1993; Helman 1995; Henderson 1991; Oodit and Udo 1992). Writing off less affluent countries' debt is a necessary but insufficient first step. For many ecological restoration and pro-

tection activities in the less developed world, financial support and compensation are necessary (Broad 1994; Henderson 1991; Oodit and Udo 1992). Hawken (1993), an American businessman, suggests reducing absolute consumption of energy and natural resources in North America by 80% within 50 years.

A responsible, receptive, and active stance applies to global and local firms, too. Caring firms go beyond recycling, green marketing, and customer satisfaction while making profits: They engage in dignified and intrinsically satisfying production processes, at home and across borders; perform a service role to consumers by educating, informing, and caring for them; adopt user-centered design of products and manuals, especially when language is a barrier; and create healthy, ecologically sound, and aesthetically pleasing products, packages, and production processes that, for example, do not create the toxic wastes exported to the less affluent world (Hawken 1993; Norman 1988; Whiteley 1993). The Body Shop, Ecover (cleaning products), Tradecraft (imports purchased at a fair price from less affluent countries), and Ben & Jerry's exemplify some of these practices. Political action and media can stimulate such practices and marketing and media support can make products of these practices sell.

Caring firms can turn their attention to the poor of the less affluent world, make attempts to address the desires of those who cannot consume, and find ways to democratize consumption—that is, target the poor. The attention and respect to the desires of the poor will be empowering. For example, Colgate-Palmolive developed Axion soap to mimic what Venezuelan women use to wash clothes: a mush made from slivers of soap (Burkhalter 1994). Axion, which was designed on the basis of ethnographic observations of Venezuelan women washing clothes, is a profitable laundry cleaner in several Latin American countries. Products designed for the poor and their local conditions, such as the walking tractors in China (Burkhalter 1994), will increase accessibility of consumption for those who cannot afford other choices. And retailing systems designed for and targeting the poor (e.g., mobile stores that reach the slums and rural areas) will democratize access. A creative retailing system for consumer goods and services can be modeled after the Tegucigalpa water scheme (Choguill 1994). In addition, firms can make a business by providing potable water and sewage, especially by forming joint ventures with operations such as the Tegucigalpa scheme. The benefit also can be indirect if firms sell products that require clean water—avoiding Nestle's powdered infant formula saga (in which thousands of infants allegedly died in areas with no access to clean water with which to mix the powder). Although ignored because of an urban middle class and high-technology mind-set, rural residents and slum poor well could be lucrative markets (Burkhalter 1994; Fadiman 1994). Like the urban markets, they too want aesthetically pleasing consumption experiences. Therefore, global and local firms can make money by contributing to the solution of health and social inequality problems of the less affluent world and by doing it beautifully.

Caring and aesthetic firms also can make money by contributing to the revival and building of local cultures. They can collaborate with small-scale producers—such as silk weavers in Thailand (Fadiman 1994), rubber-tappers in the Amazon, and carpet weavers in Turkey—to serve national or global markets. Beymen, a Turkish upscale store, organizes villages to weave sheets, curtains, bedspreads, and table cloths using traditional materials and designs. Such revival of a dwindling regional craft and making it fashionable is empowering to the peasants financially and culturally; their culture is valued. It is empowering for the upscale urbanites, because something homespun (and expensive) rather than foreign yields status for a change. And it is a differential advantage for Beymen among other upscale stores, where all goods are "modern." Previously mentioned examples are the Indian *churidar-kurta*, which made the traditional fashionable, and revival of old artistic styles by the advertising industry, as in the use of reinvented sketches in sari advertisements. Caring firms also can gain goodwill by supporting local arts and crafts. For example, Japanese firms, cooperating with the Japanese government, sponsor revival and spread of regional cuisines within Turkey.

Another way to reduce asymmetries in power relations is for the periphery to take a more active stance. This involves contributing more to the global flows. Thai restaurants, Reggae music, Latin American and Egyptian novels, Chinese films and Tiger Balm, Bangalore chips, Indian clothes, and Afgan jewelry in the United States and Europe are examples of peripheries talking back (Hannerz 1989). Following the lead of its scholars and authors, the periphery can make more of an entry into the discourse of the core, mix with it, and transform it to make it acknowledge marginalized cultures (Said 1993). A larger impact is possible with the export of a variety of cultural productions, high and popular, commercial and artistic or intellectual.

A more active periphery not only exports, but also takes in less—that is, depends less on the core and engages in more active and critical reception, producing local goods, ideas, and images. Freed from Marley's "mental slavery," local entrepreneurs can turn local strengths and potentials into profitable national or transnational businesses. They can discover unnoticed national or export potential in what are considered to be regional peculiarities. In addition to extractive products and revived local crafts from the Amazon region, specialty products sold in world niche markets include fashionable health or ethnic goods, botanical medicine, and ecotourism. However, these modes are to be recommended to the extent that they contribute to human development in their respective regions rather than restrict the nature of local production and maintain the power differences between the less and the more affluent worlds. Development of high-technology products and services that are based on local strengths and potentials is equally important. With a "we-can-do-it" attitude, firms can improve the quality (including aesthetic and caring aspects) of their products, undertake research and development activities, and generate innovative products. Caring local firms can employ responsible and culturally appropriate design of products (like Indian solar cookers and efficient stoves) and distribution. Production of images and ideas (i.e., film, music, and printing industries, broadcast media, and intellectual and artistic activities) can flourish in similar ways. For example, North Africans develop soap operas that are based on their storytelling tradition (Arnould 1996). Locally

rooted creative products, not imitative of the foreign, will increase trust and pride in the local, reduce feelings of deficiency, and provide affordable choices. Learning by doing and collaborations will make these practices more potent in time.

Locally rooted creative production and consumption practices flourish in the presence of a cultural vitality, self-respect, self-confidence, and a positive social identity. The issue is how to build cultures that will breed these resources and equip and enhance people—that is, how to provide space for current articulations of culture (Marglin 1990) and expressions of self. On the basis of the literature, I propose two interrelated approaches: expanding the role of noneconomic activities that (1) help people attain a critical understanding of their culture, themselves, and the strengths of both, as well as cultures of others, and (2) build cultures and humane consumers by relying on their strengths and enhancing creative expression (e.g., Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981; Dube 1988; Kleymeyer 1994; Marglin 1990; Schafer 1994).

One set of to-be-expanded activities is production of knowledge to promote critical understanding. "Much knowledge concerning the periphery is more available in the center than in the periphery itself,... because of the greater capacity of the center to organize and analyze knowledge in certain ways" (Hannerz 1989, p. 69). For example, a well-known Turkish drama historian's book on 16th century Istanbul does not have a single Turkish citation. In 39 peripheral countries there are no newspapers and in 30 others only one, whereas there are more than 1600 daily papers in the United States. In 1989 Europe produced approximately 12,000 new books, whereas Africa produced fewer than 350. Europe averages 1400 libraries per country compared with 18 in Africa (Simms 1996). In addition to books, knowledge includes myths, legends, and experiences. In oral cultures, collecting stories and songs, staging plays with audience participation, and making films and videos and radio programs will ensure that when people die, legends, ancestral histories, local histories, and local knowledge do not die with them (Kleymeyer 1994). And discourses, which are more empowering than the typically negative text written from within, can be generated drawing from local legends, caring relations, and aesthetic experiences.

Production of knowledge also involves interactive experiences. We learn about ourselves, personally and culturally, and others by interacting with others. Interaction among various cultures within a society and with the outside must be expanded. Simms (1991) suggests that just as Europe became aware of and learned about itself by interacting with its peripheries using critical gaze, the East now can learn more about itself by interacting more with the West—but only when freed from mental slavery. Interaction is also necessary for creativity.

Without a certain openness to impulses from the outside world, we would even expect science, art, and literature to become impoverished. Nigerian literary life could hardly exist if it were not for the importation of literacy and a range of literary forms. But there would not have been a Nigerian Nobel Prize winner in literature in 1986 if Wole Soyinka had not creatively drawn on both a cosmopolitan literary expertise and an imagination rooted

in a Nigerian mythology, and turned them into something unique (Hannerz 1989, pp. 70–71).

Finally, alternative knowledge about the "other" can be produced to allow a critical understanding of the more affluent nations. Fascination with the West can be curbed by increased familiarity with different modes of existence there, which do not always reflect the good life. Just as CNN shows starving African children, local media and foreign travel can show the other side of the heaven abroad: homelessness, crime, drugs, suicides, and intangible experiences such as empty selves, alienation, joylessness, and unhappiness. Locally popular forms of art, such as popular music, video clips, films, and media and new technologies, such as the Internet, can spread images of the failures of the Western model as well. Moreover, the same means can spread images about alternatives—nonconsumerist, nonwestern ways of life at home and abroad. Existence of enjoyable ways of living, less dependent on consumption, can be made visible, and such ways salient and desirable.

The second to-be-expanded set of activities include reformulated education, arts, and cultural expression. New forms of education should make learning more than an instrument of economic activity (see Schafer 1994). Type of education is critical, because enterprise versus love cultures (cooperation and commitment) are learned in childhood (Frank 1988). Aesthetic tendencies also are cultivated best in childhood. Aesthetic literacies (e.g., visual, musical) can be learned as well as verbal literacy and will open up new ways of seeing the world. Learning by doing and education as pleasurable play effectively will breed self-reliance, self-confidence, and creativity, as the Aymara Indians have experienced. Formal and informal education can be designed to build on local strengths, tendencies, and oral culture. It also can be designed to foster a critical perspective, reflection, and awareness, for example, by immersion in nature, people, and cultures, interacting with diverse groups within the society and foreign cultures.

By encouraging the human imagination, arts promote the idea that change is possible and the future can be made more livable (Kleymeyer 1994). Rather than being marginalized and trivialized as a form of entertainment, the arts, and hence the process and practice of creating, should be regarded as a respectable, rewarding, and worthwhile endeavor (Schafer 1994). Incorporating the arts into daily life will enhance creativity, which is a by-product of agency. For example, Jack Lang's Fete de la Musique in Paris, in which everybody goes in the street and plays music, can be a model for "let's create" campaigns in all kinds of arts—for example, music, literature, plastic, film, performance arts. Art events, for children and adults, should be organized and publicized widely. Cultural expression is a source of creativity, fueling cultural energy to act, and a shared sense of self-worth that breeds self-reliance (Kleymeyer 1994). It can affirm and restore social identity and weaken negative stereotypes. Furthermore, cultural expression can be used as a means of promoting participation in specific development programs, as the Aymara Indians have done. "Let's be us" campaigns and grassroots reinvention of tradition can increase cultural awareness, especially if they are exciting. A Turkish puppeteer has been

reviving the centuries-old art of shadow puppetry, writing new scripts for the original figures; for example, the hero now discusses environmentalism.

In summary, asymmetries in power relations can be reduced mutually by a caring and active core and a caring, active, and self-confident periphery. Understanding of the local and its specific relation to the global can be increased by knowledge production in multiple ways. Cultures and humane people can be built and enhanced. This would foster alleviation of a culture of poverty and growth of cultural capital and creativity.

Conclusion

I propose well-being to be humane consumption embedded in human development. This article is a search for ways through which it can emerge, even if gradually and microcosmically. The argument is that if consumption is highly desirable in the less affluent world, consumer desires are to be acknowledged. But goods can delight or frustrate, cultivate or impoverish, empower or alienate, and nourish or destruct social relations for individual people and contribute to societal, cultural, health, and environmental problems. The suggested alternative ideologies, structures, processes, and practices can bring out the enhancing potential and constructive power of goods. These alternatives can enhance humane consumers as they realize their potential as total human beings situated in global, ecological, and cultural diversity.

Alternative ideologies regarding multiple paths of development and multiple ways of life, with a greater emphasis on love and aesthetics, will fuel humane consumption embedded in human development. Decentralized, participative, and collaborative organizations will mobilize it. And reduction of power asymmetries, local production of various forms of knowledge, development of cultural capital, and creative self-expression will make it a lived experience. These alternatives will provide the resources and conditions necessary for humane consumption: knowledge, skill (including reflection, critical understanding and receptivity, and sensibility), affordable choice, self-confidence, positive identity, and social links. For example, products that delight, which are generated by caring firms and stimulated by consumer organizations and active consumers, will reduce frustrations. Social groups, nourished by cooperative and caring tendencies and cultural expression, will use and share goods for sociality. Self-confident consumers, surrounded with alternative ideas and images, aided by alternative organizations, and equipped with resources, will consume goods actively and defiantly, for creative self-expression and cultivation. They also will pursue and emphasize alternative joyful desires and experiences. Caring firms, consumer unions (representing people who underconsume), and sharing consumers will democratize consumption. Humane actors will nurture cultural and natural ecology. Qualitative improvements in life and reduction of material, environmental, and sociocultural deprivation will follow.

Major improvements would be a dream. But more realistic are microcosmic changes and a slow diffusion of such changes, as seen with the Aymara culture building, Honduras water system, and Amazon forest products, or rela-

tively less harmful changes, such as in Hungary and the People's Republic of China. Numerous policy implications are implicit in these and other examples cited here for multiple agents of the complex global stage to use their transforming capacities. Suggestions can be made only for a specific context. Some broad recommendations for governments follow:

- Collaborate and share experiences with other less affluent societies;

- Provide incentives for cultural interaction within and outside the society;

- Plan and implement more locally grounded change with stability: Use new or old institutions to regulate marketization, minimize inequalities (especially for the worst off), stabilize the otherwise rapid disruptions, and protect cultural diversity at various levels;

- Rely more on decentralized structures, collaborations, and participative methods;

- Improve and make accessible infrastructure to encourage alternative alliances and networks;

- Improve and make accessible institutions for citizens and consumers (e.g., consumer unions) to pursue civil, political, and social rights—in other words, provide space for a civil society to flourish; and

- Provide incentives for alternative practices and creation and export of alternative images, ideas (e.g., cultural, artistic, intellectual, educational), and products (e.g., Indian Institute of Design).

As important as these recommendations are the alternative structures and practices suggested for multiple agents. The present argument rests more on the agency of people and civil groups—the "public," in the original sense of the word in the phrase *public policy*—than the agency of governments.

In closing, consider wine as an analogy. Wine "is a converting substance, capable of reversing situations and states, and of extracting from objects their opposites—for instance, making a weak man strong" (Barthes 1993, p. 58). Wine is also the "leisurely act of drinking" (p. 59). A glass of wine is very fine. The better the wine the more enjoyable it is for the connoisseur. Wine helps people get rid of stress, feel stronger and freer, dance better, tell better jokes, and make company laugh. It energizes and stimulates passionate experiences. Having wine with others makes the party fun, and sharing wine with others forms a bond. But "to believe in wine is a coercive collective act" (Barthes 1993, p. 59): Excesses, misfortunes, and crimes are possible in wine, though they are never penalized. When drinking turns into addiction, the tongue can no longer taste the wine, joy yields to the discomforts of craving and distress, and the power found in wine turns into dependency. Wine is less enjoyable if there is no food to go with it, it replaces nutrition, or it drugs feelings of starvation. It is less of a bliss if a person has a headache the next morning, either because it was bad wine or water did not accompany it. It is also less fun if no one else at the table can afford it. And what if the winery chemicalizes the environment and underpays the immigrant grape-pickers who sweat and toil and cannot even have a bottle themselves? And what if the French forget or ignore the historical wine traditions and rituals of the Mediterranean and Near Eastern cultures? And what if French wines replace, rather than coexist with, Chilean, Australian, and Bulgarian wines and other drinks in other countries? The

proposed alternative ideologies, structures, processes, and practices aim to improve the wine experience for all.

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