His Highness the Aga Khan on the need build capacity for moral reasoning and moral judgement through education

by NANOWISDOMS ARCHIVE

"There is one last topic about which I would like to say a few words. Building capacity for moral reasoning and moral judgement is a goal that appears in the foundation documents of many of the world's oldest and most prestigious universities. For a number of reasons, I worry that insufficient attention is being paid to the development of these important capabilities and that the situation may worsen in the years ahead.

"The advances that have occurred in the sciences -- most recently in the biological sciences, and the engineering that underlies computer and information technologies -- are important for economic development and attractive to students and scholars. I applaud these developments, but worry that they will crowd out parts of the curriculum devoted to the study of the great humanistic traditions that have evolved in all civilisations throughout human history. Exposure to these traditions contributes to the formation of values, as well as an understanding of the richness and diversity of human experience. The complexities of world problems and societies today require people educated in broad humanistic traditions in addition to the guidance and direction provided by the teaching of their religion. The history of the twentieth century is replete with examples of the danger of the systematic propagation and uncritical acceptance of dogmas, ideologies, and even theologies. More than ever, I believe that universities must shoulder the responsibility for contributing to the process of building the capacity for moral judgement in complex settings."

His Highness the Aga Khan's 2001 address to the Association of American Universities (Washington D.C., USA)

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