

**Paper from**  
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**presented at the**  
**World Forum of Spiritual Culture**  
**“Spiritual Culture – a key to the transformation of the world”**  
**(Astana, 16-20 October 2011)**

We have an important title and theme for this conference – Spiritual culture – a key to the transformation of the world!

I cannot emphasize enough how important this understanding of a spiritual culture is. And yes, it is the key for the transformation of this world. If we hear, see and feel, we can find around us and in the whole world a movement of spiritual culture, which is expressing its strong potential in the historical events in the Arabic world. But this is just one side of the coin, the other side is the transparency which begins to appear everywhere. Thanks to the new information technology it is impossible to hide anything, at least not for long, and so the world starts to be like a small town, not like an unknown place where we hear about catastrophes from far away which don't interest us. No, it is just around the corner. We can see, hear and feel it. It's happening in our living room, thanks to television. It's happening on our blue planet earth; it must hurt us if we still have a sense of feeling.

Therefore we all are called to look after ourself, our own development as humans and spiritual beings. We are called to look to our family, to our relatives, friends, neighbors and in fact all humanity. We are one family living on this wonderful blue planet, an incredible gift we have all received from our source. It is surely not a coincidence that so many important conferences, like the World Forum of Spiritual Culture and many others, are held in Kazakhstan, a country known for its family values, the citizens precise knowledge of all ancestors over generations.

In this time of transformation, everybody can feel the acceleration of speed, the intensity of life beginning to increase. Be it in business, culture, politics, science, farming etc. or private life, it is just obvious for everybody who wants to feel it, we are in a time of transition. And this transition needs the deep understanding of everyone for his spiritual culture, for his spiritual path, his life journey, be it in

whatever tradition of religion or culture somebody is in. Spiritual culture is as well the path of understanding, tolerance, compassion, empathy, awareness for other cultures and views. It is the essence of our relationships to neighbors, being it your private neighbor or your fellow citizens. We are able to live all in harmony, peace and joy, if we understand that we are all from the same source, with the same purpose on this planet.

Organizations like the World Forum of Spiritual Culture, individuals like our friend Tolegen Mukhamedzhanov and his organizing committee, and thousands of other organizations and individuals worldwide are important catalysts for this change of consciousness in the world, this aspect of expressing the thoughts of millions of people, showing us that we are not alone thinking in this direction. That we all believe in a world which all humans can participate in with the same right to live in dignity, everywhere. It doesn't matter where you are born, we all have equal rights. We have written and adopted the Universal Declaration and Conventions on Human Rights. The UN was formed a long time ago. Even the UN Charter mandated that we ensure and protect the rights for all of humanity. We can and must follow these good intentions and ideas.

All of us came here to Astana for a reason. To understand the urgency, to meet with like minded people, to share our values and opinions. To openly discuss our thoughts and bring them back home to our own organizations and families. It is a mutual understanding which crosses borders, cultures and nations. We all have different identities and backgrounds; but we also understand ourselves to be as one human family. With this understanding we have all the capacity to make the so urgently needed change in this world. The time has never been so right, the changes never so big, the knowledge never on this high of a level. So there is nothing stopping us all, being here in this room, at this conference, from bringing this message back to our part of the world.

Yes, we need a deeply rooted Spiritual Culture, a culture "within", as the key for the transformation of this world – our blue planet which we all know has suffered tremendously in the last decades. We are all able and in the process of changing this direction, we are gathering here for exactly this purpose.

Let me share with you some experiences I had when living in Africa in the nineties for nearly a decade. Young school boys living in the country asked me always if they can come with me to my homeland, to Switzerland, thinking that there must be paradise, just better than they have it in Africa. It was for me no question that I told them to stay in their country, in their town, in their neighborhood and to help their mother, father, brother and sister and their villages to grow. So we have started to build schools in this region of Africa for hundreds of young children, so they feel at home and taken care of. What am I saying is this. If we leave the resources of a nation, their natural and human resources, where they are found and exchange with them knowledge, then the people will have the capacity to stay

where they are; and we will have solved the big migration problems of the day. Furthermore people like to stay where they are born, it is their homeland, despite today's unlimited travel possibilities.

In the tradition of our host country Kazakhstan, I can read and understand the same culture and history. The Kazakhs are proud about their ancestors' history and know for generations back all their family members. Which you will not find as easily in Europe f. e., such a knowledge of the history of their country. All this belongs to a culture, belongs to a strengthening of the personality of a person and which finally supports their spiritual approach and development within.

Dr. Michael Ben Eli 1), whom I met for the first time in 2008 at a conference in Costa Rica, told me about "Sustainability" and the following 5 principles;

- *The Material Domain:* Constitutes the basis for regulating the flow of materials and energy that underlie existence.
- *The Economic Domain:* Provides a guiding framework for creating and managing wealth.
- *The Domain of Life:* Provides the basis for appropriate behavior in the biosphere.
- *The Social Domain:* Provides the basis for social interactions.
- *The Spiritual Domain:* Identifies the necessary attitudinal orientation and provides the basis for a universal code of ethics.

which since then have become my guiding principles. When we had breakfast he explained to me that it had taken him some years, after he had already his first 4 principles, until he figured out that without the 5<sup>th</sup> principle, the spiritual principle, the other 4 would not function.

Mentioning these principles I would like to come to the end of my presentation here in Astana; and I hope that this 5 principles provide for you the same value that they have for me over the last years.

May we all have the goodwill and strength to develop, embrace and share a spiritual culture leading us to the transformation of ourselves and all of humanity – Thank you.

For further readings please see:

- 1) The Cybertec Consulting Group Inc. New York – Sustainability, the five core principles – a new frame work – by Dr. Michael U. Ben-Eli  
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About the author:

**Sesto Giovanni Castagnoli (Switzerland)**

Sesto Castagnoli is an entrepreneur, development consultant and spiritual bridge builder. Following his commercial education and seven years in management positions, he started his own production and trading company network. For a decade he created and managed businesses in West Africa. During this time he developed a deep longing for a world of peace, economic equilibrium and spiritual unity. In this time he co-founded the Humanitas Association for schools in Africa and the Chapter Western Africa of the Swiss African Chamber of Commerce. In 2003 he co-founded the WSF World Spirit Forum, which is the reflection of this vision. In 2008 he helped to found World Transforming Initiatives. In 2010 he co-founded the Unity Media Group. All three initiatives seek to change consciousness in the world. Beside these three main activities, Sesto serves in numerous other organizations. He is a confidential listener and an advisor on paths to conscious leadership.

NGO's

Founder Member and President of the WSF World Spirit Forum  
Founder Member and President of the WSF World Spirit Foundation  
Chair WTI World Transforming Initiatives  
Founder Unity Media Group

Founder Member of the Förderverein Humanitas – Schools in Africa  
Founder Member of the Swiss African Chamber of Commerce (Chapter Western Africa)  
Member of the Int. Coordinating Committee of the WPF World Public Forum till 2010  
International Ambassador Cities of Light

Business

Executive Member – International Relations – CTModule AG – Switzerland  
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