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Human Values "Stock Market"

Investing in "shares" in a "value market" of fundamental principles

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Introduction

There is a strong possibility that human values may tend to be thought about by many in capitalist societies with the same logic and mindset as company stocks and shares. There is therefore a case for exploring those values as though they were "stocks" that could be "traded" --, bought and sold -- on a "value market".

The two kinds of value -- "human" and "economic" -- may be more intimately related than is readily assumed. Economic values may be confused, deliberately or inadvertently, with other values that may be as essential, or more fundamental, to community viability -- as argued by Dee Hock (*Birth of the Chaordic Age*, 1999; *One from Many: VISA and the rise of chaordic organization*, 2005).

Part of the challenge lies in the overlap in terminology between "values" as economic values and those considered to be of psychosocial, even spiritual, importance. For example governments issue "bonds", a term fundamental to social and other bonds considered vital to a sense of relationship and community. There is a sense in which the terminology applicable to "intangible" fundamental human principles, such as "equity", has been appropriated to facilitate descriptions of the specific needs of investment and trading in economic values treated as significantly more "tangible".

This overlap is more consciously explored with respect to [local exchange trading systems](#) (LETS) and [complementary currencies](#) where there is a recognition that economic transactions can underpin community relationships more effectively than monetarized transactions. LETS could be understood more generally as systems for the exchange of community values -- as is the case of such web-based variants as [Friendly Favors](#) and [GiveGet Nation](#). The arguments for use of such systems are not however the immediate concern of the exploration here -- although their specific concerns with the poorly understood operations of the monetary system may well point to insights of more generic significance with respect to human values (cf Margrit Kennedy, *Why Do We Need Monetary Monetary Innovation?* 1995; Richard Douthwaite, *The Ecology of Money*, 1999; [Bernard Lietaer](#), *The Future of Money*, 2001; Thomas H Greco, *Money: understanding and creating alternatives to legal tender*, 2001; Peter Koenig, *30 Lies About Money*, 2003).

In part the following exploration is an effort to determine whether there are insights from the process of trading in values in the financial market arena -- notably in the light of the terminology used -- which are of relevance to understanding the dynamics of society in relation to human principles. It is however also possible that the disciplined thinking devoted worldwide, and so intensively, to the financial markets and their operation might offer insights into forms of thinking that would give greater discipline to thinking about human values and principles -- perhaps with more fruitful implications for the challenges of humanity.

The pattern of thinking with regard to financial values is therefore used here as a form of cognitive template offering a means of tentatively ordering understandings and possibilities with regard to human values. However this is NOT an exploration of possibilities of placing monetary value on human values, as studied in other contexts. Nor is the intent to explore the morality of the marketplace as studied by Daniel Finn (1998, 2003, 2006) [[more more](#)]

More generally this exploration is an effort to address the collective "split personality" that is seemingly so determinative of the dynamics of society -- between preoccupations, on the one hand, with economic values and, on the other hand, with values extolled as exemplifying the best of humanity. The fact that "trillions of dollars" are exchanged daily through various financial markets -- whose benefit to humanity continues to be debated -- suggests a need to explore ways of understanding how human values are (or might be) "traded" or "exchanged" to the greater benefit of humanity.

In clarifying the intent of this exploration, two further potential misunderstandings need to be addressed:

- There is a concern expressed by some that the term "human values" should be understood as referring to the uniquely "positive" and "good" in contrast with other non-monetary "values" which are the reverse, do not meet such standards, or are unfortunately misunderstood by those mistakenly holding them. Although there is no universal consensus in practice, such qualities are held to be non-valuable to society and therefore should not be misrepresented as "values". The purpose here however is to treat any quality that some humans would label as valuable to themselves as "human values", including greed and other qualities (even those held by some to be hindrances to spiritual development). The intention in doing so is to recognize the challenge of a "market" in which people might indeed "trade up" or "trade down" -- reflecting the reality of the psycho-social system rather than a particular human understanding of how it ought to be (with which, in the light of human colonial intervention, extraterrestrials might well disagree!).
- There is a concern expressed that the very nature of the "market" process is incompatible with the emergence of a better society. This argument has been well-expressed by John Raven (*The New Wealth of Nations: a new enquiry into the nature and origins of the wealth of nations and the societal learning arrangements needed for a sustainable society*, 1995) in presenting evidence that: "undermines any lingering faith one might have in the effectiveness of the so-called market process as a means of orchestrating communal action for the common good". Here the confusion lies primarily in the assumed indissoluble relationship between "market" and monetary values. In what follows the whole focus is on the possibility of a non-monetary approach to "trading", as widely experienced in many aspects of human relationship. Raven however recommends: "to develop ways of ensuring that [public servants] seek out, and act on, information in an innovative way in the long term public interest, recognising that, in order to do this, they need to develop and release the know-how, creativity, and initiative of all members of the population in a pervasive climate of innovation". The issue in what follows is how to make such an ideal approach less dependent on "public servants" but to provide processes which could benefit from insights from consideration of the market approach, whether or not the parallel is only of limited relevance.

Virtuality of value: the challenge of intangibility

Concepts such as stocks, shares, companies, property/ownership, and debts are primarily intangibles whose "existence" derives from the social construction of conventional reality. There are various forms of agreement that such phenomena are "real" and this reality is acknowledged in a variety of documents that confer a legal existence to the phenomena through that convention.

Part of the challenge is evident when attempting to view a corporation and its assets. The challenge has been exemplified in endeavouring to explain concepts of "property" to many indigenous peoples -- especially when "ownership" of that property has been acquired from them under treaty. The modern consequences of these difficulties continue to feature in complex legal proceedings on behalf of indigenous peoples in former colonies, notably Canada, New Zealand, Australia, USA (cf *Conclusions and Recommendations of the U.N. Experts Seminar on Indigenous Land Rights and Claims*, 1996; Charlene Yates, *Conceptualising Indigenous Land Rights in the Commonwealth*, Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit, 2004) [[more](#)]

The intangibility of human values -- including virtues and principles -- is more obvious. In terms of modern understanding of chaos, such values may even be described as phenomena of higher dimensionality (cf *Human Values as Strange Attractors: Coevolution of classes of governance principles*, 1993).

There is a case for recognizing the commonality between understandings of "interest" in the economic sphere and the more generic role of any form of "interest" as an attractor. The former is understood as problematic by some religions (as noted above) and by studies promoting [complementary currency systems](#) (cf Margrit Kennedy, *Interest and Inflation Free Money*, 1995), whereas other religions may view any form of interest as a problematic symptom of mundane "attachment" from a mystical perspective. But, irrespective of this spiritual reservation, the issue remains of the relation between "values" and the "interest" they variously evoke, attract because of a subtle reward that they offer -- and how any "market" in such values is to be managed.

Curiously, there is a degree of overlap between the domain of economic values and that of human values. This is exemplified in several cases:

- **"Goodwill" in accounting practice:** Considerable importance attached in the financial market to intangible notions of "confidence" and "trust", especially as they affect "credibility". More curious still is the recognition of "goodwill" in accounting

terms -- as one of the assets of a corporation that may figure in the balance sheet of a business.

- **"Selling indulgences" by religions:** Priesthoods throughout history have tended to be open to intercession with divinity in exchange for temporal goods. Historically considerable controversy was created by what became known as the "[sale of indulgences](#)" -- leading to the Protestant separation from the Roman Catholic Church [more]. By an indulgence (indulgentia) is understood "the extra-sacramental remission of the temporal punishment of sin remaining after the forgiveness of the guilt of sin." Penance was initially to be achieved through the performance of certain good works such as fasting, the recitation of certain prayers, pilgrimages, or alms. From the 14th century, partial substitution of money gifts for works of mercy and charity was accepted. In 1517, Pope Leo X offered indulgences for those who gave alms to rebuild St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, a situation that took on the appearance of "selling indulgences." The aggressive marketing practices of Johann Tetzel in promoting this cause provoked Martin Luther to protest what he saw as the purchase and sale of salvation. Concern has been expressed at the revival by Pope John Paul II of the practice of earning indulgences (cf Arthur Noble. *The Resurrection of Indulgences or Is Tetzel really dead?* European Institute of Protestant Studies, 1999)
- **Purchasing status:**
 - **Purchasing titles of nobility:** Nobility may be considered an intangible value. The acquisition of aristocratic titles by purchase has always been a possibility under certain conditions, dependent on jurisdiction [more more more]. The sale of such titles is also recognized as subject to hoaxes and scams.
 - **Honours-for cash:** In the process of fund raising for political parties, one strategy, used notably in the UK, has been to provide honours (in that case peerages) in exchange for donations or loans [more | more]
 - **Purchasing academic degrees:** The quality recognized by academic accreditation may be purchased under certain conditions. There is an extensive market in academic degrees (notably online), much of it (through so-called "diploma mills") considered to be fraudulent [more more]
- **Subversion of democratic values**
 - **Votes for cash:** The purchase of electoral votes, whether in parliamentary bodies or in international organizations, has long been a widespread practice [more | more | more]
 - **Cash-for-questions:** This is the procedure whereby lobbyists pay parliamentary representatives to ask questions that will advance their special cause [more]

The nature of intangibility has even been provocatively highlighted in relation to the "existence" of a "person" by Kenneth Boulding (*Ecodynamics; a new theory of societal evolution*. Sage, 1978)

Our consciousness of the unity of the self in the middle of a vast complexity of images or material structures is at least a suitable metaphor for the unity of a group, organization, department, discipline, or science. If personification is only a metaphor, let us not despise metaphors -- we might be one ourselves.

Equivalence of value-related intangibles?

In what follows below some possible implications of equivalence are explored between intangibles in the financial world and in the world of human values and principles. An overview is provided by some of the parallels highlighted in the following table.

Comparison of financial securities and human values	
Financial securities	Human values
Company: asset / liability	Value (liability)
Stocks	Values, principles
Stockholders	Subscription <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • signatories • memberships • journal
Stockholders Association	Association <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • memberships • voters
Broker	Mediator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DJs
Financial analyst	
Share issue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking it up 	Promotional campaign <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking it up
Credit, credibility (Standard and Poors)	Credibility
Transaction (buying, selling)	Subscribing (lapsing, resigning)
Value fluctuation	Value fluctuation (shifting priorities)

Key human value "stocks" or "shares"

Some human values that might be considered obvious key "stocks" include:

- Love

- Peace
- Democracy
- Justice
- Freedom
- Courage
- Equality

As an example, a more limited set of "chief human values" (identified with associated sub-values) is given in a clarifying discussion by Robert Priddy (*In What May Human Values Consist?*, 1993/2003) as: Truth, Care, Peace, Duty, Justice. A number of efforts have been made to present key values (eg Copthorne Macdonald, *Values That Various People Have Associated With Wisdom*).

The distinction between such fundamental values and others is helpfully made by C H Cooley (*Valuation as a Social Process. The Psychological Bulletin*, 9, 12, December 1912).

The objects possessing... values differ greatly from age to age, but the tests which are applied to them are fundamentally much the same, because the organism from which they spring is much the same.... Such values are as various as human nature itself and may be differentiated and classified in a hundred ways. There are some in which particular senses are the conspicuous factors, as auditory and gustatory values. Others spring from the social sentiments, like the values of social self-feeling which underlie conformity, and the values of love, fear, ambition, honor and loyalty. Closely related to these are the more universal religious and moral values, which, however, are usually entangled with institutional values of a more transient and special character. The same may be said of scientific, philosophical and ethical values, and great achievement in any of these fields depends mainly on the creation of values which are such for human nature, and not merely for some transient institutional point of view.

The "key stocks" -- as "global values" -- may be understood as analogous to **"blue chip" stocks**. That term is used to describe large, well-known companies that offer stable earnings and a consistent dividend record. Blue-chip companies are reputed to be reliable investments. There would be little question that the above values are typically recognized as reliable "investments" -- as extolled in much traditional wisdom as well as in stories for children.

Recent political initiatives by social or religious conservatives in some countries have stressed a particular set of core values termed **"family values"** which might also be considered as "blue chip" stocks. As a political and social concept, the term is used to describe a set of moral beliefs in society specifically in response to the perception of declining morality. The term is vague in its precise definition because of the overlapping and distinct understandings of those proposing such a set of values.

However, just what "dividend" and "investment" mean in this context needs to be clarified further -- as with "stocks" and "shares".

"Portfolios" of human values -- and "mutual funds"?

A **portfolio** is collection of investments held by an institution or by a private individual, typically in the form of stocks and shares.

It could be argued that many social groups, especially political parties, hold "portfolios" of human values as "stocks" -- occasionally "trading" in them. In the case of groups, the formality of holding "stocks" in this way is evident in the manner in which they are embodied into the statutes and constitutions of such bodies -- or additionally into the manifestos and declarations to which they subscribe. There it is typically declared what principles the group "holds" to be true or intends to cultivate in some way. Those "truths" tend to be values, namely "stocks" in the sense explored here. This may usefully apply to the values of a nation as embodied in its constitution.

Intergovernmental "value portfolios": Declarations, manifestations, and especially a constitution, may therefore be understood as a kind of "portfolio" of stocks -- a set of values to which nations that are members of an intergovernmental group subscribe. "Portfolios" of values of major international importance are those embodied in universal declarations such as the following:

- *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* -- effectively "managed" by the United Nations
- *European Convention on Human Rights* -- effectively "managed" by the Council of Europe
- *Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam* -- effectively "managed" by the **Organization of the Islamic Conference**
- *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union* -- "managed" by the European Union
- *American Convention on Human Rights* -- effectively "managed" by the **Organization of American States**

There are of course numerous other intergovernmental declarations, some of whose principles are embodied into treaties, for example:

1. *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* -- effectively "managed" by UNICEF
2. **ILO Conventions** (of which 8 are identified as **fundamental**) -- effectively "managed" by the International Labour Organization

Mutual funds: Portfolios of stocks in companies, as managed by a **mutual fund**, suggest some interesting similarities to the above "management" of human values. In the case of stocks:

- **Mutual fund**: This is a collective investment scheme, operated by an investment company, that typically pools money from shareholders (investors) to be invested in stocks, bonds, options, commodities or money market securities. The fund may group investments held across asset classes (stocks, bonds, real estate, gold) or within the same asset class (such as stocks across companies and industries).
- **Family of funds**: This is a group of mutual funds managed by the same investment management company. Each fund typically

has a different objective (eg growth-oriented stock fund, a bond fund, or money market fund). Shareholders in one of the funds may be able to reallocate their money into any of the family's other funds, possibly at no cost. A family of funds with no charges are called no-load families in contrast with so-called load families.

Religions as value fund managers: Of particular interest is the role of religions -- as special kinds of value-holding groups -- in relation to any such "portfolios" or "mutual funds". In the search, through inter-faith dialogue, for a [global ethic](#) (cf *Towards a Global Ethic: An Initial Declaration*, 1993), religions have named many values that they claim to share.

Religions are however assiduous in identifying in their scriptures where their sets of values are explicated (Joel Beversluis (Ed.) *A Sourcebook for the Earth's Community of Religions*, 1993/1995).

Nevertheless each religion could be understood as similar to a mutual fund, managing sets of values, whether or not they are shared by other religions. Indeed there is a sense in which religions manage their particular portfolios "competitively" -- in a manner somewhat similar to managers of mutual funds. As with mutual funds, religions strive to demonstrate to their "investors" better "performance" than may be achieved with their competitors. This is also evident in their attitude towards members of the religion "investing" in the values of another religion, which typically is the subject of strong disapproval, possibly undertaken at some considerable cost in terms of social penalization (cf "load families" in the case of mutual funds).

In relation to operations of the financial market, such shifts in the pattern of religious values to which individuals (or groups) subscribe is of particular interest to the degree to which such financial transactions are considered:

- **compatible**, notably with respect to religious views on "interest", defined prejudicially by some religions as [usury](#) (cf the concerns of Islamic banking). Of far greater concern, as noted above, is the "investment" in the values of another religion (framed contemptuously as "shopping around") or, considered even more problematic, termination of "investment" in any religious values
- **comparable**, namely the existence of any meaningful parallel between management of economic values and the management of religious values, especially such challenging notions as "trading", the "fluctuation" of values over time, or "dividends" to be derived from appropriate "investment". The latter notion is of course to be found in the long-term perspective of the rewards in the "after life" for leading a "good life", holding to religious values, Buddhists are notably sensitive to the accumulation of "[merit](#)" in this life, to be rewarded through the processes of karma in subsequent lives.

Of particular historical interest to any parallel between a "market" of financial operations and one of religious values is the implication of the much-cited biblical account of [Jesus ejecting the "money changers"](#) from the Temple in Jerusalem (*Matthew 21:12*) -- because of the exploitation by such money-brokers of pilgrims required to exchange coins bearing a foreign image for Temple coinage in order to purchase animals for sacrifice there [[more](#)]. This account has been cited in protesting the "sale of indulgences" (as discussed above). Ironically this exchange of funds for remission of sins (understood as negative values) originated in the same period as (but prior to) the issue of shares by the Dutch East India Company in 1602 -- the first company to do so.

Secular management of value funds: In contrast to value funds "managed" by religions or by intergovernmental bodies, there are numerous sets of values managed by other bodies. In direct competition with the religious management of values, for example, are the initiatives of humanistic bodies, such as the [International Humanist and Ethical Union](#), which have produced the *Fundamental Values of Humanism* [[more](#)].

An interesting initiative was taken on the occasion of the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992 to assemble a set of *NGO Alternative Treaties* covering values relating to education, communication, cooperation, economics, consumption, poverty, food, subsistence, climate, energy, waste, land, natural resources, marine issues, biodiversity and biotechnology, as well as cross-sectoral issues.

More generally it might be understood that many of the 30,000 or more international nongovernmental organizations, or their regional counterparts, effectively act as managers for "mutual funds" of values corresponding to their particular field of interest (cf *Yearbook of International Organizations*). As "mutual funds" these may be considered as competing on value "performance" with those of intergovernmental bodies and religions.

The regular meetings of many of these bodies, such as "annual general meetings", could then also be understood as analogous to meetings of shareholders in a company -- at which the value performance of the managers of the particular mutual fund is assessed (cf the 8,000 future international meetings held annually as identified in the *International Congress Calendar*).

Of particular interest is the extent to which academic and other disciplines, as represented through their professional bodies, may be understood as managing -- effectively as "guardians" -- a "fund of values" and principles understood to be associated with that discipline. An important distinction is however to be made between:

- values intrinsic to the discipline, however this is understood (scientific values, artistic values, engineering values, sporting values, ecological values, etc)
- values arising from a sense of wider social responsibility of the discipline, namely completely undefinable within that discipline or profession, as with:
 - ethical guidelines
 - [mathematics](#)
 - [biomedical research](#)
 - [chemistry](#)
 - [statistics](#)
 - [oral history](#)
 - [comparative social science](#)
 - [chemical engineering](#)

- [social anthropology](#)
- [direct marketing](#)
- social responsibility
 - [science](#)
 - [engineers](#)
 - [educators](#)
 - [physicians \[more\]](#)
 - [behaviourists](#)
 - [psychologists](#)
 - [computer professionals \[more\]](#)
 - [architects / designers / planners](#)

Ethical funds: Recent years have seen the emergence in relation to the financial market of "ethical investment" or "[socially responsible investing](#)" (SRI), namely investing by both financial and social criteria. This should not however be confused with "[value investing](#)", a term applied to a technique of financial investing in shares (articulated by Warren Buffet) that appear underpriced by some forms of fundamental analysis (cf Geoff Gannon, *What Is Value Investing?* *Investnewz*, May 2006). There are many bodies with a focus on ethical investment. Terms such as "social fund" and "social investing" have also emerged [[more](#)].

A global ethical dimension to business has been promoted through the [United Nations Global Compact](#) as an initiative to encourage businesses worldwide, notably multinational corporations, to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies, and to report on them in the light of [ten principles](#). Again this initiative could be understood as a "mutual fund" seeking to manage value performance in relation to a portfolio of principles.

It should however be stressed that **the concern in what follows is not with investments on the financial stock market that are evaluated according to ethical criteria but rather with the extent to which human (ethical) values may be understood as constituting a form of "stock market" in their own right** -- independent of any relation to financial values.

Psychic income?

One useful conventional lead is offered by understandings from the business world of "psychic income" -- the subjective value of nonmonetary satisfaction gained from an activity, possibly an "implicit revenue" associated with an economic transaction. This is income in a non-monetary form, gratifying psychological and emotional needs. In the business world, power, prestige, recognition, and fame are all considered to be forms of psychic income. From a marketing perspective, it relates to the intangible benefits above and beyond the utilitarian value derived from a conventional purchase -- including the improvement in a consumer's self image as a result of purchasing certain highly desirable products.

"Psychic income" refers to what motivates people other than money, such as respect, recognition, challenge, love of the work itself, opportunity for autonomy, location in a particular community, name of the prestigious institution for a resume, technologies that make work less drudgery, flexible hours, etc. therefore, the full income is the combination of wages and psychic income of the working conditions.

Colin F. Camerer and Ulrike Malmendier (*Behavioral Organizational Economics*, 2004) analyze how behavioral economics can be applied to organizations, and how it can be enriched by thinking about the economic questions associated with economic organization. For the authors, behavioral economics modifies the standard economic model to account for psychophysical properties of preference and judgment, which create limits on rational calculation, willpower and greed. Their modified economics theory aims at providing parsimonious and psychologically sound explanations for empirical findings that the standard model has a tough time explaining. They stress, for example, that "psychic income matters", and may be tied to psychological factors like perceived appreciation:

The basic risk-incentive model divides the worker's world into efforts they dislike, and rewards they like. It is convenient to talk about wages as rewards because they are easily measured, and don't satiate. But people are motivated by many other types of non-pecuniary 'psychic income' as well.... Psychologists' synonym for psychic income is 'intrinsic motivation' -- the satisfaction a worker gets from work for its own sake. An interesting phenomenon documented in psychology is the possibility that extrinsic incentives like money can 'crowd out' or extinguish intrinsic motivation.

Christopher J Coyne and Peter T Leeson (*How do Rulers Choose? Dual domains of discretion in political decision making*) offer an extensive discussion, with evidence, of the role of psychic income in political decision-making (points also echoed in another paper by Benjamin Powell and Christopher J Coyne, *Do Pessimistic Assumptions About Human Behavior Justify Government?* Global Prosperity Initiative, Working Paper 19). They argue:

The nature of psychic income is such that the outside observer is unable to assign, a priori, specific characteristics that constitute psychic income for the ruler. The psychic component of income is solely in the mind of the actor and hence cannot be measured. Some rulers may place value on being altruistic and truly attempt to serve the interests of their constituents... Others may value their reputation and legacy and act in manner to promote and accomplish these goals. It is most likely due the difficulty in quantifying psychic income that the notion has largely been excluded from analyses of the actions of rulers. Despite difficulties in quantification, we see a plethora of examples of actions taken by rulers that cannot be explained by the standard rent-seeking models.

Milan Zafirovski (*Human Rational Behavior and Economic Rationality*, *Electronic Journal of Sociology*, 2003) argues that the rational behavior of human agents is far from being invariably utility- and profit-optimizing, and thus cannot be automatically reduced to economic rationality. His main argument is that behavior can be rational not only on economic grounds but also on non-economic ones. Hence human behavior can be non-rational in economic and yet rational in extra-economic terms, i.e. economically irrational and non-economically rational. He points out:

One can argue... that while measuring psychic-income concepts like happiness is not as clear as the measurement of purely economic utility, they also can be measured. Arguably, though happiness or psychic income is relative and cannot be as precisely quantified as money income, it might be to a degree and in the same way concepts like social prestige can be numerically measured. Researchers in sociology and social psychology have been measuring prestige for some time thus making this concept at least an ordinal-level variable, though it is a subjective measure based on group judgments.... For psychic income simply does not add up to money income -- and often vice versa -- and to that extent to utility in any sensible sense.... As egoist's utility or money income seems of a qualitative different kind to that of the altruist or psychic income, it is highly questionable to subsume under the same category, i.e., utility optimization, even satisficing, what are essentially different types of behavior, such as egoism and altruism, status and wealth, political power and profit, and the like. In addition, these types of income are quantitatively incomparable and incommensurable...

Zafirovski is however careful in pointing out the fallacy of treating psychic income (especially in the light of its acknowledged importance in behaviour) merely as an extension of economic thinking:

...for psychological, ideal and other cultural phenomena are simply not what economists term income, profit, capital, and the like. In this sense, the term psychic income appears as an oxymoron reflecting the above fallacy, or at best an easy analogy and mere metaphor; this *mutatis mutandis* applies to similar pseudo-economic terms, including political profit, income, capital, exchange, or markets, etc.

Insights from terminology: stocks, shares, bonds and securities

In economic practice, stocks, shares and bonds are formalizations of notions of mutual confidence in the [social construction of reality](#). With respect to human values, they are as fundamental as the process of "sharing" and the resultant pattern of "shares" -- recognized even by small children faced with the challenge of subdivision of resources (whether equitably or with "preferential" allocation of resources to older siblings or more respected "gang" members).

In this context, the analogue to the "stocks" typical of the economic market (especially the [commodities market](#)) is that of "setting stock by", namely by a valued standard of reference. With respect to "commodities", these might be understood in the sense of the set of things which are commodious or appropriate -- an old sense of "commodities". Again "bonds" outside the economic market reflect an understanding of a strong relationship, typical of kinship, team and tribal bonds -- and of elective affinities. A similar point could clearly be made with respect to "securities" (physical, affective, or otherwise) .

What is it then possible to learn about "investing" in human values, and from the process of sharing, given the understandings and distinctions made with regard to "financial instruments" and their distribution?

How do people "share" an investment in a value? *Comments with respect to human values are given in italics.*

- **Shares (Stocks):** These are units of account, or equity ownership, with respect to various financial instruments including stocks, mutual funds, or limited partnerships. In the case of a company, a share is one of a finite number of equal portions in the capital of a company. The word stock may refer specifically to a bond (eg in the UK). It can also be used more widely to refer to all kinds of marketable securities. *As noted above, people and groups may subscribe to human values but the only quantitative measure of their share would then be in terms of amounts of money allocated or number of petitioners.*
 - **Share issue:** More generally, for a corporation, the stock is the capital raised by a corporation, through the issuance and distribution of shares. *Group articulation and promotion of a declaration or manifesto, or even the formation of an organization or the publication of a periodical, may be considered to correspond to a "value issue" analogous to a "share issue". These are effectively all invitations to subscribe to the associated values.*
 - **Dividends:** Shares entitle the owner to a proportion of distributed, non-reinvested profits, known as dividends, and to a portion of the value of the company in case of liquidation. *As noted earlier, dividends are an indication of the sense of reward derived from subscribing to the values, whether in the short, medium or longer-term. It could possibly be understood as a form of "psychic interest" in the light of understandings of psychic income.*

A shareholder is then any person or organization which holds shares, or fractions of shares, of a corporation's stock. *Those subscribing to a value, or set of values, may be described as value shareholders.*

There are several types of share:

- **Ordinary shares (Common stock):** This is the most common form of share. Shares can be voting or non-voting, meaning they either do or do not carry the right to vote on the board of directors and corporate policy. Whether this right

exists often affects the value of the share. Holders may receive dividends in line with the company's profitability and recommendation of its directors. *In the case of human values, these could be considered as the ordinary subscribers to a value. As such they clearly have some right to speak to the value and in its name. They may receive some notional reward for doing so -- if only in the form of self-satisfaction. They may be rewarded to a greater degree if duly recognized by those claiming to manage relevant value funds. Examples include the recognition accorded by the Right Livelihood Foundation, and other such awards, notably those for outstanding performance or courage (as medals, for example).*

- **Preference shares (Preferred stock):** Although normally fixed-income shares, compared with common stock, these stocks enjoy a number of preferences, such as a higher dividend and preferential payment of dividends (before ordinary shareholders). In return, however, preferred stocks generally do not have voting rights at the Annual Shareholders' Meeting. They may have enhanced voting rights such as the ability to veto mergers or acquisitions or the right of first refusal when new shares are issued (i.e. the holder of the preferred stock can buy as much as they want before the stock is offered to others). *In the case of human values, these may be associated with the exemplars of such a value. There is a process whereby those ordinary value shareholders who are widely recognized are then treated preferentially, if not deferentially, in relation to the values for which they are exemplars. Laureates of the Nobel Peace Prize are an example of those who effectively become the equivalent of preference shareholders.*
- **Treasury stock:** These are shares that have been bought back from the public. Such stock is considered issued but not outstanding. *This suggests the existence of an interesting process in relation to values.*
- **Multiple class:** In this case there are several classes of shares (for example Class A, Class B, and Class C) each with its own advantages and disadvantages. *This suggests the existence of an interesting equivalent in relation to values.*

The number of issued and outstanding shares for the specified security may be used in the calculation of index values. *An equivalent is to be seen in the methods used in various value surveys.*

- **Bonds (Bills or Notes):** These are any interest bearing or discounted government or corporate securities that obligate the issuer to pay the bondholder a specified sum of money, usually at specific intervals, and to repay the principal amount of the loan at maturity. A bond is therefore a debt security, in which the issuer owes the holders a debt and is obliged to repay the principal and interest (the coupon). A bond is just a loan, but in the form of a security, although terminology used is rather different. Bonds enable the issuer to finance long-term investments with external funds. *From a human values perspective, given the special relation to government, the equivalent to a bond would seem to be intimately related to the values embodied in any social contract through which the integrity of the collectivity is defined.*
 - **Bond issue:** They are issued by governments and companies as a means of raising capital. The issuer is equivalent to the borrower, the bond holder to the lender and the coupon to the interest. *Governments can be understood to promulgate new values in seeking support and commitment from their populations. People may then respond by effectively lending such commitment for a period typically specified in the promise made by government at the time. This is most obvious in the case of the values associated with plans promoted by government for 5 or 10 years or more.*
 - **Interest:** This generally entitles the holder to a fixed-rate of interest during the life of the bond and to repayment of the amount of the bond at maturity. *In the value case, the bond holder may be said to benefit in a continuous manner throughout the life of the bond -- in the expectation of eventually recovering the investment. As noted above, criticism of "interest" by some religions and in the promotion of complementary currencies may suggest richer and more sustainable possibilities.*
 - **Price:** The market price of a bond depends on the coupon rate, the market interest rate and the number of years to maturity. Bond prices are inversely related to interest rates. *The price of a value bond can be explored in the light of understandings of examples such as the price of friendship, the price of peace, the price of freedom, etc*
 - **Conditions:** Other stipulations may also be attached to the bond issue, such as the obligation for the issuer to provide certain information to the bond holder, or limitations on the behaviour of the issuer. *In the case of values, both parties may indeed impose conditions on any value bond. In some cultures, saving a life may create a special binding obligation on the person saved. The obligations associated with the Japanese concept of giri offers an interesting example.*
 - **Maturity period (or date):** This is the life of a bond or security, namely the date on which the principal amount of a bond is to be paid in full. Bonds are generally issued for a fixed term (the maturity) longer than one year (whereas stocks may be outstanding indefinitely). A bond usually ranges from 5 to 15 years but a few government bonds may even have a lifespan of 25 to 50 years. Debt securities with a maturity shorter than one year are typically bills. **Perpetual bonds (Perpetuities)** have no maturity date, some are still traded having been issued in the 19th century. Some ultra long-term bonds will only mature in the 24th century with a principal currently valued near zero. *The period of a value bond is most evident in interpersonal relationships, notably friendships or those partnerships with even greater commitment -- notably those involving membership in groups whose role takes precedence over that of government (eg secret societies). The commitment at marriage, for example, may be "until death do us part" (notably the commitment made by nuns in their "marriage" with Christ). Some bonds may even be understood to be "eternal". In some cultures, certain bonds may be*

understood to have been undertaken in previous incarnations -- or as having existed "forever". For the religious, the maturity of a bond with any form of deity may be associated with processes of reward associated with notions of heaven (eg "sitting on the right hand of God"). In a secular context, the maturity of value bonds associated with government commitment may be presented as closely related to notions of benefits for a person's "grandchildren", or "the next generation"

There are many kinds of bond:

- **Fixed rate bonds:** These have a coupon that guarantees a fixed interest throughout the life of the bond. *In the value case, this may perhaps best be understood in terms of the constancy of friendship or of the support offered by a community. In Japan, this is even clearer in the constant support offered by a corporate environment. A degree of equivalence in the West may be found in the possibly life-long support offered by an institutionalized environment (eg a government bureaucracy, academic tenure systems, or the military)*
- **High yield bonds:** These are bonds that are rated below investment-grade securities by the **credit rating agencies**. As these bonds are relatively risky, investors expect to earn a higher yield. They are considered to be "speculative" because the issuing company's ability to meet the debt obligations is less certain. These bonds are popularly known as **junk bonds**. *Equivalents in the value case are to be found in relation to the bond created with those issuing any form of prediction or prophecy. This may range from the "high yield" offered by marginal or alternative political parties to the "end-times" scenarios offered by religious fundamentalists. They may include predictions offered by doom-mongers (peak oil, asteroids, etc), conspiracy theorists, or channellers. Although such bonds offer a higher "yield" in psychological benefit, the fact that the commitment to them may prove unfounded also leads to them being rated by the mainstream analysts as "speculative" and "junk".*
- **Floating rate notes (FRN's):** These bonds have a coupon that is linked to a **money market index**, such as **LIBOR** or **EURIBOR**. The coupon is then reset periodically, normally every three months. *The money market, in the value case, may be understood as a measure of general confidence. Clearly there is a case for exploring the manner in which the psychic yield on certain types of bond may be periodically adjusted in relation to general levels of confidence rather than being independent of it.*
- **Zero coupon bonds:** These bonds do not pay any interest. They trade at a substantial discount from **par value**. The bond holder receives the full principal amount as well as value that has accrued on the redemption date. Such bonds may be created from fixed rate bonds by financial institutions by "stripping off" the coupons. In other words, the coupons are separated from the final principal payment of the bond and traded independently. *In the value case many bonds may be of this form, postponing any reward in the light of a promise of a final recompense commensurate with the original value commitment, plus that for the intervening period. Parents may promote such value bonds. Notable examples are however those bonds promoted on the basis of spiritual values explicitly based on non-expectation of "earthly" rewards -- recompense being associated with the afterlife.*
- **Inflation linked bonds:** With these bonds, the principal amount is indexed to inflation. The interest rate is lower than for fixed rate bonds with a comparable maturity. However, as the principal amount grows, the payments increase with inflation. The UK was the first to issue inflation linked **Gilts** in the 1980s. **Treasury Inflation-Protected Securities (TIPS)** and **I-bonds** are examples of inflation linked bonds issued by the USA. *In the value case, the bonds would bear some resemblance to the points made above with respect to floating rate notes.*
- **Subordinated bonds:** These bonds have a lower priority than other bonds of the issuer in case of **liquidation**. In case of bankruptcy, there is a hierarchy of creditors. First the **liquidator** is paid, then government taxes, etc. The first bond holders in line to be paid are those holding what is called senior bonds. After they have been paid, the subordinated bond holders are paid. As a result, the risk is higher. Therefore, subordinated bonds usually have a lower credit rating than senior bonds. The main examples of subordinated bonds can be found in bonds issued by banks, and asset-backed securities. The latter are often issued in **tranches**. The senior tranches get paid back first, the subordinated tranches later. *This form of bond is particularly worth exploring in the value case in the event of any form of default in the light of any sense in which value bonds may have been prioritized -- or may need to be prioritized. Especially agonizing examples are provided in emergency situations in which a parent may have to choose which of two children to save -- some religions may prioritize an unborn child over the mother where only one can survive a problematic birth process. More generally this is related to the value challenges of any process of triage. Examples at a planetary level may be seen in choices effectively made between developing and industrialized countries, or between humans and other species.*
- **Bearer bond:** This is an official certificate issued without a named holder. In other words, the person who has the paper certificate can claim the value of the bond. Often they are registered by a number to prevent counterfeiting, but may be traded like cash. Bearer bonds are very risky because they can be lost or stolen. *A value equivalent is an obligation to an unidentified party, perhaps most simply illustrated by a blind date.*
- **Securities:** A general term signifying an instrument of ownership position in a company (a share), a creditor relationship with a company or government body (a bond), or rights to ownership such as those represented by an option, subscription right or subscription warrant. Bonds and stocks are both securities, but the difference is that stock holders own a part of the issuing

company (have an equity stake), whereas bond holders are in essence lenders to the issuer. *Understood in this general sense, value securities essentially describe the pattern of value relationships in which a person or a group is embedded -- relationships which are effectively a source of security. Security in this sense may range from physical, through affective, mental, or spiritual forms. As such it may include cultural, philosophical and epistemological variants.*

- **Gilt-edged securities (Gilts):** Debt securities issued on behalf of a government. *In a value sense, it is in these forms of security that the highest level of confidence are placed. They are values promulgated and sustained by a system of governance, whether this is associated with a country, a local authority, a religion, or some other authoritative body. It could be argued that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (as managed by the UN) offers a selection of such core values (although omitting many that are promoted from a more transcendental governance perspective by religions, as presented in the Global Ethic). Interesting cases are provided by ideological movements and schools of thought (eg communism, capitalism, the military) especially when confidence in them is lost.*
- **Asset-backed securities:** These are bonds whose interest and principal payments are backed by underlying cash flows from other assets. Examples of asset-backed securities are **mortgage-backed securities (MBS)**, **collateralized mortgage obligations (CMO)** and **collateralized debt obligations (CDO)**.

From stock exchanges to "value markets" and "value exchanges"?

(As above, the possible equivalent with respect to human values is indicated in italics)

The so-called **capital market** is the market for securities (thus also known as the securities market), where companies and government can raise long-term funds. The **stock market** and the **bond market** are parts of the capital market. A distinction is made within the capital market between the **primary market** where new issues are distributed to investors, and the **secondary market**, where existing securities are traded. Note that an **Alternative Investments Market (AIM)** has been created as a sub-market of the London Stock Exchange, to allow smaller companies to float shares with a more flexible regulatory system.

In the case of human values, the notion of "capital" is perhaps best understood through terms such as "moral capital", "ethical capital", "spiritual capital", "emotional capital", or "intellectual capital". Fundamentally, as in the financial case, it is a question of the credibility on which confidence is built to enable the establishment of sustainable relationships (for whatever period viable transactions are required). The challenge of "raising capital" is thus one of raising confidence through various forms of presentation and promotion that provide a sense of security. The process of "talking it up" is as meaningful in the financial markets as it is with respect to the promotion of other forms of credibility -- for example in the motivation of soldiers going into battle. The distinction in the values case between stocks and bonds has been made earlier. But clearly a distinction can also be made between a "primary market" through which new values are offered and a "secondary market" through which existing values are appreciated or depreciated.

The capital market can be contrasted with other financial markets through which various forms of economic value are exchanged::

- the **money market** which deals in short term liquid assets. It is the financial market for short-term borrowing and lending, typically up to thirteen months. This contrasts with the capital market for longer-term funds. *The points to a possible contrast in the values case between short-term values and longer-term values -- especially how they are called upon in practice. A distinction can indeed be made between short-term value-based thinking and that based on more en during values.*
- the **foreign exchange (currency or forex or FX) market** exists wherever one currency is traded for another. It is by far the largest market. *The human value equivalent is especially interesting since it points to the daily need for transactions across the interface between the different sets of values typical of different "cultures" (exemplified by languages, ethnic groups, age and gender, disciplines, etc). In particular it highlights the challenge of "convertible" and "non-convertible" value currencies -- which are the bane of many communication processes. But also of great interest is the manner transactions can be handled where a much appreciated value within one culture has little (or no) value in another culture (or vice versa).*
- the **commodity market** for which trading facilities are provided through so-called commodity exchanges specializing in future contracts on commodities
- the **derivatives market** deals in derivative contracts typically traded on a **futures exchange** (also termed a futures and options exchange, rather than a derivatives exchange) which is managed by a corporation or mutual organization (see **checklist**). This form of exchange developed from commodity exchanges through the addition of other products such as short term interest rates or bonds. In addition to futures contracts, they now include trading on options, options on futures, and other varieties. The method of trading is called exchange trading, as opposed to over-the-counter (OTC) trading. The term derivatives may lead to confusion, as most derivatives are traded OTC, and most derivatives, such as swaps are rarely exchange traded. *This points to an interesting way of framing reflection on future value-based "contracts" -- especially future relationships (where emphasis may be placed on "options") between groups, and notably between individuals. In the case of religious values, there is of course a case for examining the performance of a portfolio of values, such as "heaven" or "hell", as an ultimate understanding of "futures" .*
- the **insurance market**. *In the case of values, this facility raises the question of how to insure against value-related risks*

Stock exchanges (see [checklist](#)) tend to have the following characteristics:

- **Access to capital:** An exchange provides access to capital and facilitates securities dealing through speedy and innovative trading platforms and services. *As framed in the case of human values, the credibility of a value is achieved through various contexts that can be understood as analogous to a stock exchange. Groups, especially international organizations (cf [Yearbook of International Organizations](#)), can be understood as performing exactly this function of collectively determining the worth of values in relation to each other. Some organizations of this kind are actually set up as exchanges (or federations of exchanges), as for example:*

- *International Petroleum Exchange*
- *World Federation of Exchanges*
- *Union of Arab Stock Exchanges*
- *Asian and Oceanian Stock Exchanges Federation*
- *Asian Regional Exchange for New Alternatives*
- *European Commodities Exchange*
- *Global Exchange for Social Investment*

Ironically the trading room of stock exchanges is not too different architecturally from the plenary conference room of such bodies -- where values are debated and prioritized through a voting process (possibly even an electronic one). Of course, as with electronic stock market trading, increasingly values may be said to be traded virtually through electronic fora and the like. More generally it may be said that, in the case of values, the role of a stock exchange is performed in part by the role of the media in changing appreciation of a value -- but possibly only to the same degree as it constitutes an extension of the financial stock exchange, namely without obviating the need for contexts in which values can effectively be traded. It is possible however that electronic fora and blogs may dramatically modify this in the case of human value trading.

- **Market stabilization :** As an organization, an exchange ensures an orderly marketplace (whether physical or virtual) for trading shares, where investors (represented by stock brokers) may buy and sell shares in a wide range of companies. *In the case of human values, many international bodies would argue that an important reason for their creation is to be stabilize the set of values that are the core of their membership. Their regular meetings offer an orderly environment for this process although increasingly aspects of that process are handled through virtual conferences hosted by the organizations.*
- **Listing requirements:** A given company will usually list its shares in only one exchange by meeting and maintaining the listing requirements of that particular stock exchange. *An analogous situation may exist in the relationship between an international organization and its members. Many organizations have (often stringent) criteria for membership. Some organizations may even oppose adherence of a member to another body and may limit the number of members from a single country*
- **Inter-market quotation:** Through an inter-market quotation system, stocks listed on one exchange may also be bought or sold on several other exchanges, including relatively new internet-only exchanges. This is done to broaden their investor base. *It is typical of many values that they are the subject of debate in many different national, regional and international fora. Whilst particular values may be differently appreciated in each, the valuation made may well be communicated between such contexts -- effectively an "inter-market" system of quotation which may indeed be accelerated through electronic fora.*
- **Pricing discrepancies between exchanges:** Although it makes sense for some companies to raise capital by offering stock on more than one exchange, with electronic trading, there is little opportunity for private investors to make profit on pricing discrepancies between one stock exchange and another. As such, arbitrage opportunities disappear almost immediately due to the efficient nature of the market. *Clearly in the case of human values, where there is no unique value currency (or equivalent to the dollar), values will be differently appreciated in different contexts. These discrepancies may well be exploited.*

In the human values case, it would appear that there is a strong argument for exploring how the many nonprofit organizations and their conferences effectively function as "value exchanges" -- whether at the local, national, regional or international level, and whether they are (inter)governmental or nongovernmental. As with stock markets, such bodies are the contexts in which:

- new values are "issued" with an associated promotional process, amplified by media involvement
- values are appreciated or depreciated (to the point of rejection) relative to each other, through a trading process by which they are prioritized
- value brokers are recognized, accredited or discredited

Assemblies of religious bodies may also be understood in this light, and especially when convened for inter-faith dialogue. In this respect there is considerable irony to the fact that the centennial of the [Parliament of the World's Religions](#) (Chicago, 1993), with its core Assembly of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, was held in the former Chicago Stock Exchange (cf [Learnings for the Future of Inter-Faith Dialogue: Questions arising from the Parliament of the World's Religions](#), 1993)

Concern has frequently been expressed by the principal religions that individuals are increasingly faced with what amounts to a "religious supermarket" amongst which people are effectively encouraged to feel free to choose -- selecting aspects of one religion and matching them with features of another. What is selected in this way might however be considered to include "values" -- as respectively promoted by each religion. Further exploration is required to determine whether this "supermarket" could be better understood as the religious segment of a "values market" from which individuals build up a "portfolio" of values according to their investment strategy and preferences. This framing could offer a way of looking at the traditional long-term religious strategies of acquiring "merit" in anticipation of a desired "afterlife".

It is appropriate to note that the expression "psychological stock exchange" has been used by Jean Baudrillard (*The Melodrama of Difference*, 2006) as a feature of modernity.

Value transactions: "buying" and "selling"

The question is whether the nature of trading transactions in a stock market can offer any insights into the kinds of "trading" transactions that are (or might be) associated with analogues to a stock market, namely plenary conference sessions (or their electronic variants). The main transactions are of course buying and selling, primarily undertaken by brokers, and supported by a flow of communications in which the media play an important role.

- **"Buying"**: There are various methods of buying stocks and financing their purchase. This effectively means taking a financial risk. *In the case of human values, the process of buying may be best understood in terms of such phrases as "buying into", "subscribing to", "committing to" or "conversion" (notably in relation to religious values). Through this process, the buyer effectively "holds the value", "owns to the value", or "possesses the value" (and may consequently be appreciated for doing so). The acquirer may be perceived as embodying the value or imbued with the value -- or even, possibly more problematically, as being "possessed by" the value. Buying into a value may be appropriately perceived as taking a risk -- as the discourse around any form of "commitment" or "conversion" recognizes.*
 - **Via broker**: Typically this is done through a stock broker, listed with the stock exchange, who arranges the transfer of stock from a seller to a buyer. *In the case of human values, the role of broker is discussed in detail below.*
 - Full service brokers: These usually charge more per trade, but give investment advice or more personal service;
 - Discount brokers: These offer little or no investment advice but charge less for trades.
 - Banks or credit unions: These may serve as another kind of broker by setting up a deal with either a full service or discount broker.
 - **From company**: Most companies will, under certain conditions, allow the purchase of shares directly from the company through their investor's relations departments.
 - Direct: Usually possible, if at least one share is already owned. However, the initial share of stock in the company will have to be obtained through a regular stock broker.
 - Direct Public Offerings: A direct public offering is an initial public offering, typically sold by the company itself, in which the stock is purchased directly from the company, usually without the aid of brokers.
 - **Financing purchase of stock**:
 - With funds: The purchase of stock is made with money currently possessed by the buyer
 - On margin: Buying stock with money borrowed against the stocks in the same account. As collateral, these stocks guarantee that the buyer can repay the loan; otherwise, the stockbroker has the right to sell the collateral to repay the borrowed money. He can sell if the share price drops below the margin requirement, at least 50 percent of the value of the stocks in the account. Buying on margin works the same way as borrowing money to buy a car or a house using the car or house as collateral. Moreover, borrowing is not free; the broker usually charges 8-10 percent interest.
- **"Selling"** Selling stock is procedurally similar to buying stock, notably with the aid of a broker. This may be understood as taking a financial risk -- or avoiding one. It is important to distinguish with promotion of the stock to potential purchasers and the act of selling itself. *In the human values case, it is also important to distinguish between: (a) promoting the value, understood as marketing it; (b) achieving "buy in", "commitment to", "subscription to", or "conversion" (notably in the case of religious values) on the part of another; and (c) any implication that, by "selling" the value, the "seller" is effectively "selling out". In this last case the seller ceases to "hold the value", "own to the value", or "possess the value" (and may consequently be judged pejoratively for doing so). The seller is then perceived as no longer embodying the value or being imbued with the value -- possibly to be stigmatized as "backsliding" with respect to religious and ideological values. In some cases, as with ideological "re-education" and deprogramming those associated with sects, ensuring that the "seller" is no longer "possessed by" the value may be perceived very positively. Dispossessing oneself of a value may well be appropriately perceived as taking a risk -- as the discourse (possibly accompanied by threats) around any form of "commitment" or "conversion" recognizes.*
 - **Strategies**: Generally, the investor wants to buy low and sell high, if not in that order (short selling); although a number of reasons may induce an investor to sell at a loss.
 - **Transaction fees**: As with buying a stock, there is a transaction fee for the broker's efforts in arranging the transfer of stock from a seller to a buyer. This fee can be high or low depending on which type of brokerage, discount or full service, handles the transaction. After the transaction has been made, the seller is then entitled to all of the money.
 - **Taxation on earnings**: An important part of selling is keeping track of the earnings. Importantly, on selling the stock, in jurisdictions that have them, capital gains taxes will have to be paid on the additional proceeds, if any, that are in excess of the cost basis.

Value promotion -- and the role of the media

In the economic case, any purchase or sale is heavily influenced by the promotion through the media of the stocks, bonds, or other financial securities. This promotion is undertaken by the company seeking to raise capital, to justify the confidence of investors, or to promise future performance. Extensive commentary in the media may be made by financial analysts influencing some to buy and others

to sell. Rumour-mongering may perform a significant role in interpreting available information. The securities may be "talked up" by interested parties.

Promotion is especially important when issuing a new stock. Private companies may seek public participation, becoming a public company, by floatation of their shares on a stock exchange primarily in order to raise funds to grow their business. A secondary objective is to achieve extra exposure and credibility with existing and potential investors. Both objectives may be associated with plans for acquisition of other companies through use of the shares. Floatation may also be used as a means of extending participation to directors and staff..

In the values case, the media also perform a significant role in carrying and interpreting information from press releases provided by the group promoting the value. Examples are evident in the case of values such as peace, justice, health, and the like. Many organizations conduct their own media campaigns in support of positive values and against negative values. Such organizations may range from (inter)governmental agencies to (international) nongovernmental bodies of every kind.

Values may be promoted widely or to relatively specialized or closed groups. Promotion may be associated with efforts to seek wider adherence to the values through converting an essentially private set of values into a set to which the public is invited to adhere. This exposure and increased credibility may be envisaged as a strategy to subsume other sets of values held by other groups.

Value brokers: buying and selling

In the financial case, a broker is an agent, or middle man, who facilitates the buying and selling of securities on behalf of investors on the stock exchange. The broker may be a company and is recompensed through a commission on each transaction. Ironically, important in the selection of a broker may be non-financial value criteria, notably "honesty", reinforced by industry standards for "ethical" behaviour (often formulated by individual stock exchanges).

A variety of individuals and groups can usefully be considered as acting as value brokers:

- religions and their priesthoods have an especially important role in promoting "positive" values and adherence to them by their believers and condemning "negative" values and ensuring that their believers disassociate themselves from them.
- song writers and singers play a major role in promoting particular values, notably in relation to the social revolution of the 1960s (Joan Baez, Beatles, etc). This role was exemplified in history by wandering minstrels and troubadours.
- media programmers (exemplified by disc jockeys) now play a central role in the promotion of values through the selection of particular songs for radio; similar arguments apply to other media, notably films.
- artists, literature -- promotional literature for a value
- story tellers have long performed the role of articulating and maintaining the values of a culture
- politicians and political parties may seek to articulate and promote sets of values important to their (desired) constituencies, notably "traditional values" and, most recently, "family values"

Value brokers, aided and abetted by the promotional activities of the groups concerned, help to define what values "are in" and which ones "are out" or "outdated".

Learnings from financial market strategies: investment styles and preferences?

As indicated in the following table, investment strategies in financial securities distinguish between short-, medium- and long-term periods over which risk will be accepted in order to derive benefit. With respect to risk, a distinction is made between low, medium and high risk. In addition to such conventional distinctions, a distinction is now increasingly made by some between "ethical" and "unethical" investments, notably in relation to corporate social responsibility and social investment. *With human values, there is a case for distinguishing between adherence to a value for the short-, medium-, or long-term. Such adherence may indeed be understood as low, medium or high risk. As in the financial case, short-term, high-risk investment in a value may be associated with a high degree of opportunism to enable a "quick killing" -- which in the values case could be held to be cynical adoption of values purely as a matter of (selfish) convenience.*

Investment strategies and preferences						
	Short-term		Medium-term		Long-term	
	Neg.	Pos.	Neg.	Pos.	Neg.	Pos.
High-risk
Medium-risk
Low-risk

The distinction between "ethical" or "unethical" investment may be fruitfully generalized in terms of "positive" ("constructive") or "negative" ("destructive") values -- complexifying the table (as shown above). This extension makes it possible to encompass situations where people or groups invest in "negative" values rather than in "positive" values. Obvious examples include: the glorification of "war" in preference to "peace"; "wealth" in preference to "poverty", "intolerance" in preference to "tolerance"; "selfishness" in preference to "altruism"; "materialism" in preference to "spirituality".

Such examples point to the ambiguity of any positive-negative connotations. This issue has been extensively explored elsewhere with respect to a very comprehensive range of values in the [Human Values Project](#) (as part of the [Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential](#)) -- 4148 "constructive" [[list of key values](#)] and 7246 "destructive" values [[list of key values](#)]. These were in turn clustered in terms of 220 value polarities [[checklist](#)] specifically in order to respond to ambiguity in value-charged word connotations.

The resultant value database has been used experimentally to associate thousands of international organizations with both the "positive" values to which they claim to aspire (in their constitutions) and with the "negative" values that may be their operational preoccupations in alleviating problems that inhibit the dominance of the "positive" value. This highlights the fact that organizations may be more focused on alleviating "problems" than in embodying or celebrating "positive" values. It is in this sense that value investment may be in problem alleviation rather than in what might be more conventionally recognized as "positive" values. It was in fact concluded that no such problem (as a "negative" value) could be meaningfully recognized without recognizing that it effectively concealed an implicit "positive" value. Just as the financial market may be understood as split into ethical and unethical investment opportunities, so the values market might be understood as split into "positive" and "negative" investment opportunities.

In the case of religious values, there is of course a case for recognizing their polarization into portfolios of "sins" and "virtues" -- with the ultimate value (or value portfolio) of "heaven" or, alternatively, "hell".

The distinct strategies of mutual fund managers offer useful insights:

- **Active management:** In this case fund managers strive to outperform the market by identifying stocks that could produce better returns and beat the overall market (or target index).
- **Passive management:** In this case, fund managers do not attempt to beat the market. Instead, they try to mirror the performance of a selected market index (such as the FTSE 100).

In the values case a similar distinction could be made in the case of value brokers offering advice to value investors:

- **Active management:** In this case an effort is made to "outperform" the values market by identifying values that could produce better returns and beat the overall market (or target index). This might best be understood in terms of efforts to achieve a "strong position" or occupy the "moral highground". More aggressively it might be understood as an effort by a particular group (notably a religion) to "corner the market" on a set of values
- **Passive management:** In this case, fund managers do not attempt to beat the market. Instead, they try to mirror the performance of a selected market index (such as the FTSE 100).

Comprehension of stock exchange operation through metaphor

A number of studies and commentaries have focused on the metaphors through which understanding of stock trading has been articulated. The studies include:

- C. J. Lofting. *Market Games: the "what" and the "where" in the stock market*. 1999
- Michael W. Morris, Oliver J. Sheldon, Daniel R. Ames and Maia J. Young. *Metaphors and the Market: consequences and preconditions of agent and object metaphors in stock market commentary*
- Judy Steininger. The bond market as metaphor for American society. *The Business Journal of Milwaukee*, 25 July 1997 [text]
- Tom Walker. *Metaphors affect investors, researcher says*. *Statesman.com / Cox News Service*, 9 October 2005
- Stefan Marti, Deva Seetharam and Hiroshi Ishii, *WeatherTank: A Tangible Interface using Weather Metaphors*
- Fabio Cifariello Ciardi, *sMAX: a multimodal toolkit for stock market data sonification* Proceedings of ICAD 04:Tenth Meeting of the International Conference on Auditory Display, Sydney, Australia, July 6-9, 2004
- J.M. Seymour, *Stock Market Pie: Grandma Helps Emily Make A Million*
- Tim Dwyer and Peter Eades, *Visualising a Fund Manager Flow Graph with Columns and Worms*
- Andrew Salway and Khurshid Ahmad, *The Role of Metaphors in Financial Texts*, 1997
- Geoff P. Smith, *How High Can a Dead Cat Bounce?: metaphor and the Hong Kong stock market*. *Hong Kong Papers in Linguistics and Language Teaching*, 1995
- A Hübler. *On Metaphors Related to the Stock Market: who lives by them?* Duisburg, L.A.U.D., 1989
- M. Hundt. *Modellbildung in der Wirtschaftssprache. Zur Geschichte der Institutionen- und Theoriefachsprachen der Wirtschaft*. Tübingen, Max Niemeyer, 1995
- Christopher M. Schmidt. *Metaphor and Cognition: a cross-cultural study of indigenous and universal constructs in stock exchange reports*. Language Center at the Åbo Akademi University, Finland
- Donald N. McCloskey, *Metaphors Economists Live By*, *Social Research*, 1995, Summer

Such studies offer insights into how a values stock exchange might be understood to operate -- **and how it might already be experienced, whether by individual or institutional "investors" in human values**. They point to the possibility of providing greater comprehension of the "feel" and context of the exchange trading process.

Learnings from financial analysis and modelling

There is a very considerable interest, on the part of those extensively involved in investment in financial securities, in the insights offered by financial modelling (cf [Simon Benninga](#), *Financial Modeling*, 2000; Sergio M. Focardi and Frank J. Fabozzi, *The Mathematics of Financial Modeling and Investment Management*, 2004). The central aim of such modelling is valuation under uncertainty, namely how to estimate the value of a security when its future trajectory, or the trajectory of the other securities or economic variables it depends on, is unknown. They make extensive use of mathematics. Of particular interest is the management of portfolios according to investment preferences for risk and return (cf Björn Palmgren, *The Need for Financial Models*, 1999). There are many such models. Some of these are highly confidential and proprietary, notably those used in automated trading (or algorithmic trading) on the stock exchange. **Algorithmic trading** is the use of very complex computer programs to trade financial instruments (e.g., stocks, bonds, etc.) in electronic markets.

Other analytical approaches include:

- **Game theory:** Many studies have been made of the relevance of game theory to understanding stock market operations (cf Ronald B. Shelton, *Gaming the Market: applying game theory to create winning trading strategies*, 1997; Benoit S. Montin, *A Stock Market Agent-Based Model Using Evolutionary Game Theory*, 2004)
- **Complexity theory:** Following the work of [Benoit Mandelbrot](#), considerable interest has been aroused about the application of complexity theory to price movements in financial markets. (Benoit Mandelbrot and Richard L. Hudson, *The (Mis)Behavior of Markets: a fractal view of risk, ruin, and reward*, 2004; Blake LeBaron. *Building the Santa Fe Artificial Stock Market*, 2002; Edgar E. Peters, *Fractal Market Analysis: applying chaos theory to investment and economics*, 1994)

In distinguishing the basis for the two forms of analysis in the stock market, technical and fundamental, C. J. Lofting (*Market Games: the "what" and the "where" in the stock market*, 1999) focuses on a dichotomy that is equally relevant in the case of human values:

From this brief analysis we can see the fundamental neurological processes, manipulation of the what/where dichotomy, at work in one of the most dynamic and at times abstract disciplines used in society and across all cultures within the species, the discipline concerned with financial markets.

What is of interest is that behind all of the words used in these various disciplines there is an invariant pattern of meaning used by ALL disciplines that use dichotomies as fundamentals. It is this [template](#) that acts to encode all words with a sense of meaning, something we 'feel', and as such even enables us to make analogies across disciplines since it is the invariant patterns of emotion that resonate with meaning rather than any words.

Furthermore, since the market forces emphasise the use of profit/loss, long/short, put/call, bear/bull dichotomies etc etc so patterns we see in the market are in fact patterns found in the template; For example, wave patterns observed in market processes [C. J. Lofting, *Patterns in Markets : the imposition of thinking patterns and the establishment of 'meaning' in trading systems*, 1998] can be traced back to (a) recursive dichotomisations combined with (b) indeterminant states and (c) different degrees of feedback considerations. Thus all possible expressions are 'known' and we need to find the current 'flavour of the month'.

In the values case, the main area in which value analyses are done is in relation to value-related opinion surveys, notably with respect to customer values (for marketing purposes) or environmental values -- typically in order to place an economic value on human values (Rajaram Krishnan, Jonathan M. Harris, Neva R. Goodwin (Eds), [Survey of Ecological Economics](#), 1995). This is not the concern of this exploration. The possibility of the kinds of complex modelling and analyses performed in the economic case is not apparently considered in the development of policy options or in the management of value portfolios. Any such portfolio management tends to be framed as an art, unassisted by mathematical modelling -- as in reflection on lifestyle design (cf Mary Catherine Bateson, [Composing a Life](#), 1990; [Organization and Lifestyle Design: characteristics of a nonverbal structural language](#), 1978).

Value surveys typical endeavour to identify with what values people identify ([World Values Survey](#), [European Values Study](#), [more]). These may endeavour to focus on the manner in which such values relate to social change in terms of the "blue chip" values of "democracy", "freedom" etc (cf Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, [Modernization, Cultural Change and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence](#), 2005; Mansoor Moadell, [Religion, Democracy and Gender: Findings from Value Surveys in Islamic Countries](#), 2003). Analyses tend to focus on how the adherence to (specific) values has changed between successive surveys, possibly of annual or greater periodicity (cf World Database of Happiness, [Average happiness in 90 nations 1990-2000](#), 2004; Edwin J. Feulner and Doug Wilson, [Getting America Right: The True Conservative Values Our Nation Needs Today](#), 2006). The [Global Values Monitor](#) (developed by the [Global Values Network](#)) is, for example, an instrument to survey and measure the "values mix" present in either an organisation, a region or a country.

Of particular interest is the value-survey analysis that has identified a group of people who have invested in a particular portfolio of values. As a result of this work, the group has been recognized as a "sub-culture", labelled the "cultural creatives" (Paul H. Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson, [The Cultural Creatives: how 50 million people are changing the world](#), 2000). Whilst that sub-culture is acknowledged to have low self-recognition, it might be asked whether sub-cultures within that group had a higher sense of identity.

Such analyses are primarily concerned with identifying the sets of values with which people identify. Any similarity to the economic preoccupation with "portfolio management" is limited to political agendas encouraging people to shift to a different value portfolio ("in their best interests" as defined by the promoter of the values in the promoted portfolio). This may indeed be expressed in terms of social change, paradigm change, patterns of consumption, or the promotion of democracy.

Two forms of analysis mentioned in connection with stock market values have also been explored in relation to non-economic values:

- **Game theory:** This has been used to explore the nature of the social contract, that could be interpreted in terms of a pattern of value relationships (cf Kenneth M Binmore. *Game Theory and the Social Contract*, 1994;) Of particular interest is the adaptation to business ethics (Christopher W. Morris and Peter Vanderschraaf (Eds). *Game Theory and Business Ethics*, *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 9, 1999, 1). An associated approach is via social contract theory because of its clear correspondence to the exchange relationships central to marketing thought and practice as explored by Thomas W. Dunfee, et al [Social Contracts and Marketing Ethics](#), *Journal of Marketing*, 63, 1999). The use of game theory has also been related to the development of a global ethic (cf D Loye. [Can science help construct a new global ethic? The development and implications of moral transformation theory](#). *Zygon*, 1999)
- **Complexity theory:** Pointers to the possibility of the application of complexity theory to dynamic systems of ethics have been offered by a number of authors (Chris Lucas, [Contextual Ethics](#), 2006; Chris Lucas, [Complexity Theory: actions for a better](#)

Benefits vs Losses: dividends from investment in values

The benefits from investment are typically associated with the following notions:

- **Dividend:** With respect to financial securities, this is understood as the distribution of earnings to shareholders, prorated by the class of security. It may be paid in the form of money, stock, scrip, or, rarely, company products or property. The amount is dependent on the general business condition and is therefore subject to fluctuations. It is decided by the board of directors and is usually paid quarterly. *As noted above, in the values case, dividends are an indication of the sense of reward derived from subscribing to the values, whether in the short, medium or longer-term. It could possibly be understood as a form of "psychic interest" in the light of understandings of psychic income.*
- **Stock dividend payment:** This is a corporate dividend paid in the form of stock rather than cash. It may be additional shares in the company, or it may be shares in a subsidiary being spun off to shareholders. Such dividends are often used to conserve cash needed to operate the business. Unlike a cash dividend, stock dividends are not taxed until sold.
- **Yield:** In general, a return on an investor's capital investment. For bonds, the coupon rate of interest divided by the purchase price, called current yield. Also, the rate of return on a bond, taking into account the total of annual interest payments, the purchase price, the redemption value, and the amount of time remaining until maturity. The yield measures return on invested capital in percent. There are two main types:
 - Dividend yield: ratio between dividend + tax credit and the share price.
 - Investment yield: ratio between dividend + tax credit + share price changes + subscription rights and the share price.
- **Long term gain:** A gain on the sale of a capital asset where the holding period was twelve months or more and the profit was subject to the long term capital gains tax.

Fluctuation in values

The price of a stock in the market fluctuates due to the law of supply and demand like all commodities. However, there are many factors on basis of which the demand for a particular stock may increase or decrease. These factors are studied using methods of analysis to predict such changes in the stock price. *In the human values case, the appreciation or depreciation of values is typically recognized in opinion surveys and the subject of media comment and research. A useful example is the increasing concern with environmental and health values in comparison with earlier periods.*

Significant situations include:

- **Capital appreciation:** This occurs when the market value of the shares exceeds the purchase price. *This situation might be compared in the human values case with the importance attached to a value in, say, a political manifesto, and its importance several years after the political party had gained power on the strength of that manifesto.*
- **Rising (Bull) market:** A bull market is a rising market in which bulls would prosper. A bull is then understood to be an investor who buys a security in the hope of selling it at a higher price, as he thinks the market will go up. *This situation might be compared with an individual or organization positioning themselves as subscribers to a value in anticipation of increasing interest in that value. This is evident in the case of "early adopters" of a value (cf. Everett Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 1962). Many consultancies seeking opportunities for development project funding adopt strategies of this kind in response to new policy "flavours" as they start to emerge (eg "sustainability").*
- **Falling (Bear) market:** A bear market is a falling market in which bears would prosper. A bear is then understood to be an investor who sells a security in the hope of buying it back at a lower price, as he thinks the market will go down. *This situation might be compared with an individual or organization positioning themselves to disassociate themselves from a value in anticipation of decreasing interest in that value.*
- **Volatility:** This is the degree of variation in a share's price. It is the price fluctuation for a given asset, rate, or index (usually expressed as a variance or standard deviation). Stocks which react strongly to market trends are highly volatile. For the investor, this means the possibility of making fast and attractive gains, but also the risk of making equally fast and dramatic losses.
 - **Beta:** A measure of the volatility of a stock relative to the overall market. A beta of less than one indicates lower risk than the market; a beta of more than one indicates higher risk than the market.
 - **Alpha:** This is a measure of how much a stock has risen or fallen over a one-year period. The weighted alpha is a measure of one year growth with an emphasis on the most recent price activity:
 - Positive: A stock whose price has risen over the period will have a positive Weighted Alpha.
 - Unchanged: A stock whose price has not changed in the period will have a small Weighted Alpha
 - Negative: A stock whose price has dropped over the period will have a negative Weighted Alpha.
- **Crash:** A [stock market crash](#) is a catastrophic situation in which the market value of many stocks, across a significant cross-section of a market, suddenly declines very rapidly. Crashes are driven by panic as much as by underlying economic factors. They often follow speculative stock market bubbles. *In the human values case it is worth envisaging the possibility of a similar global or regionalized loss of confidence in a wide set of values -- which might effectively trigger a loss of confidence in economic values, or be triggered by it. It could be argued that the consequence of the actions of the US-led Coalition of the Willing in response to "global terrorism" has resulted in such a catastrophic collapse of confidence in institutional leadership and in the military, scientific and legal opinion on which it draws to justify what have subsequently proven to be an extremely questionable initiative -- possibly analogous to a stock market "bubble". Just as concerns have been expressed regarding the future economic implications of "peak oil", it could be argued that a values market collapse would be associated with a "collapse*

of meaning" of unforeseeable consequences.

Performance indicators in the values market

Share indices: These are used to track the price and value development of a group of company shares. The shares included in the index are given a specific weighting according to the criteria of the particular index. A distinction is made between:

- Share price indices (such as the FAZ index) consider only the development of share prices,
- Performance indices (such as the DAX) also consider dividends and subscription rights, i.e. the overall development of shares included in the index.

Indexes may be either [price-weighted](#) or [market value-weighted](#) (cf [List of stock market indices](#)):

- **FTSE 100 Index:** This is a share index of the 100 largest companies listed on the London Stock Exchange
- **S&P 500 Composite Stock Price Index (S&P500):** This is a European-style, capitalization-weighted index (shares outstanding multiplied by stock price) of 500 stocks that are traded on the New York Stock Exchange, American Stock Exchange and NASDAQ Global Select Market or NASDAQ Global Market. The advantage of "cap-weighting" is that each company's influence on index performance is directly proportional to its relative market value.
- **NASDAQ Composite Index:** This measures all NASDAQ domestic and non-U.S. based common stocks listed on the NASDAQ Stock Market (over 5,000 companies). It is market-value weighted to ensure that each company's security affects the Index in proportion to its market value. The market value, the last sale price multiplied by total shares outstanding, is calculated throughout the trading day, and is related to the total value of the Index.
- **Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA):** This measures the relative value of the market. It is a price-weighted average of 30 actively traded blue chip stocks, representing between 15% and 20% of the market value of NYSE stocks. The DJIA is calculated by adding the closing prices of the component stocks and adjusting for splits and stock dividends equal to 10% or more of the market value of an issue as well as substitutions and mergers.
- etc

Bond indices: A number of bond indices exist for the purposes of managing portfolios and measuring performance, similar to the S&P 500 or [Russell Indices](#) for [stocks](#). The most common American benchmarks are the [Lehman Aggregate](#), [Citigroup BIG](#) and [Merrill Lynch Domestic Master](#). Most indices are parts of families of broader indices that can be used to measure global bond portfolios, or may be further subdivided by maturity and/or sector for managing specialized portfolios. The Treasury Bond index (TYX) is based on 10 times the yield-to-maturity on the most recently auctioned 30-year Treasury bond.

In the case of human values, the main approach to value performance is through the tools identified earlier, notably value-related surveys of different types:

- Value surveys (as noted above), including:
 - [Human Values Project](#) (of the [Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential](#))
 - [European Values Study](#)
 - [World Values Survey](#)
 - [Cultural creatives](#)
- Value-related international reports, including:
 - [Human Development Reports](#) (UNDP)
 - [Report on the World Social Situation](#) (UN Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs)
 - [Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State)
 - [World Report](#) (Human Rights Watch)
 - [Annual Report](#) (Amnesty International)
- Value-related national reports, including:
 - [Gross National Happiness Studies](#) ([Centre for Bhutan Studies](#))

In proposing a Human Value Index (HVI), Peter Block ([Hard Measures for Human Values](#). News for a Change, April 2000) makes the point:

We have now made the stock market our primary measure of well-being.... So why do I know more about the well-being of these market indexes than I do about most of my friends? The stock market has become much more important than an index of economic value, it has become a thermometer of our morale and the justification of a culture. As the stock market has become essential to my sense of well-being, the importance of relationships and the value of the person and their social and emotional well-being has been in decline.

A significant reframing of the challenge of human value has been made from a business perspective by W. Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne ([Blue Ocean Strategy: how to create uncontested market space and make the competition irrelevant](#), 2005) who notably focus on the art of drawing value innovation charts, namely trying to transform truly qualitative indicators into comparative form. They have found that the most profitable companies -- over a sustainable period -- seem to "value" the intangibles, not technology, but relations: with clients, staff etc. Based on a study of 150 strategic moves spanning more than a hundred years and thirty industries, Kim and Mauborgne argue that tomorrow's leading companies will succeed not by battling competitors, but by creating 'blue oceans' of uncontested market space ripe for growth. Such strategic moves -- termed 'value innovation' -- create powerful leaps in value for both

the firm and its buyers, rendering rivals obsolete and unleashing new demand. It would be interesting to determine whether a "blue ocean" approach could be successfully applied in ways that would reframe the significance of "competitors" and the insecurity associated with any need to render them "irrelevant".

Of relevance to any such reframing is recognition of the extent to which the largest corporations in the "East" (the Korean chaebol, the Japanese keiretsu in Japan, and similar Chinese groups) decide with their "hearts" (see related arguments on metaphor by Susantha Goonatilake, *Toward a Global Science: Mining Civilizational Knowledge*, 1999). By this is meant that their financing of future start-ups has little to do with "economic values" as understood in the "West" (cf P K Ip, *The Weizhi Group of Xian: a Chinese virtuous corporation*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 35(1), 2002, pp. 15 - 26).

The above points were highlighted by **Ernst Max Nielsen** (in a personal communication) following his experience as chief of bureau of the Market and Democracy office in the transition economy of Leningrad. He recognized that "business people" transact in the absence of "monetary" value systems through fundamental reliance on trust -- of which money may become a token. This value is also recognized in the "western" "old boys clubs" like Rotary -- possibly adapted by the knights of yore with their emphasis on "valour".

Jeremy Rifkin (*The Third Sector -- and the rebirth of civil society*, 1999) argues that modern business practice relies on the practice of value relationships -- notably associated with trust -- built over generations by the third sector (civil society). Also the corollary: to the degree that such trust relationships are dismantled, then modern business collapses:

The first thing to understand about the Third Sector -- the cultural sphere -- is that it is the primordial sector. Throughout history, human beings have always established social communities first. They develop rules of social exchange, embed their members in complex reciprocal relationships, and build up social trust. Only when these relationships, and the trust that is built from them, are firm can communities enter into commercial trade and set up markets for exchange. That's because markets, by their very nature, deplete trust.

Assessing the value of shares

There are various ways in which the value of financial securities can be assessed, notably to determine those which are undervalued or overvalued. *In the case of human values, such assessment is based primarily on opinion surveys through which non-financial values are rated (as with the Consensus Rating described below). A distinction should however be made between the assessment of human values on their own terms and efforts to assess the financial performance of the nonprofit bodies that typically promote such values, as discussed by Elizabeth K. Keating and Peter Frumkin (How to Assess Nonprofit Financial Performance, 2001) or as suggested for international associations (Management and Assessment of Financial Resources of international nonprofit associations, 1971):*

- **Share price:** This is the price of a share quoted on a stock exchange in monetary units. The price is determined by supply and demand, but is influenced by the share's par value and other key factors, such as company earnings and future prospects. *As noted above in the human values case, this can be thought of in terms of the "price" of friendship, of peace, of freedom, of democracy, or of a human life, etc*
- **Market value (or market capitalization):** This is calculated by multiplying the number of issued shares for that security by the current share price. The aggregate value of a corporation's issued shares is its market capitalization. A high market capitalization is one of the primary aims of value-oriented management. *Clearly in the human values case, a measure of this kind would provide some sense of aggregate value within society (or within a subgroup)*
 - **Net asset value (NAV)** The market value of a fund share is synonymous with a bid price.
 - **External liabilities:** These are assessed by dividing them according to their maturity dates (i.e. short-term bank overdrafts and long-term bonds and loans).
- **Equity:**
 - **Face value:** The value of a bond, shares, or other security as given on the certificate or instrument. The face value is the amount on which interest payments or dividend are calculated, and is also referred to as par value or nominal value. *This raises the question in the human values case of the "face value" of many values such as peace, democracy, etc -- perhaps as claimed in formal documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.*
 - **Shareholders' equity (net worth):** The amount by which assets exceeds liabilities; also known as shareholders' equity or net assets. *This raises the question in the human values case of the "positive" connotations of a value in practice as compared with the "negative" connotations. This distinction is dramatically evident in the presence of threat when a pacifist stance may be perceived as exposing a group to unnecessary levels of danger.*
 - **Equity valuation:** Valuation of holdings in associated companies in proportion to their equity capital. The proportional net income of the associated company is included in the consolidated financial statements of the parent company. *This raises the question in the human values case of the relation between sets of values, when one set may subsume another.*
- **Intangible assets (or debts):**
 - **Goodwill:** Difference between the price paid for a company and its net assets (assets minus debts). It appears in consolidated accounts as an intangible asset. *As noted earlier, this provides one of the few examples of a human value being recognized within an economic (financial accounting) context.*
 - **Human resources:** These include the quality of management of the company and the professional skills at its disposal. *Of particular interest in the human values case is the recognition of the presence of "good people", possibly described as "good vibrations" or "high energy".*

- **Future prospects:** These include expansion plans (or vulnerability to acquisition). *This points to the expectation, or hopes, attached to the future importance of a value, such as peace, freedom, democracy or justice.*
- **Liquidity:** A term used to indicate how readily a security can be traded. The more market participants there are, willing to quote prices for a certain security, the greater the liquidity, namely the greater the chance of finding a buyer and/or seller. In the case of a specific company, the term may also be used to describe the ability of a company to meet due payments on time in its daily business. *In the case of human values, some may have so little "currency" that the number of people prepared to buy into them may be very limited.*
- **Consensus rating:** The (standardized) average of financial analysts' recommendations for a single security. This arises from the many rating systems used by different broker's systems. One consensus standard distinguishes: 1. Strong buy, 2. Buy, 3. Hold, 4. Underperform, 5. Sell
- **Surprise (Earnings Surprise):** A company earnings report that differs (either positively or negatively) from what analysts were expecting (forecast consensus rating). This often causes movement in the stock's price. The nature of any surprise is indicated by symbols such as: N+ : Negative actual earnings with positive surprise; N- : Negative actual earnings with negative surprise; -+ : Negative consensus earnings with positive actual earnings; -0 : Negative consensus earnings with zero actual earnings; -VL: Very large negative percent surprise; +VL: Very large positive percent surprise; NA : Not available (data necessary for calculation are not available). *It could be argued in the values case, that prime examples of surprise have been demonstrated by the (fanatical) courage unexpectedly demonstrated in various forms of asymmetric warfare in recent decades.*
- **Performance over time:** In addition to the above positive or negative values in the financial accounts (assets or debts), a range of analytical measures are applied to provide insight into the performance of a share value over time. *They merit exploration in the human values case:*
 - **Debt to Equity Ratio:** Long-term debt divided by shareholders' equity, showing relationship between long-term funds provided by creditors and funds provided by shareholders; high ratio may indicate high risk, low ratio may indicate low risk.
 - **Return of Capital:** A distribution of cash resulting from depreciation tax savings, the sale of a capital asset or of securities in a portfolio, or any other transaction unrelated to retained earnings.
 - **Return on Equity (ROE):** This is the net income divided by shareholders' equity. It is the company's total earnings divided by the total shareholders' equity and is a measure of the net income that a firm is able to earn as a percent of stockholders' investment. It indicates to common shareholders how effectively their money is being employed.
 - **Return on Total Assets:** This is the net income divided by total net assets and is a measure of the net income that a firm's management is able to earn with the firm's total assets.
 - **Price/Earnings ratio (P/E ratio):** Calculated by dividing the current share price by the reported (or forecast) annual earnings per share. A high P/E ratio means the company is highly-rated by the stock market, suggesting that investors think its prospects for earnings growth are good. It gives investors an idea of how much they are paying for a company's earning power. A forward P/E refers to the value for the next full year.
 - **Price/Book Ratio (P/B Ratio):** The price of a stock is divided by the reported book value (as of the date specified) of the issuing company
 - **Price/Cash Flow Ratio (P/C Ratio):** Comparison of stock price with cash flow from operations per outstanding shares.
 - **Price/Sales Ratio (P/S Ratio):** Comparison of stock price with sales per share (or market value with total revenue).

In the case of human values, there are few, if any, indicators of the type mentioned above for economic values -- which may be made available with high periodicity (even hourly). Various approaches to assessment of value performance are however worth considering:

- **Value-related surveys:** *As noted with respect to the tools identified in the previous section, this is a widely favoured approach to value performance. Typically they are conducted **annually** or even more infrequently.*
- **Public opinion surveys:** *These may constitute a variant of values survey and may indeed be conducted irregularly but with higher frequency*
- **Media ratings:** *These are usefully recognized as a distant variant of values surveys, but do indeed seek to assess the non-monetary value of TV and music (at relative high frequency)*
- **Horoscopes:** *Although seemingly irrelevant to the topic of this exploration, in practice these devices are recognized by the media as much in demand by audiences. Whilst the reports they give daily may be considered to be based on a totally questionable analytical model, functionally the confidence placed in such models may be seen as analogous to that placed in many stock market analyses. It is of course the case that horoscopes are used by many as a guide to financial investment [more more more].*

Abuse in the value exchange system

Financial regulators, such as the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and the Financial Services Authority in the UK, oversee the markets, to ensure that investors are protected against mis-selling of various kinds. Individual exchanges may deploy a vast array of sophisticated automated systems to review each trade and price quotation on an on-line, real-time basis. Off-line computer-based analyses may be conducted to evaluate trading patterns on a monthly, weekly and daily basis -- notably unusual price or volume variations in a stock. Abuses include:

- **Insider trading :** The purchase or sale of securities by someone who possesses 'inside' information affecting securities which has not yet been made available to the market and which, if made available, would significantly affect the share price. Utilizing this

knowledge to make gains in stock trading is forbidden.

- **Misuse of information:** The abuse of dealing in securities based on information that is not publicly available. This abuse is similar to the offence of insider dealing.
- **Market abuse:** A conduct that adversely affects a financial market and falls below the standards expected by the regular user of that market.
- **Creating a false impression:** Deliberately creating false or misleading impressions regarding the supply, demand, price or value of an investment.
- **Distorting the market:** Manipulating market prices by interfering with the normal supply and demand process.
- **Market offence:** An illegal/criminal conduct that adversely affects the market.
- **Money laundering:** The process of disguising money obtained from criminal activity.
- **Churning:** This is the unethical practice of buying and selling shares simply in order to earn more commission.

There are as yet no analogous controls with respect to abuses in the human values market, notably those relating to misrepresentation. The need for these is increasingly obvious -- in the light of the degree of "spin" with which values are now presented to public opinion.

Conclusion: ambiguities with regard to human values

The intangible nature of values has been stressed. In effect the discussion is an exploration of value "trading" in a generic sense -- of which trading in economic market values is the most obvious and best articulated form.

Although any conflation of the two forms of value may be disputed, there is an interesting way of reviewing and relating the two extremes:

- the focus on monetary interest and dividend, across a judiciously chosen (multi-sectoral) "spread" of shares in the economic case, may indeed be understood as seeking to optimize a single monetary variable according to a preferred investment strategy
 - but the assumption regarding the single monetary focus ("the bottom line") can however be reframed to the extent that each sectoral share investment is distinguished in that the expected monetary interest (or dividend) in each case is effectively qualified by an assessment of risk-opportunity -- each investment is then qualitatively different
- the focus on a set of distinct human values may be understood as having been judiciously chosen to optimize a preferred life strategy and sense of identity
 - but the assumption regarding the disparate nature of the set of values, seemingly without any common element, may be usefully seen as corresponding to the sectoral spread of qualitatively different shares
- in both cases the challenge is to optimize a qualitative set, whether the "bottom line" is monetary or some sense of merit or satisfaction

In the discussion above various suggestions were made as to how a value is held or traded. At this early stage -- prior to further clarification -- an organization may **already** be ambiguously understood as:

- **A stock:** In this case a particular organization, for example [Democracy International](#) or [World Peace Council](#), is understood to constitute a prospectus for a particular value, whether or not it in fact embodies the intangible qualities of that value.
- **A share portfolio:** In this case a particular organization, for example [Amnesty International](#), [Human Rights Watch](#) or UNICEF, are each understood to represent a distinct portfolio of values
- **A mutual fund:** In this case a particular organization, for example [Amnesty International](#) or [Human Rights Watch](#) might be understood to constitute a fund managing a distinct portfolio of values
- **A meeting of shareholders:** In this case a particular individual membership organization, for example [Amnesty International](#), is understood to represent those subscribing to the value -- but effectively only the major shareholders
- **A broker:** In this case a particular organization, for example [European Science Foundation](#) or [Migrants Rights International](#), are in each case understood to act as a broker -- promoting particular values for acquisition by others. It might even act to assist an investor to relinquish a value (as in re-education or deprogramming) or give priority to another
- **A value exchange:** In this case a particular organization, for example UNESCO or ILO, is each understood to constitute a value exchange in which a range of values is traded and prioritized in the plenary conference.

Many of these roles are already variously performed by international organizations identified in the [Yearbook of International Organizations](#) -- whether "official" intergovernmental organizations or nongovernmental bodies. The value exchange role is in particular performed within the international (plenary) meetings of such bodies -- as identified in the [International Congress Calendar](#). Of particular interest is the manner in which these many distinct "stock exchanges" for non-monetary human values are interlinked and variously "quote" and prioritize (namely "trade") the same values (or value sets) -- perhaps at a regional level. Where such contexts bring together their equivalents at the regional or national level, or those which have a more specific sectoral focus, a distinction may be seen between broader and more specialized exchanges analogous to that in the economic case. The broader contexts may be understood as seeking to bring order to a wider segment of the values market.

Of particular interest is that the intimate relationship of organizational forms with a value that they purport to represent in some way result in practice in either the organization or the value losing its credibility in relation to that which it previously held. Of course it is also possible that the appreciation of the value and/or the organization may increase in a manner subsequently held to be excessive or inappropriate.

The fact that, for a given value or set of values, many different bodies may be considered as performing such roles stresses further the non-exclusive quality of intangible values. Whilst some bodies may strive, or claim, to "corner the market" with respect to one or more such values, other bodies may emerge that claim or act otherwise. Classically this situation has been highlighted with respect to "peace"

as a value. The inability of any of the many bodies focused exclusively on "peace" to represent that value unambiguously, and without contestation by others making some such claim, is an indication of how the value transcends any of the above roles to "capture" it within the values market. In contrast with the **exclusive** nature of possession or ownership of property, as represented by stock in the financial market, human values clearly have a **non-exclusive** dimension -- despite any efforts to "corner the market".

This framework also suggests the merit of reflecting on the nature of national parliaments as contexts in which human values are effectively traded. The use there of the term "horse-trading" points to an existing recognition of this process -- as a dematerialization of the trading in stock by farmers. The dynamics of regional parliaments, such as the European Parliament, are then of particular interest as regional value exchanges -- especially with respect to the efficiency, speed and transparency with which they perform this function in relation to the value "shareholders" in whose values they are effectively trading.

Recently there has been a focus on selected (but typically unidentified) core "blue chip" values at the global level. This has notably been in service of particular (and potentially questionable) political and religious agendas (cf Tony Blair, *Global Alliance for Global Values*, Speech on Foreign Policy to the Parliament of Australia, 27 March 2006; Honor Mahony, *Merkel favours God reference in EU constitution*, *EU Observer*, 26 May 2006). It is especially unfortunate that such initiatives should be promoted by world leaders so recently associated with public deception -- Blair in the case of WMD, Merkel as inheritor of the mantle of presidency of the **Christian Democratic Union** (completely discredited by **Helmut Kohl's** party financing scandal), or George Bush (*Lie by Lie: Chronicle of a War Foretold: August 1990 to March 2003*, *MotherJones*, September/October 2006).

Any value initiatives are particularly problematic when deliberate efforts are to be made to impose "Christian values" on a continent under the auspices of a particular religion -- as indicated by **Angela Merkel's** commitment, as future president of the EU, following her encounter with the Pope (cf Nicholas Watt, *Merkel backs more Christian EU constitution*, *The Guardian*, 29 August 2006). The commitment on behalf of Germany is particularly unfortunate given its highly controversial association with the Vatican on the occasion of a previous attempt to impose a set of values on Europe (cf Bill Stone, *The Vatican and World War II*, 1999). Such initiatives should be explored in the light of the necessary clarification of roles suggested here. Such clarification is especially important to the extent that these political agendas represent a reframing of the discredited strategic initiative of the **Coalition of the Willing** and its leadership (cf **Blair: Western values must triumph over radical Islam**. *Islam Review*, 1 August 2006) -- perhaps well analyzed by **Scott Peck** (*People of the Lie*, 1983).

Also of interest is the possibility for any individual to reframe the sense of personal identity in terms of the value stock market metaphor. An individual is thus constantly juggling with a set of value priorities -- a personal (existential) portfolio requiring "management" and calling for analysis of "performance". It is perhaps through enhancing the skills required for such management, through the many insights from the stock market, that new approaches to well-being can be realized.

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- [Yearbook of International Organizations](#) (annual/online) [[text](#)]

Values surveys:

- [European Values Study](#)
- [Global Values Monitor](#) (of the [Global Values Network](#))
- [Value Inquiry Network](#) (VIN / [Value Net](#))
- [World Values Survey](#)



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