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Development Corridors: How Do We Decide What Is Good and Bad?

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The video excerpt is available [here](#). The full conference is [available](#) on the Schiller Institute website.



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As has been understood for more than a century, almost a century and a half, the only way this could work, was to develop a system of infrastructural development which would effectively link the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean across Eurasia. This is not railroads, this is not Silk Roads, these are corridors of development, which run a range of, let's say, up to 100 kilometers in width, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, going in various directions. On these routes, as we did in the United States with the Transcontinental Railroad, the area on either side of the transportation axis becomes immediately, in and of itself, a sustainable area of economic development. Then by that means, you can branch out from the main corridors into subsidiary corridors of development and capture the area.

Therefore, if we conquer this area, what happens? Take transportation alone. People will think today, who don't think, will think that ocean freight is the cheapest way to move freight. It's not true. The cheapest way is across land, but not by truck. Trucks running up and down the highway tell you that the economy is being mismanaged. Too many trucks. It's not efficient, costs too much. It's intrinsically bad.

Railways are much better. Integrated transport systems, featuring railways, especially magnetic levitation systems, are excellent. Magnetic levitation systems

move passengers more rapidly, but magnetic levitation systems for moving cargo, freight, that is really a wonder. That's where the payoff comes. If you can move freight from Rotterdam to Tokyo at an average rate of 300 kilometers per hour, without much stopping along the way, and if for every 100 km of motion across that route, you are generating the creation of wealth through production as a result of the existence

of that corridor, then the cost of moving freight from Rotterdam to Tokyo is less than zero, and can be up to 200-300/km per hour.

Now what ocean freight system can do that? Did you ever see a large supercargo ship producing wealth while travelling across the ocean? And at what speed?

So therefore, we have come to a turning point in technology, which has emerged in the recent period, where the development of the internal landmass of the world and the great typical frontier is Central and North Asia, is the greatest opportunity—it's the greatest single opportunity before all mankind for development.

This requires some revolutionary changes in the way we think about things. This means that we would be engaged in the greatest change in the environment in the history of mankind. This single project, say a 25-year or more development of Central and North Asia in this direction, including the conquest of the tundra. The Arctic tundra is one of the great frontiers to be mastered; it can be done.

That would mean a great change in the environment. How are we going to decide what is good or bad about changing the environment? What people think today about the environment is pretty stupid. It's wrong; it doesn't make any sense; they don't know what they're

talking about. And you see the kind of education they get, it's no wonder they believe that nonsense. Especially people with physics degrees, who don't know which end is up.

The great theory of the environment was established by a Russian of Ukrainian credentials, Vladimir Vernadsky, with his concept of biogeochemistry. The problem is that what you're taught in most universities, and elsewhere, about science is nonsense—it's a damn lie most of it, to put it frankly. What you're taught as basic physics is mostly a lie. Because we know, as Vernadsky demonstrated this in his own way, and as others have known it and shown it, that there are actually three principles involved in man's physical relationship to the Earth and the universe—three, three categories.

Three Principles, Three Categories

One, the category we call non-living processes; what most people who are not well-educated call physical processes. The second one, which some people don't understand, those in molecular biology, they refuse to understand, is called the principle of life. You will never get life out of a non-living process. Life is, as [Louis] Pasteur insisted, a principle unto itself. It's a universal physical principle which, as Vernadsky demonstrated with his biogeochemistry, is that the history of earth is what? The oceans and the atmosphere were produced by living processes, down several kilometers below the Earth's surface. Most of the Earth that we are in touch with as humanity was created was a by-product of living processes, with what Vernadsky calls the "natural products of the biosphere." We can measure it. We can measure the power of the biosphere over the non-living processes. We can measure it!

Living processes are superior to non-living processes; they are more powerful. They are apparently weak, but their long-term effects are more powerful than the short-term effects of the non-living processes.

There is a third thing, which again Kant—Immanuel Kant won't let you know. That's why they call him Kant, because he can't do anything. You believe him; you can't do anything either. The essential nature of man is that we are capable of making discoveries of universal physical principle, discoveries we can validate in known experimental ways. By applying these principles, we increase our power in the universe, in ways that can be measured physically, per capita and

per square kilometer. We can measure this in terms of the demographic effect of this kind of action. That is, does the human species improve its life expectancy, its power to exist in the universe, as a result of this? Yes, it does, that's good. Mankind's primary mastery of nature has occurred in terms of man's mastery and development of the biosphere.

So actually, the biosphere, including what we call basic economic infrastructure such as waterways, power systems, transportation systems, the development of cities, good cities at least—these are natural products of cognition which are reflected as improvements in the biosphere. The biosphere is weak; it is stupid; it does not know how to deal with the deserts it has. It does not know how to deal with the tundras. It does not know how to deal with the other problems it has. But we, as human beings, can come to our poor, stupid slave, the biosphere, and say, "We will educate you and we will make you stronger and better."

So, mankind intervenes in the biosphere, to make the biosphere better. The principles of discovery, the application of the discovery of principles applied to the environment creates natural products of cognition in the biosphere, which improves the biosphere, which increases the potential for human life.

This Is Science

So, this is not a mysterious, arbitrary area. This is an area of science. It's an area of scientific precision, which would mean that the job to do is not to say, is it good or bad to tamper with the environment? It's very good to tamper with the environment if you know what you're doing. But you have to develop the science of water management, the science of transportation, the science of reforestation, the science of how to change and control the atmosphere and the climate.

You can't make big mistakes. These mistakes will live with you for a quarter of a century or more. You can't make big mistakes: Therefore, you have to have competent groups of people making the determination how we do this. But by changing the biosphere of Central and North Asia, and changing the biosphere in the arid areas of China, and so forth, we will create the greatest boom for humanity in any part of this planet.

What we need is a mission-oriented task force to undertake the policy planning for precisely this. And it must be international.