

Modernity's Other and the Transformation of the University:
Short Answers to Simple Questions
By Howard Richards

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I want to make this as simple as possible. I know you are the smartest people in the world. If you were not the smartest people in the world you would not be here. But I do not want to make you prove you are smart. I do not want to ask you to figure out something complicated.

I will give short answers to four simple questions:

Who are we?

Where are we going?

How will we get there?

What are some next steps?

Here are the short answers:

We are the species whose ecological niche is the creation of culture.

We are going to a global mosaic of green and open societies.

We will get there liberating ourselves from domination by capitalism.

Some next steps are teaching social entrepreneurship and selling lifelong education for the good life.

These ideas are not complicated. I will do my best to explain them clearly. For the most part I think you will agree with me if you can understand me. If you think you understand and do not agree, please tell me why. I will be grateful to anyone who calls my attention to any errors there may be in my reasoning.

Immediately I have to qualify my brave claim that I will make this clear and simple, for I already fear I have said something confusing. I am making a double use of the pronoun "we." On the one hand, I am using the pronoun "we" as a stand in referring generally to all human beings. "We" is all humanity and when I ask "Who are we?" I ask what it means to be human. But on the other hand the pronoun "we" names specifically all us professors. "We" are the academics, and when I ask "What are some next steps?" I mean what are next steps in the transformation of the university.

There is a connection between using “we” both to name all humans and using “we” to name all professors. The connection is the suggestion that universities in principle work for human development.

My platform today is provided by a very large university that defines itself as the African university in the service of humanity. I suggest that in principle all universities are in the service of all humanity. The very word “university” in its etymology refers to something universal. An original and central purpose of the university is to prepare people to practice professions, and the word “profession” in its etymology implies commitment to an ideal of service.

Later today you will hear an ideal of service to humanity expressed in terms of two exciting concepts: The first is the concept of two enterprise planes. Any enterprise, whether or not it is a university, has its own particular goals. It also can align itself with the societal enterprise, the enterprise of all of us. The societal enterprise has general overall goals like ending poverty and making the biosphere sustainable.

A second exciting concept you will hear this afternoon is “unbounded organization.”¹ Let me for now just tantalize you with the poetry of juxtaposing these two words “unbounded” and “organization.” To be continued.

And let me now ask a question about my first question: “What am I seeking when I ask the question ‘who are we?’ ”

Here is the answer to my question about my question: “I am seeking a metanarrative with cognitive justice.”

Don’t panic. The concept of metanarrative is not hard to understand.

I picked up the word “metanarrative” from the book The Postmodern Condition by Jean-François Lyotard.² A metanarrative is a big story. It is a comprehensive story about our world and who we are in our world. Examples are Christianity, Marxism, and liberal economics. If we go out to non-western societies and back to pre-modern societies we find that metanarratives have invariably played an organizing role wherever large numbers of humans have lived together. Sometimes human beings have organized themselves telling stories about Gods, sometimes they use stories about ancestors, sometimes they use stories about military heroes. What Lyotard calls a metanarrative is sometimes called a cosmology or a founding myth or a worldview.

The need for a metanarrative to organize human life led the cultural historian Thomas Berry to say there is no community without a community story.

In The Postmodern Condition Jean-François Lyotard says people do not believe metanarratives anymore. He says that our post-modern age is an age of incredulity toward metanarratives. Putting Berry and Lyotard together, it would follow that since today we have no metanarrative today we have no community. No doubt Lyotard is

¹ Unbounded Organization: Embracing the Societal Enterprise is the title of a book by Gavin Andersson forthcoming in 2013.

² Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

partly right to say we live in a time of incredulity toward metanarratives. There is indeed a growing trend among intellectuals, among young people, and among depressed people of all ages to believe in nothing.³ Nevertheless, Lyotard exaggerates. Today there are still many people who believe in a metanarrative. One metanarrative, liberal economics, is ruling the world.

So we have a problem: Nothing authorizes us to believe that humanity today is so different from humanity in the past that today we can get our act together and act in concert to solve our problems without sharing a metanarrative that tells us who we are and what our role is in the great scheme of things. But the closest thing we have to a shared metanarrative defining the first person plural is a toxic brew. It shreds community more than it builds it. It smothers diversity and imposes the crudest and most violent forms of cognitive injustice. Its growth imperative and its systematic demand to create conditions for capital accumulation and ever more capital accumulation are killing the biosphere very rapidly, so rapidly that if we think in a perspective of geological time the end of life on this planet is the equivalent of only a few seconds away.

A Hobson's choice: either no metanarrative or a toxic metanarrative. Either civil wars between mutually incompatible ethnic fundamentalisms which in principle can share no common ground, or else a secular state imposing certain death by liberal economics on one and all.

In this context, which is our context today, some of us are proposing a metanarrative that has the simple virtue of being true. We, humanity, are creators of cultures. We have always been creators of cultures. We are biologically coded to be culturally coded. We have the capacity to invent cultural codes that can be passed on to the next generation by upbringing and education. This capacity has given us an evolutionary advantage over species that can only adapt to changing environments by genetic mutation and natural selection.⁴

The intellectuals of today are called on to do the same thing that cultural creatives have been doing ever since our common matrilineal ancestor the Mitochondrial Eve was giving birth to children and bringing them up to be humans somewhere in Africa some 200,000 years ago. Namely, in the words of Antonio Gramsci, we are adjusting culture to its physical functions.

Who are we? We are creators of cultures. I offer this as a simple answer to a simple question.

My second simple question is: "Where are we going?"

The beginning of a simple answer is: We are going to a green future.

³ This bald and threatening use of the word "nothing" deliberately suggests that lack of belief in big stories goes with lack of belief in little stories, for example lack of belief in one's spouse, one's parents, one's children. See my M.A. thesis on Jean-Paul Sartre's concept of nothing (*Néant*) University of California, Santa Barbara, 1964,

⁴ I do not claim any originality for this proposed metanarrative. For example, I do not think I am saying anything that has not already been said by Edgar Morin. See his Method: Towards a Study of Humankind. Vol. I. Washington: American University Press, 1992.

The simple reason why we are going to a green future is that we cannot possibly go to any other future. Either we go green or we go nowhere. There will not be any human development if we do not go green because there will not be any humans.

A human culture whose constitutive rules and basic norms are incompatible with the laws of physics, the laws of chemistry, and the facts of biology is not sustainable. This is the simple proof that we are going to a green future if we are going anywhere at all.

But my simple answer to the question “Where are we going?” includes another key word. The key word is “open.” Where are we going? We are going green and we are going open. There is no place else to go.

What do I mean by “open” and why do I say an “open society” is our only possible future?

The phrase “open society” was coined by the philosopher Karl Popper.⁵ Popper meant several things by the phrase. Three of them I mean too:

1. Democracy
2. Science
3. Unbounded organization⁶

Democracy – In an open society people have the power to choose the leaders and the institutions that work best for them, provided that they do so in an orderly way and not in a revolutionary way. Popper regards revolution as in principle irrational because it changes the values of so many variables at once that it is impossible to trace which effects are due to which causes.

Science – In an open society the results achieved by the leaders and the institutions are constantly studied and evaluated by independent scholars responsible in principle only to participate sincerely in the search for truth.⁷

Unbounded organization – In an open society (unlike the societies Popper calls “closed” because their principles are –falsely—taken to be immutable) there are no limits

⁵ Sometimes I agree with Popper and sometimes I do not. See Chapter Nine “Karl Popper’s Vienna” in Howard Richards and Joanna Swanger, *The Dilemmas of Social Democracies*. Lanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006. I find little or nothing to agree with in Karl Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957.

⁶ “Unbounded organization” is not a phrase Popper uses. I take his railing against Plato, Hegel, Marx, and others he calls enemies of the open society to be railing against bounded thought, and his praise of an open-minded and fallibilist scientific method to be an endorsement of unbounded thought, albeit one flawed by his (in the opinions of some of us) mistaken views on scientific method. See Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1945. It is to be noted that the only example praised in that book as an open society was social democratic Sweden. (See footnote below.)

⁷ “In principle” scholars are accountable only to truth-seeking, but since truth-seeking has no e mail or postal address and no telephone number, in practice it is represented by such surrogates as peer reviewers, dissertation examiners, and accreditation panels. Popper himself might well have wanted scholars to be required to accept his version of the scientific method, and to agree with him that although truth is always sought it is strictly speaking never found.

constraining science or social innovation. Society, like science in Popper's philosophy of science, is never perfected. Both science and society consist of hypotheses that so far have withstood the tests of experience.⁸

Is this clear? I hope it is clear that if we lived in an open society its leaders and its institutions would be working for the benefit of all of us. I hope it is clear that if we lived in an open society we would be constantly improving our institutions to make them work for all of us better. I hope it is clear that if we lived in an open society science would be monitoring our successes and our failures. Science would be systematically helping us to make society work better for all.

I hope it is clear that we do not live in an open society.⁹

So why do I say that where we are going is both green and open because there is no place else for us to go? My argument has two parts:

1. Part one: We are necessarily going for a green society, because if we are not going there we are not going anywhere at all.
2. Part two: We are necessarily going for an open society, because without it we cannot make the necessary transition to a green society.

Part one I think I already proved. If you will grant me a premise, I will offer you a proof of part two.

The premise: An open society *just is* a society organized to pursue rationally the best interests of all.¹⁰

⁸ By using the concept "democracy" I mean (and I think Popper means) to import into the open society concept the many safeguards against the tyranny of the majority that democratic theorists have built into the democratic concept. "Unbounded" is not intended to mean "anything can happen" in the sense Hannah Arendt employs when she uses the phrase "anything can happen" to describe the totalitarian abolition of the rule of law. On the other hand, I obviously do not agree with those who severely restrict the meaning of democracy (or, more honestly, oppose democracy) in order to make economic institutions and property rights untouchable and not subject to any legitimate modifications.

⁹ By saying this in South Africa I imply that South Africa is not an open society. Neither is any other. The "open society" ideal of Karl Popper and the similar "experimental society" ideal of John Dewey are still philosophies that have not been put into practice. Writing The Open Society and its Enemies in the early 1940s Popper gives only one good example, social-democratic Sweden, and he may have meant to say that it was an open society. That the Swedish model failed to liberate from domination by the basic cultural structures of capitalism and why it failed are explained in Howard Richards and Joanna Swanger, The Dilemmas of Social Democracies. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006. Popper suggests at one point that an open society will be thwarted if economic power dominates political power, and recommends that in such a case people must struggle to achieve the supremacy of (democratic) political power over economic power. Richards and Swanger show why this recommendation is not feasible without a culture shift.

¹⁰ You have to grant me this premise because it can be argued that a command society, say the former Soviet Union or China could go green because its rulers could command it to go green. I do not believe this, but I do not have time to make the argument, so I have to beg you to grant that democratic rationality can make the green transition while authoritarian power cannot. Of course even if both were capable of making the green transition, there are many reasons why the democratic route would be preferable. Amartya Sen makes arguments for democracy in several works. He makes extended comparisons of India and China, arguing that India is better off with freedom even though it is somewhat behind China on some economic and social measures.

The offer of proof: If we can govern ourselves in ways that rationally pursue the best interests of all, then we can make the necessary transition to a green society. And if not, not.¹¹

So we need an open society. In other words, we need a society designed to act rationally for the good of all.¹²

My next simple question: How will we get there? How will we get to a green and open society?

My simple answer is: We will get there liberating ourselves from domination by capitalism.¹³

Let me define capitalism: A short definition is that capitalism is the production of goods and services for profit. A slightly longer definition is that capitalism is the production of goods for sale, where the sale in turn is for the sake of profit.¹⁴

Let me say why we are dominated by it: Because production is for profit, if there is no profit there is no production. Therefore, simply put, everything about society, including wage rates, labour supply, education, taxes, government, culture, science, and so on must be geared to complying with a single imperative: There must be profit. There must be accumulation of capital. Without profit, nothing moves. To

¹¹ I omit some premises that are in strict logic required, but which should be non-controversial, for example the premise that if we can reach our goals at all we can do so by pursuing them rationally, but we cannot reach them either by pursuing them irrationally or by not pursuing them at all.

¹² It may not be obvious that I am claiming that protracted violence such as that in Sudan, Somalia, and Palestine could be overcome if the societies involved and the international system were open in my modified Popperian sense. It may not be obvious but I find this pro-peace claim to be implicit in saying that an open society is a set of procedures and an institutional setup designed to act rationally for the good of all. Notice that one of my modifications of Popper is that my critical realist notions of scientific rationality embrace cognitive justice. They are less ethnocentric and physics-centric than Popper's logic of research.

¹³ There are of course other obstacles to achieving an open society. I believe making capitalism governable is key and that it is a necessary giant step forward that deserves priority attention. Here I think many some people may disagree with me even if they understand me, since they may believe that some other key problem, for example patriarchy, deserves higher priority in efforts to make capitalism governable, or, some would say, to abolish capitalism altogether. Nancy Hartsock argues in Money Sex and Power that capitalism itself is best understood as a consequence of patriarchy. Boston; Northeastern University Press, 1986.

¹⁴ This definition traces pretty closely the meaning given to the term by the man who coined it, Karl Marx. I need the definition to avoid the meaning given to the term by anti-socialists like Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich van Hayek, and Francis Fukayama. They define capitalism as competitive pricing and socialism as central planning. It follows from their definitions that both by logic and by historical experience it can be shown that socialism is unworkable. Fukayama for example holds that socialism was an option for basic industrialization, but that in today's knowledge society where flexible response to constant change is the name of the game, socialism is a non-starter. I also need the definition to avoid the meaning given to the term by writers like Peter Drucker and David Korten who define it in such a way that capitalism is already over. From their viewpoint I am wasting my time discussing the role of capitalism in a mixed economy because we already live in a post-capitalist society. Drucker and Korten are right that in several senses capitalism no longer exists (for example, in the knowledge society capital is no longer the key factor for production that it once was), but their being right does not eliminate the question what role to assign to production to profit, i.e. to capitalism as (roughly speaking) Marx defined it. I say "roughly speaking" because Marx can also be read as making the exploitation of "free" labour part of the definition of "production of commodities" (*Waren*) and therefore part of the definition of capitalism defined as "production of commodities."

simplify a little less: to the extent that the livelihood of everybody depends on capital making profit, everybody is dominated by capitalism.¹⁵

Here we see a key reason why we do not have an open society. Democracy is truncated because the first thing governments must do, before they can do anything else, is to make sure the wheels of capitalism keep turning.¹⁶ Profit comes first because everything else depends on it. Any other goals can be pursued only to the extent that they do not interfere with profit.¹⁷

So how can we liberate ourselves? Here I will take Amartya Sen as my guide. His ideas on how to tame capitalism can be taken both as advice on how to pave the way for human development and as advice on how to pave the way for the necessary transition to a green and open society. So my short answer to the simple question “How will we get there?” becomes: We will get there by building an open society. We will build an open society liberating ourselves from domination by capitalism. We will liberate ourselves from domination by capitalism by following Amartya Sen’s advice.

Sen writes: “Capitalism can generate mean streets and strained lives unless it is restrained and supplemented by other –often nonmarket—institutions.”¹⁸

Sen here offers a two part formula for liberation. The first part is restraining capitalism, more commonly known as regulating it. The second is supplementing capitalism, often by nonmarket institutions. Let us consider the two parts one at a time.

First, regulation.

When we regulate or restrain we impose conditions.

We decree for example that firms must either pay at least the legal minimum wage or cease to do business.

Or we require that a factory must either cease to dump toxic waste into a nearby river or close.

¹⁵ I am relying here on the theory of “regimes of accumulation” developed by the Grenoble school of “regulationist” economists in France. David Harvey relies on this theory and further develops it by showing how culture is shaped by the requirements of capital accumulation in his The Condition of Postmodernity. Oxford: Blackwell, 1987.

¹⁶ Marxists often downplay this point because they centre-stage the related point that the wheels of capitalism are going to stop turning no matter what governments do, even if they give investors all the tax breaks, exceptions to environmental laws, subsidies, cheap labour and so on that they ask for. For example John Bellamy Foster and Robert McChesney The Endless Crisis. New York, Monthly Review Press, 2012.

¹⁷ The need to escape the systemic imperatives of capitalism to make democracy real is discussed in detail in Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, Democracy and Capitalism. New York: Basic Books, 1986, Ellen Meiksins Wood, Empire of Capital. London: Zed Books, 2003; and by the same author Democracy against Capitalism Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995. I focus on the key problem of achieving an open society by making capitalism governable, but as noted in a previous footnote many other things can be done to make societies more open. More examples: increasing citizen participation, promoting media and universities that are not controlled by economic interests, organizing the disorganized so they can better articulate and pursue their interests.

¹⁸ Amartya Sen, “Sraffa, Wittgenstein, and Gramsci,” Journal of Economic Literature. Vol. 41 (2003) pp. 1240-1255. p. 1247. I have varied Sen’s words slightly to disentangle them from a here irrelevant context.

Or we pass a law that all shops must install ramps to accommodate handicapped people in wheelchairs. If they do not install the ramps they lose their licenses and must shut their shops.

You get the picture. Restraint and regulation gives business a choice. Obey or quit.

Both logic and the historic failures of social democracy teach us that businesses often choose option two. They quit. They stop doing business. Or they move somewhere else. Their workers lose their jobs. Whatever they were going to produce is either not produced at all, or it is produced somewhere else where there is less regulation.

My simple conclusion is that imposing restraints on capitalism will not by itself liberate us from domination by it.

That leaves the second part of Amartya Sen's formula: supplementing. It leaves what Catherine Hoppers calls transformation by enlargement. Indeed, the more we restrain and regulate, the more we need to enlarge and supplement. This is true because the more businesses choose option two and close, the more we need to create supplementary livelihoods for the unemployed. And the more we need supplementary ways to supply the goods and services that the closed businesses are no longer supplying.

Is this clear? I am saying that we have to accomplish in some other way whatever it may be that needs to be accomplished that capitalism cannot get accomplished on terms that are socially and ecologically acceptable. We have to supplement. Regulation alone will not bring us freedom.

Back to Sen: Sen calls for supplementing capitalism, often with nonmarket institutions.

What could those nonmarket institutions be?¹⁹ From the economic historian Karl Polanyi and others we learn that for most of the time human beings have lived on

¹⁹ Sen also implies that sometimes we supplement capitalism with market institutions that are not capitalist. What would be some examples of market institutions that employ people and produce goods and services but are not capitalist? One example would be the work of Matilda, the seamstress who lives in a house near mine and ekes out a living mending her neighbours' garments. Other examples would be the hawkers in South Africa around 1910 described by Mahatma Gandhi in his autobiography. Gandhi writes about them because they were prohibited from hawking their wares on the streets of Johannesburg because of their race. Such people are not capitalists and they are not employees of capitalists. They are not in business for profit. They are just using their labour power to generate enough cash to survive. Most of them make less money than they would make if they were working for wages in a modern factory run by a multinational corporation. In most Latin American and African countries they outnumber the people who find steady employment in the capitalist sector. Their sector is usually called the informal economy although some of us prefer to call it the labour economy (because labour rather than capital is the main factor) or the people's economy. It sometimes happens as happened toward the end of apartheid in South Africa that, "Rising unemployment and the pressure of informal operators have forced policy-makers to move from suppressing to encouraging informal activities, often drawing ideas and proposals for action from academic work." Terence Moll, in a book review of South Africa's Informal Economy by Eleanor Preston-Whyte and Christian Rogerson in Africa: Journal of the International

this planet their economies have not been market economies. There is such a thing as traditional economy. There are non-capitalist traditional livelihoods that have existed for thousands of years and still exist.

Therefore if we are looking for ways to supplement capitalism, to make it governable by breaking free of a system where either production happens because of the profit motive or it does not happen at all, we do not need to create the new socialist man or woman psychologically capable of working for love instead of money. We can turn to the old African man and woman.²⁰ He and she have an advantage over any proposal to create humanity anew. Their advantage is that they already exist and do not need to be created. They have existed for thousands of years and they still exist.

For thousands of years people have been accomplishing production and distribution in non-capitalist ways. Polanyi as well as other historians and anthropologists identify two main categories of pre-capitalist non-market economics.²¹ Both are still alive and well today. The first great traditional category is “reciprocity” or “reciprocal obligation.”²² Reciprocity is the principle that organizes families, clans, and tribes.²³ It is a generic category including what is known in the Bantu languages as

African Institute, Vol. 63 (1993) pp. 143-44. More often government response to the informal economy is a mixed bag; sometimes it is treated as tax-evading illegal activity to be suppressed by the police; sometimes it is encouraged and supported, sometimes governments dream that it will end when the country becomes “developed” and everybody has a steady job at good wages in the formal sector. The Peruvian economist Hernando De Soto famously advocated making supporting the informal economy the linchpin of development policy. The Other Path: the Invisible Revolution in the Third World. New York: Harper and Row, 1989.

²⁰ I do not mean to imply that the other continents do not have traditions worth cherishing. They do.

²¹ Karl Polanyi et al, Trade and Market in the Early Empires. Glencoe: Free Press, 1957. See also Walter Rodney, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa. London: Bogle-L'Ouverture, 1972; Maria Mies in Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale chronicles the violent implantation of European institutions to all continents. London: Zed Books, 1986. For a more detailed review of anthropological and historical studies of African economic institutions prior to European contact see George Dalton, review of An Economic History of West Africa by A.G. Hopkins in African Economic History Vol. 1 (1976) pp. 51-101 and by the same author “Traditional Production in Primitive African Economies,” The Quarterly Journal of Economics. Vol 76 (1962) pp. 360-378. I side with Polanyi and the “substantivists” in the “substantivist/formalist” controversies. As Peter Breiner remarks, “...capitalist culture selects out and cultivates the very behaviour that marginal utility [i.e. liberal economic theory] postulates as universal.” [words in brackets added] Peter Breiner, “The Political Logic of Economics and the Economic Logic of Modernity in Max Weber,” Political Theory. Vol. 23 (1995). pp. 25-47. p. 31.

²² Having sworn myself to simplicity I must refrain from elaborating a point that is essential. Reciprocity is typically embedded in a whole worldview in which one might say, for example, “The commons we share was left to us by our ancestors. We are its custodians and we must pass it on to our descendants.” Such talk comes out of a whole different worldview and sense of self. There is no simple way to translate it into the common sense of modern western normality. My proposed metanarrative insists on the legitimacy of such talk, but it does not in itself get past square one in understanding it.

²³ Sir Henry Sumner Maine in his account of the transition from ancient to modern society called the principle of reciprocity in families “status.” Everybody is born with a role and place in society, with a status, just because of being born a member of a certain family, clan, or tribe. The transition from ancient to modern Maine called a transition from “status to contract.” See his Ancient Law. London: Oxford University Press, 1931. (first edition 1861) On reciprocity see for example besides Polanyi Alvin Gouldner, “The Norm of Reciprocity: a Preliminary Statement,” American Sociological Review. Vol. 25 (1960) pp. 161-178. For Genevieve Vaughan and others what anthropologists call reciprocity is a gift economy. See her Homo Donans and other writings and collections available free on line.

²³ In Durkheim “*integration sociale*” and “*solidarité*” are synonyms. He called their ancient forms “mechanical” and their modern forms “organic.”

ubuntu. Reciprocity was typical of the societies Emile Durkheim called “archaic” to which he attributed high levels of social integration and *solidarité*.²⁴ The second big generic category identified by Polanyi is redistribution. It was typical of the empires of Africa before European conquest. The classic example is Egypt where the agents of the pharaohs gathered up the harvests, stored them, and from their granaries distributed grain in the seasons between harvests.

From Polanyi and other scholars we learn that we do not need to begin from scratch to find non-market supplements. We can rely on tried and true cultural resources that have functioned in practice for thousands of years to tame capitalism and to make it governable. The principle of *ubuntu* or “I am because you are” is old not new. The principle of meeting basic needs from collective resources already existed three thousand years ago. It existed in Africa and you can read about it in the Bible.

Of course cultural creativity did not end in the year zero, even though by then it had made a good beginning. In more recent times we have invented cooperatives, non-profit foundations, public-private joint ventures, worker-owned enterprises, permaculture, community currencies, neighbourhood food banks, asset based community development, monasteries, to name a few. I will later particularly recommend social entrepreneurship.

We will know that liberation from domination by capitalism has arrived when we can say: Whatever may be the livelihoods that capitalism cannot generate with social and ecological responsibility, we will generate some other way. When we can truthfully say that, then at long last we can make the rules for capitalism instead of capitalism making the rules for us.

My fourth and last simple question is, “What are some next steps?” In particular, I mean next steps for universities. Of course I have already been implying curriculum transformation. At this point in intellectual history simple honesty requires cognitive justice. The ethnocentric assumptions that framed the founding of the disciplines that constitute the modern university in Germany in the 19th century are simply false.

But there is a problem with relying on an appeal to intellectual honesty to transform the university. Relying on that route we could do what Catherine Hoppers and I have often dreamed of doing, starting by transforming thinking in the faculties of law, and then move on to bring cognitive justice and the embedding of the commons to economics and management, to education, and to natural science. Reforming those four key faculties would shift the centre of gravity of the university away from bankrupt paradigms that are part and parcel of humanity’s descent into social chaos and ecological disaster. If we could assume that thinking is at the core of the university’s identity and mission, then rethinking thinking would be sufficient to change the university.

²⁴ In Durkheim “*integration sociale*” and “*solidarité*” are synonyms. He called their ancient forms “mechanical” and their modern forms “organic.”

However, I do not think an epistemological critique, like Edgar Morin's²⁵ or like Professor Hoppers and mine²⁶, provides by itself practical answers to the question "What are some next steps?" Next steps have to be within what we can call following Lev Vygotsky the university's "zone of proximal development."²⁷ Next steps in the zone of proximal development have to start where the university is and lead to where it is ready to go.

I do not believe I can safely assume that in this day and age universities are mainly driven by what Max Weber called science as a vocation. That is not where the university is today.

Henry Johnson Jr. wrote, "In theory the university is in need of ontological, epistemological, and axiological rescue, but in fact it is uninterested in being redeemed. Its ontology is that of the business world, its axiology that of the account book, and the only truths it seeks are saleable truths. Worst of all, most of its members are by and large relatively happy with the way things are."²⁸ I think Johnson exaggerates. I still believe that service to humanity and pursuit of truth are essential to the very idea of a university. I still believe that some academics still remember these old ideas and still include them in their moral compass. Nevertheless, thoughts like those of Henry Johnson ring true enough to move me to caution. I think that to be in the ZOPD of today's university I have to propose next steps that make business sense. I have thought of two.

I start from the business premises that universities are interested in employment opportunities for their graduates, and that employment opportunities are scarce and getting scarcer as worldwide millions of new university graduates flood the labour markets.

My first suggestion for a next step is to promote social entrepreneurship. Harvard already led the way generically by communicating the message to its undergraduates that instead of hoping somebody would hire them upon graduation they should go entrepreneurial and start their own enterprises. It happens that there is a growing field within the generic concept of going entrepreneurial called social entrepreneurship. It is sometimes called social enterprise. In social entrepreneurship people learn and invent innovative ways to mobilize resources to meet needs. They both get jobs and create jobs. They create jobs in ways that supplement the standard logic of capitalism.²⁹ If we follow Amartya Sen's advice and save ourselves from unbridled capitalism by supplementing, then the world needs more and better social entrepreneurs.

So here I might eat my cake and have it too: Teaching and researching social entrepreneurship might well be a profitable next step for a university that regards itself

²⁵ Edgar Morin and A.B. Kern, Homeland Earth: a manifesto for the new millennium, Creskill NJ: Hampton Press, 1999.

²⁶ Catherine Hoppers and Howard Richards, Rethinking Thinking: modernity's other and the transformation of the university, Pretoria: University of South Africa, 2012.

²⁷ For ZOPD applied to organizing and management see Gavin Andersson, Unbounded Organization: embracing the societal enterprise, (forthcoming)

²⁸ Henry Johnson Jr., review of Prescribing the Life of the Mind by Charles Anderson, in The Review of Politics Vol. 56 (1994) pp. 765-768. p.768.

²⁹ See www.socentex.com, www.socialenterprise.org.uk, www.socialedge.org

as a business. At the same time social entrepreneurship builds nonmarket institutions that supplement capitalism and make it possible to restrain it.

Social entrepreneurship with IKS would be an even better business proposition and an even deeper social transformation. IKS would differentiate the product of UNISA or whatever university gets there first. It could be marketed as a premium quality product different from the diplomas in social entrepreneurship offered by competing firms.

My second suggestion for a next step starts from the same premise: employment opportunities are scarce and getting scarcer. But it takes that premise in a different direction. Sooner or later we have to realize that the labour market will *never* generate jobs for everyone. More. The labour market will *never* generate jobs for all university graduates. More. The labour market plus opportunities for self-employment through entrepreneurship social or otherwise will *never* employ everyone. Markets are not going to employ everybody. They never have and they never will.³⁰

Do you understand me? Do you believe me? If you understand me but do not believe me please ask me for a bibliography. Or better yet step outside and take a walk around the streets of downtown Pretoria. Ask yourself whether you can seriously believe that the labour market will some day give all the people you see steady jobs at decent wages.

OK. Now we know. Markets will never employ everyone. Now we face some choices: we can let the chronically unemployed simmer on in misery, delinquency, addiction, depression, and mental illness; or else we can put them on the dole and pay them a minimum wage for doing nothing or for doing some make-work tasks that could more easily and quickly be done by a few real workers using up-to-date technology; or else we can frankly put an end to the nonsense that in order to have a right to life with dignity in this world you have to find customers who are able and willing to buy what you have to sell. We have to separate livelihood from sales. We have to get back to the first principle. The first principle is that the economy should be serving humanity, not the other way about.³¹

Now we are reversing the present status of education. Instead of education being the servant of the economy, we are talking about the economy becoming the servant of education.

Now we are talking about life-long education for self-realization, for the good life. Everybody needs it: the busy executive, the overworked professional, the bored plodder in a dead end job, the prisoner in the jail, the immigrant to the city who is losing touch with her rural roots and wants to study the traditions of her peopleeveryone. But education for the good life is especially needed for that fraction of the population that constitutes an oversupply of manpower that is not needed by today's economy and will not be needed by tomorrow's economy. They will live at public expense one way

³⁰ The lesson of history is that full employment, or even approximately full employment, is a rare and short-lived phenomenon. John Maynard Keynes, General Theory of Employment Interest and Money. London: Macmillan, 1936, pp. 249-50.

³¹ "The economy must serve people, not the other way around." Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship. Washington DC: US Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2007. Paragraph 52.

or another, even if they have to prey on the public by resorting to theft and assault and dealing drugs.

The best option, I suggest, is that they develop their talents in the arts, in athletics, in the sciences, in gardening, in construction, in languages and literature, in the practical skills required to live green, in the health sciences, in short in one or another branch of self-improvement that has intrinsic value in itself whether or not it has exchange value in the labour market.

I am not talking about free money. I am talking about students who have to work to pass their courses. If they flunk out they lose their incomes and have to seek employment elsewhere. I am not being cruel to the people who have no special talent. The untalented may not get paid to develop themselves as Olympic athletes or historians or astronomers or organic agriculturalists or poets. But they will find themselves in an economy that has a slot for everybody. Everybody ought to do something to serve their neighbours and society and to development their God-given talents. By detaching livelihood from sales, we make it possible for people to do what they ought to do.

Of course unemployment today is already less than it would be if it were not for the millions who are being subsidized to study. I am saying do it more.

So my second suggestion for a next step is that the university devote itself to selling lifelong education for the good life. It is an old idea. Plato already thought of it nearly two thousand four hundred years ago when he founded his Academy. Universities and technical schools have the resources on their faculties to deliver the product. Society needs it. If society is smart, it will pay for it. Society will pay for it because it will realize that the most likely alternative is ever deeper social chaos, bringing ever higher bills for jails, police, mental hospitals, drug rehabs, and security guards. Society will pay for it because it will realize that life has a purpose, and that its purpose is human development.³²

³² Sen and Nussbaum's concept of human development neatly sidesteps the objection that anyone who claims to know the purpose of life and proceeds to organize the world (or some small part of it) to achieve that purpose necessarily interferes with other people's freedom. . They define human development as enhancing capacities. Human development enhances people's capacities to choose their own goals and to attain them. It makes people more free not less free. Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom. New York: Alfred Knopf, 2001. Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen, The Quality of Life. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.

