

Humanitarian Competition: An Intellectual History in Perspective

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The classic novel *Hadji Murad* by Leo Tolstoy, originally written in 1912, opens with the following quotation:

‘I am writing to you specially to say how glad I have been to be your contemporary and to express my last and sincere request. My friend, return to literary activity! That gift came to you from whence comes all the rest... Great writer of our Russian land, listen to my wish’. Tolstoy (published after his death in 1910, first edition, 1912, p. xxi)

Turgenev made this impassioned plea on his deathbed to Tolstoy, who for five years had produced no clear work of art except for one short story. There was no competition or rivalry between Turgenev and Tolstoy and in fact, the senior in profession was encouraging the younger Leo to write for the sake of humanity. Of course three years later Tolstoy had produced the *Death of Ivan Ilyith, the Power of Darkness*, followed by a long novel *Resurrection and Hadji Murad*.

Through the life of a noble Caucasian in *Hadji Murad*, Tolstoy reiterates the distastefulness of the customary ways of life we refer to as ‘civilised’, with its characteristic qualities of selfishness and self-indulgence, competing for success. In the novel, he describes a particular Tartar thistle plant and states:

‘...the land was well tilled, and nowhere was there a blade of grass or any kind of plant to be seen; it was all black. Ah, what a destructive creature is man... How many different plant-lives he destroys to support his own

existence!' Tolstoy (1912 p. 2)

Here too the invisible thread of competition was snaking through this narrative highlighting the struggle for existence between the proud Caucasians (Chechens, today) and the arrogance of the Russian empire.

Likewise, Rosen (1982, p. 435) notes that Mahatma Gandhi sought a society without competition as he felt that this would inevitably lead to violence. He craved for a society of equals, limited in material needs. He believed that competition resulted in boosting an artificial want, of ruinous wealth and debased power. Around the same time, Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) one of the greatest minds of modern India believed that western materialism and nationalism was both destructive and dehumanising. He was against duplicating the western ideals of competition and was far keener to revitalise traditional moral and spiritual values for sustaining human spirit. Indeed, competition today has become the mantra for survival in a globalised world where meaningful existence is fraught with demands, which go beyond the material to the immaterial 'byte-size' in a borderless, virtual world, dominated by loquacious desires. This has been exemplified by our obsession with illusions of immediate fame and fortune. This resulted in mistrust and contentious behaviour among the contenders.

Competition in context

The challenge of dealing with unregulated competition is best expressed in a classic document by Robert Coram. (1791) His influential ideas became the cornerstone principles for the establishment of formal schooling system throughout the United States of America. Consider the following quotation in *Political Inquiries*, which states:

'At every quarterly examination a gold medal was given to the best writer. When the first medal was offered it produced rather a general contention than emulation and diffused a spirit of envy, jealousy and discord through the whole school; boys who were bosom friends before became fierce contentious rivals and when the prize was adjudged, became implacable enemies. Those who were advanced decried the weaker performances; each wished his opponent's abilities less than his

own and they used all their little arts to misrepresent and abuse each others performances'. Coram (1791, p. 81)

Such an attitude is rife in this globalised world based on endless rollercoaster of successive contests. In other words, we have been programmed to outdo others.

Today, competition has become a second nature to our existence. This idea stretches from honourable schools, to universities, to even the cosy homes, among siblings and extended families. It is now ingrained in our psyche that some people need to fail in order for others to succeed. Even the most advanced education system seems to suggest that we have to provide a marking spreadsheet, which reflects an ideal 'bell curve'. The idea being that grouping a few firsts on top of the pyramid and bunching a crop of seconds and thirds and if possible a couple of failures would reflect well in the education league tables churned out by newspaper agencies year after year, without reflection. This adept invention of the *Thatcherite* neoliberal era was successfully grafted into the more than two decades of New Labour policy mantra resulting in wasting huge amount of precious capital in order to keep the educational quangos afloat.

Consumed as it were by competition we have lost the ability to reflect and observe. Therefore, there is a collective denial of the potential for improvement and therefore by extension negates the possibility of the existence of an informed global citizenship. Dr Daisaku Ikeda's 2009 peace proposal helps to contextualise this very same perspective, of moving beyond the realms of 'pure' competition and alerts us to the machinations of the corrupt market and insatiable greed of the corporations. Aronson (1976, pp. 153–4) states: 'We manifest a staggering cultural obsession with victory'. This is true between the newly developing as well as among the developed states. Still others state that competition is our state religion. Wachtel (1983); Berger (1969) Therefore any resistance to competition is seen with suspicion, especially seen among far eastern states, of Singapore, Taiwan or indeed Hong Kong.

Our mode of development is predicated on being subservient to the philosophy of competition. Even our earliest conscious schooling experience trains us to always view the success of others with disdain,

regarding others as obstacles to one's own route to success. As often as we can we instinctively turn everything, even the most innocent of activities as one of unbridled contest. Our collective creativity of innovation in science and technology is not designed to help humanity, but to produce winners for the market. A success story is far more important than supporting those who have lost out. Thus, under market based capitalist society, we have the society divided not by haves and have not's, but by deserving and undeserving poor. An educational system, which only promotes winners, stifles creativity and innovation. You are paid for what you do, and not what you can do! This allows 'mediocrity to be promoted, where the average is exalted and the ordinary elevated' (Bailey, 2007, p. 126). The various reality shows in currency only helps to reinforce this attitude, that 'winning is everything' and as Vince Lombardi (1976, p. 432) states: 'it is the only thing', be it X Factor or Strictly Come Dancing or the obtuse Big Brother! Our weekend diet has a nail biting finish of who the winner is! This is followed by diverse guidebooks on 'how to be successful' in specific arenas of one's life. The fall out of all this is that we have leased our life out to the gurus of cutthroat competition, the corporation who instil in us the imperatives of competition and thereby makes us accountable to their targets, machinations, profits and payoffs.

Competition to follow Kohn (1992, pp. 3–4) can be divided into structural and intentional competition. Structural refers to a situation and intentional refers to an attitude. The former is defined by a framework for winning or losing, with certain rules of the game. However, intentional competition is related to an inner desire to be number one. This could mean winning with oneself, against negativity, low self-esteem. In other words, structural competition relates to MEGA, mutually exclusive goal attainment, where 'my success requires your failure' (Kohn, 1992, p. 4). It is not that our destinies are positively linked, but that our fate is negatively linked. This is not a zero-sum-game where all who participated are winners and losers. An X Factor contest can have only one winner because that is the way the rules of game works. Here winning is based on a subjective judgement, of national audience, who may or may not have a singing bone in their spine. Likewise contests such as a Wimbledon or World Cup football presents a stronger version

of structural competition where one contestant must make the other fail in order to become a champion. Intentional competition on the other hand, is more subjective and based on the natural proclivity to succeed. In 1975 when the Indian cricket team was vying for the World Cup championship, there was a series of news reports stating that they lacked the killer instinct to win the World Cup. Why? Because India never produced a fast bowler and they were confirmed vegetarians! Some even went on to say that Buddhism killed this killer instinct and lay bare to the ravages of Islamic incursions by the Mongols and Huns. This idea was translated into the sphere of cars, and even economic development when India struggled with the 2% Hindu rate of growth. However, all this changed since 1996 with software revolution and today mergers and acquisition is the buzzword for success and competition associated with India. This is truly a generational shift. Setting standards and goals do not necessarily imply competition with one another. In fact we can accomplish a task and set goals without competing with others. Olympic champions breaking records in a fixed pool every four years is a good example of this. Further, ideas of cooperation suggest that by helping others we help ourselves.

We have been trained not only to compete but also to believe in competition. As Bertrand Russell (1930, p. 45) notes, struggle for life is itself a competitive struggle for success. In reality what we fear the most is not just failure, but success too! There are four myths associated with competition. (See Kohn, 1992 p. 8, for an extended discussion). The first myth is that competition is an unavoidable fact of life or part of an intrinsic 'human nature'. The second myth is that competition motivates us to do our best. In other words, we stop being productive if there is no competition. This idea is the very basis for reinforcing the ideas of capitalism and free market. The third myth suggest that contests provides the best and the only way to have a good time. The joy of leisure resides in competition. Finally, the fourth myth claims that competition builds character, critical for self-confidence. As is usually experienced, healthy competition will always be a contradiction in terms because it inevitably descends to promoting greed, anger and stupidity. Winning at all costs is the biggest danger as the recent events on the melt down of subprime markets have shown with the collapse of major corporations and banks.

Greed circulates as fast as the speed of light to cover all corners of the planet earth with increasing sophistication.

The question we need to ask is whether competition is inevitable. Subscribing competition to human nature reinforces a myth in two essential ways. The first one being that differences exist among certain groups of human beings, those living in the tropics are lazy and those living in the temperate zones are highly industrious. Such an idea helped to rationalise the emergence of colonialism and imperialism in the world. This also helped to justify slavery and bondage in majority of the civilised world. The second aspect of this argument is to assert that competition is an unavoidable part of human spirit. Are we genetically programmed to compete in order to survive? Is this a natural state? Herbert Spencer (1880) reinforces biological along with environmental determinism when considering the 'survival of the fittest' argument. In fact, as Stephen Jay Gould (1978) asserts, there is no relationship between natural selection and competitive struggle (as referred to by Kohn, 1992, p. 249). Fascinating records of survival reveal the importance of cooperation rather than competition. Thus, survival has far better value for humankind than competition. Never before has this become such a premium for the future of humankind, given the threats to our financial, environmental and social existence. The act of striving with others (cooperation) or against others (competition) is an acquired form of behaviour. However, Morton Deutsch's (1973, p. 89) highly acclaimed view on competition in social psychology states that it is unlikely that everyone wants to be a 'top dog'. Thus, we are socialised to compete and then such behaviour is cited as being inevitable element of human existence. The idea is unceasingly communicated that competition is desirable, inevitable, from pre-school learning to adulthood. As a result failure leads to suicides in highly demanding, meritocratic societies, be it India, Japan or China. In contrast, Ikeda (2009) calls for aligning ourselves against uncritical acceptance of the idea of competition. In this context, the idea of Prisoner's Dilemma (PD) provides an opportunity for players to cooperate or to defect and there are greater moral hazards to competition than to cooperation. There is no research, which emphasises a preference for competition over cooperation.

Competition is more productive

To suggest that competition brings out the best in us means that a non-competitive society is made up of non-achievers. This is to confuse success and competition as one and the same thing. One can set goals and achieve them without necessarily engaging in a duel with another colleague. Achieving a goal does not mean winning over others, just as failing does not mean losing to others (Kohn, 1992, p. 46). Superior performance can also be attained without competition. According to Spence Helmreich (1983), it is stereotypical to suggest that very successful businesspersons are highly competitive. Thus, competition precludes efficient use of resources. When one measures success against one's own standards, we tend to perform much better and be more successful than when trying to compete with others. Global inequities can therefore be blamed on unbridled competition. Frank (1949) identified some of the collateral costs associated with economic competition. These include business failures, copious litigation, idle equipment, reduction in quality, and unsafe working conditions. When regulation was cut back to increase competition, the results have been disastrous. Yet competition has some value, in that it keeps prices down. The non-economic costs of competition are the decline of a community spirit, and increase of selfishness.

Is competition more enjoyable?

Bertrand Russell (1930, p. 55) noted that 'it is not only work that is poisoned by competition, but leisure too is poisoned as much' and being aware of this will enable us to avoid the pitfalls on an excessively competitive society. Thus, there are games, which are based on cooperation and are far more enjoyable. These include, Chinese checkers (where the intention is to coordinate the two players movement to reach respective home sections simultaneously), or cooperative bowling (where knocking down the ten pins occurs in as many rounds as there are players), or Scrabble (where two players try to achieve the highest combined score). In all these games the so-called opponent becomes a partner to succeed (Kohn, 1992, p. 94).

Does competition build character?

Kohn (1992, p. 99) suggest that ‘we compete to overcome fundamental doubts about our capabilities and finally to compensate for our low self esteem’. Indeed researchers in North Carolina have established that aggressive monkeys living on high fat diet tend to develop more athero-sclerosis than the submissive monkeys in their own competitive world (Kohn, 1992, p. 125). Contempt for others or aggression relates to competition and becomes detrimental to one’s health and wellbeing. It is in this context that seminal ideas of Tsunesaburo Makiguchi’s ‘humanitarian competition’ of 1903 becomes relevant in the present day deliberations on the utility of competition versus cooperation.

Human face of ‘competition’

Dr Daisaku Ikeda (2009) provides an interesting overview of the idea of humanitarian competition from Tsunesaburo Makiguchi’s (1903) writing *Jinsei Chirigaku or the Geography of Human Life*. Makiguchi discussed these ideas in an era when the world was riddled with forces of imperialism and colonialism. He criticised the state of affairs whereby critical questions of human happiness were being overshadowed by intense competition and rivalry for new territories and spaces across the globe. Such forms of competition were seen in all fields from economic, to social and political. He called for a transition from such predatory forms of competition, of the survival of the fittest to one, which enhanced humanitarian forms of competition. In other words, this has resonance with the emerging ideas of ‘competition with a human face,’ which is distinct from cutthroat engagement. We have seen semblance of this form in the concepts such as ‘technology with a human face’; Schumacher (1911–1977) or UNICEF’s ‘recovery with a human face’; and ‘globalisation with a human face’ (UNDP, 1999) and ideas associated with ‘corporate social responsibility’. The earliest introduction of this concept in the Anglo-Saxon world can be traced to the notable work of Barnard (1938), followed by Clark (1939) and Kreps (1940). In all, the focus is towards incorporation of the civil society into corporate decision-making, where there is a focus on the fulfilment, or well being of humans, or of development as freedom (Sen, 1999). It encourages global governance where making profit is balanced with transparent legal

responsibility (Carroll, 1999 p. 283) and where the profit is shared equitably. This calls for greater international cooperation and democratisation of the multilateral institutions, allowing for the emergence of a sustainable ethics of mutual coexistence and cooperation for the happiness of self and others.

Daisaku Ikeda (2009, p. 19) goes on to state that rather than compete in the realm of 'hard power' (of military might) he encourages the use of 'soft power', of dialogue and diplomacy based on securing trust and respect. Humanitarian competition based on extending soft power is long lasting and not transitory. How can we bring humanity's shared attributes to fruition? These shared attributes include trust, inculcating respect and gratitude for our co-existence on this planet earth. To channel competitive energies not towards destructive ideals or violence, but to tap into humanitarian ideals is the focal point of humanitarian competition. Ikeda calls for three shared elements to stimulate humanitarian competition namely, a shared sense of purpose, a shared sense of responsibility, and a shared field of action. Sharing purpose, calls for building a culture of peace dedicated to the dignity of life and the happiness of all people? The belief is that peace is much more than the absence of war, of conflict. Poverty is an affront to the dignity of human life and the current financial meltdown has indeed reinforced this point more than ever. Here poverty alleviation and disarmament of nuclear arsenal is critical as we move towards 2050. International cooperation for human development is critical in this context and at the same time role of education cannot be ignored in this discussion.

In order to embed humanitarian competition in the society, there is a need to establish awareness that no society can build prosperity and wellbeing based on weapons of mass destruction, or on machines of terror. This calls for a new global ethic, where issues of global poverty, disarmament and environment calls for immediate action based on a sense of shared responsibility within a shared humanity. Here the role of institutions of learning is critical for nurturing shared responsibility, one that is based on cooperation and not competition.

Tsunesaburo Makiguchi's humanitarian competition in context

Tsunesaburo Makiguchi who coined the concept of 'humanitari-

an competition' lived between 1871–1944 and we need to appreciate the context and influences, which helped shape his ideas during this period. Hailed as one of the two most influential, unique books of the Meiji era (along with Uchimura Kanzo's 'Land and Man'), Makiguchi wrote his treatise *The Geography of Human Life* in 1903, published before the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese. The final 11th edition of this book came out in 1914 before Makiguchi accepted faith in Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism in 1928 (see Saito's, 1989, commentaries on the writings).

Makiguchi seriously questioned the very idea of 'competition' and the logic of survival based on such forms of competition. In a sense, Makiguchi became a forerunner in consciously promoting the concept of national and (corporate) social responsibility, following on from King Asoka's Dharma in India in the 3rd BCE. He believed that once we have exhausted all forms of competition such as military, economic and political, humanitarian competition will take the centre stage, essential for the survival of humanity. He said, 'One should do things for the sake of others because by benefiting others we benefit ourselves. In other words, engage consciously in a collective life.' Makiguchi (1903, p. 399) We can observe the deep commitment to 'humanism' in Makiguchi's writings, which was a rarity especially in an age of ultra-nationalism and imperialistic expansionism (Takeuchi, 2004). He enunciated the most progressive ideas of the time and was deeply convinced about the need to understand realpolitik (i.e. the analysis of interstate competition). He was critical of competition being the real and only guiding principle for humanity and called for a shift from the logic of competition to one of cooperation. He writes:

'Though humanitarian competition is not yet visible in the international arena, persons who have gained some level of insight are beginning to realize the significance of cooperation. Ultimate winners in the competition for survival are not necessarily the winners of the economic race. It is not difficult to imagine that the next form of competition will be humanitarian in nature.' (*Geography* 5, p. 126 translated in Miyata, 2000).

As part of this humanitarian competition, he emphasised the rights to liberty, life and property based on the notion of independence

of the state. Miyata (2000) Drawing on the fashionable ideas of Charles Darwin and Spencer, in which competition spurred evolutionary progress, Makiguchi warned that such forms of thought:

‘...had led to colonialism and imperialism. While he admitted the influence of competition, he was not convinced of its exclusive importance. He sought a transition from the principle of competition to that of coexistence as the basis for social progress. He identified four stages of competition, from militaristic, to political, to economic and finally humanitarian.’ (*Geography* 5, p.173 translated in Miyata, 2000)

On the mode of militaristic competition he maintained that war was inseparable from international politics, that gains from war were limited and losses immense. Therefore, political mode of competition, spurred by diplomacy emerged because of the recognition that war was not useful for securing either economic gains nor peace. Eventually political competition gave way to economic competition. Expansion of territories was no longer worthwhile and no longer crucial for the survival of nation state. Controlling huge colonies was a drain on precious economic resources. Here Makiguchi made some pertinent observation in that ‘an absence of an international system to mediate economic competition would result in nation states becoming victim of exploitation resulting in increased poverty, misery and uncertainty’. Makiguchi indeed pre-empted the North-South divide (Miyata, 2000, p. 16). In a way, militaristic competition was a way to boost economic competition. He concluded that:

‘...economic victor is not necessarily the ultimate victor in the struggle for survival. It is therefore easy to imagine that an era of humanitarian competition will follow that of economic competition’ (*Geography* 5, p. 182, translated in Miyata, 2000).

Such a humanitarian competition implied ‘*an expansion of spiritual influence by the forces of culture, and morality*’. He states:

‘...in humanitarian competition, invisible force is used to naturally influ-

ence and inspire respect for others, in place of resort to subjugation by authority. This is a method of compassion and reason that attracts and draws others by the power of virtue, contrary to selfish territorial expansion and conquest. It is in accordance with humanitarianism' (*Geography* 5, p.183, translated in Miyata, 2000).

His ideas clearly demonstrated the need to protect and nurture the socially and economically marginalised population by controlling unbridled competition. This would be possible by transforming the ethos of competition to the ethos of cooperation and coexistence. To provide safeguards to those most affected by the economic downturn in the present day is what Makiguchi was urging us to do. He says: 'there are no simple humanitarian methods' (*Geography* 5, p. 183, translated in Miyata, 2000). Thus, the post-imperialism era was one of humanitarian competition. There was a clear recognition for building a community of nations identity (UN), which was to oversee the role and options for promoting humanitarian competition. These ideas resonate with ideas of human security, of development as freedom as advocated by Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen (1999). He identifies the five types of instrumental freedoms, which have a major bearing on human development. These include, political freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective security. Drawing upon Hegel's (1770–1831) ideas that 'the objective of the state lies in morality, in order to realise the supreme value for all citizens', Makiguchi (see Miyata, 2000, p. 183) called for a movement in the world order away from imperialism based on 'ego' to cooperation.

Today confronting the challenge of economic disaster, of economic downturn and the challenges to global environment have called into question the role of unregulated competition, of avarice and destruction. As Ikeda (2003, pp. 158–9) notes, only through a revolution in individual self can one establish the way towards humanitarian competition, or harmonious cooperation. The final part of the paper seeks to decipher the relevance of the key ideas of 'humanitarian competition' as proposed by Dr Daisaku Ikeda in the 2009 peace proposal. Here the transition from competition to cooperation is explored by tying together the key principles of global coexistence enunciated by both Makiguchi

and Ikeda in the context of expanding spiritual influence by the forces of culture, morality and virtue.

Competition towards conciliation

The transition from competition to cooperation is crucial for a sustainable world order. In a classic paper McAdams (1995) enumerates the key issues as to why individuals participate in making material sacrifices for the sake of group welfare. His contention is that a material view of human motivation underestimates the level and extent of individual cooperation. Therefore, because of concerns for achieving and maintaining status we find that cooperation as well as competition arises within groups. This is visible in any given civil society demanding changes to the political order of the day, be it Libya, or Syria or those seeking a revolution for tackling corruption in India. What we do find is that people generally cooperate beyond predicted levels of convention. Such 'excess cooperation' can be explained by membership to a group having endorsed a common code of action, philosophy, or ideology. This is distinctly different from ideas of rational choice mechanisms, of reciprocity or even that of altruism (McAdams, 1995, p. 1009). Given that individuals by nature are selfishly motivated, any form of cooperation must reflect some form of genuine altruism.

Why do we cooperate? This may be because of the notion of reciprocity based on limited goodwill that we each possess. We will make sure not to expend all of that goodwill in order to take care of emergencies that we may face in the future. The idea of genuine reciprocity is akin to the notion of 'changing karma' as espoused by the Buddhist philosophy. For example, in a Buddhist lay society, transforming 'karma' or negative effects in this lifetime, motivates cooperation to pray together not for the purpose of gaining any form of material advantage, but to feel secure in the knowledge that the positive causes one creates by praying for the happiness of others will manifest in their own lives in days to come. Discussions and repeated communications generally tend to increase the level of cooperation. Thus, someone known to us is facing a major challenge, it is commonplace for us to say, "you are in my thoughts, or I am praying for your health". The question is why do we subscribe to such a way of response? In fact the emergence of 'com-

passion, of empathy, or *Karuna* (as described in *Sanskrit*) becomes critical to this discussion (see Bornstein, et al, 1989, pp. 422–424 for an extended discussion). Invariably altruism and fairness do not always translate into exceptional cooperation. However we have examples to the contrary, when during a major crisis, we see the whole nation/ community praying for the recovery of their favourite media star, an actor, a sports star or indeed a famous political leader. Self-worth makes it worthwhile to be seen to cooperate (McAdams, 1995, p. 1018) Thus status creates a non-material incentive for cooperation among individuals in a group and the benefit they receive in response is esteem from their peers. This is one of the basic pleasures people seek in life (see McAdams, 1992). Having a ‘shared trait’ reinforces forms of cooperation, which is based on empathy and compassion, which is distinctly different from competition. In other words, esteeming others or thinking of others from a humanistic perspective, is a ‘valuable consumption good’, which is usually reflexive than being one of deliberate action (McAdams, 1995, p. 1025).

Thus, Ikeda urges us to retain one’s sanity under the glare of super-capitalism or hyper-capitalism (Reich, 2007). Any form of regulation calls for a paradigm shift, one which, exerts moral influence, to be respected rather than to be feared. To engage with humanitarian competition calls for a major shift from hard power to soft power, from subordination to one of engagement. In other words, this concept advances the Buddhist principle of peaceful coexistence or *Panchsheel* as a norm for human behaviour of love, kindness, sacrifice and peace through cooperation. Here equality and mutual benefit is the most significant of the five principles. Humanitarian competition can be achieved through strategic partnership, which are based on cooperation for peace and security. The spirit of *Panchsheel*, the five principles of peaceful coexistence promoted by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of Independent India (1955), highlights, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs, non-aggression (against militaristic and political competition) equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence (towards humanitarian competition). The idea of *Pansheel* was based on non-violence and tolerance. The concept of *Panchsheel* means that despite have one common objective towards

progress, there are different ways to achieve it and this will embrace different outlooks and approaches. The Buddhist principle of *Panchsheel* was based on the desire to rid the world of misery and war. This relates closely to another fundamental Buddhist concept of dependent origination, which means that all human and natural phenomena come into existence within a matrix of interrelatedness. To respect the uniqueness of our existence is reinforced by this concept. As Marsella (1995) notes, 'the very life force that is within me is the same life force that moves, propels and governs the universe itself and because of this I must approach life with a new sense of awe, humbled by the mystery of this truth, yet elated and confident by its consequences. I am alive! I am alive! This will help to reinforce natural empathy for the sacredness of life at all levels (Ikeda, 1995). Humanitarian Competition therefore provides the essential framework to establish a new world order as highlighted by both thinkers namely, Makiguchi and Ikeda.

Such forms of competition were seen in all fields from economic, to social and political. He called for a transition from such predatory forms of competition, of the survival of the fittest to one, which enhanced humanitarian forms of competition. In other words, this has resonance with the emerging ideas of 'competition with a human face,' which is distinct from cutthroat engagement. We have seen semblance of this form in the concepts such as 'technology with a human face'; Schumacher (1911–1977) or UNICEF's 'recovery with a human face'; and 'globalisation with a human face' (UNDP, 1999) and ideas associated with 'corporate social responsibility'.

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Humanitarian Competition: An Intellectual History in Perspective

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Competition has become the mantra for survival in a globalised world where meaningful existence is fraught with demands, which go beyond the material to the immaterial 'byte-size'. This has been exemplified by our obsession with illusions of immediate fame and fortune. This paper contextualises and extends the debate about the role of competition in general. Here the four major myths of competition are explored and deconstructed, from a Darwinian perspective to a more demonstrably engaged perspective on 'capabilities' (Sen, 1999). The second section deals particularly with the key debates, theories that influenced Tsunesaburo Makiguchi's seminal ideas of 'humanitarian competition' in 1903. The final part of the paper seeks to decipher the relevance of the key ideas of 'humanitarian competition' as proposed by Dr Daisaku Ikeda in his 2009 peace proposal. Here the transition from competition to cooperation is explored by tying together the key principles of global coexistence enunciated by both Makiguchi and Ikeda in the context of expanding spiritual influence by the forces of culture, morality and virtue. To engage with humanitarian competition calls for a major shift from hard power to soft power, from subordination to one of engagement. In other words this concept advances the Buddhist principle of peaceful co-existence, or *Panchsheel*, as a norm for human behaviour of love, kindness, sacrifice and peace through cooperation, where equality and mutual benefit are critical. Humanitarian competition provides the essential framework to establish a new world order as highlighted by both Makiguchi and Ikeda.