

The Same Boat

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THE RENAISSANCE TRIANGLE

Not long ago, a woman who was candidate to the presidency of France made a visit to Tunisian immigrants in Italy and made clear that they would not fit in France.¹ Not long ago, such statement would not make any sense and neither it would be welcome. Today it bears it is considered logical and is welcome in times of election, in spite of it being ethically rejected by those who believe in equal rights to all human beings.

What changed in the past decades was the perception that the social-economic-ecological space (SEES) is

1 Jean Marie Le Pen, *Philosophie Magazine*, Paris, April, 2011.

limited and that, as a result of this, the feeling of individualism began to prevail over that of solidarity.

All the socially progressive ideas and feelings that developed since the late XVIII in the West have their origin in the marriage between an unlimited progress which seemed possible and the intention of an ethics of solidarity. Historical optimism, like the capacity to overcome human hardship, can be found in remote antiquity. The story of Noah and his arch, in the Bible, is an example of this. In spite of him being supposed to choose only one couple of each species, it is said that he saved all mankind. Even though it is possible to identify yet among the ancient Greeks and in the teachings of Christ part of this feeling of Man having an evolutionary purpose, it is from the Renaissance on, with its philosophical stream coming specially from Hegel (1770-1831), and the Industrial Revolution stream, with Marx (1818-1883), that the combination of the visions of economic progress and social justice gathers strength.

Leszek Kolakowski, in his classical and monumental *Main Currents of Marxism*,² goes as far as Plotinus (204-270 AD) in his search for the origins of Marxism. Edmund Wilson in *Rumo à Estação Finlândia*³ is closer

2 Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, New York, Norton and Company, 2005.

3 Edmund Wilson, *Rumo à Estação Finlândia*, Rio de Janeiro, Companhia das Letras, 2006.

to Giambattista Vico (1668-1744) and Jules Michelet (1798-1874).

The history of the idea and of the social perception of progress is above all linked to the two latest centuries, especially when it sits on the shoulders initially of Adam Smith (1723-1790) and of Karl Marx. The first managed to formulate the base of the explication on how the new capitalist system would transform stones, plants and animals into men and their products; the second showed how that such system would walk through revolutions to lead the historical process of Man developing socialism, the egalitarian society.

Ever since, with the few exceptions of Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834) and Oswald Spengler (1880-1936), the thought of intellectuals, politicians and of the general public has been one of optimism.

The Renaissance and the Industrial Revolutions it led to, both in philosophical and scientific terms, managed to link the project of mankind to a triangular basis made of economic growth, social equality and political democracy.⁴ For centuries, such triangle changed its speech but remained present in all of the projects of civilization. Even capitalism, with its exploitation and inequality, kept the dream of having equality and democracy side

4 It is important to remember that this triangle coexisted with slavery; in spite of it being questioned even at the centers of power, and with imperialism, without losing, however, the perspective of freedom to each people.

by side. The long period of real socialism stood for the three sides of the triangle, even when sustaining a very heterodox concept of democracy. Only two short termed political systems refused to accept this triangle: the Nazi regime of Germany, which rejected democracy and promoted the exclusion of non-Arians, especially Jews; and South African apartheid, which excluded native Africans.

Even though divided by the economic vision and the social one, by left and right, since the French Revolution the process of civilization has moved forward, taking into account that its purpose is that of producing the maximum and to distribute it among everyone. To this social idea and practice was added the almost spontaneous tendency of expanding democracy in the activity of politics. With the expression of humanism it was possible to move forward with the human project of mastering nature and of providing justice and democracy to the economic dimension of growth.

In the early XXI century, one comes to highest point of this project, in democracy, through the expansion of democracy everywhere: in 1945 with the German defeat; in the decades of 1950-60, with the liberation of the colonial countries; in 1989, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and everything it meant, in Eastern Europe; in 2010, with the revolts in the Arab world. But there is also the realization of the limits to growth.

Growth was a natural tendency and equality was an automatic evolution, regardless of it being by using the

free forces of democracy and of the market or the conditioning of revolution and of state planning. Besides, each society was considered within the boundaries of each nation, without the need for planetary considerations.

Only very recently, in the early 1970's, a new critical thought made its arrival, having the book *The Limits to Growth* as its landmark, ordered by the Club of Rome and especially coordinated by Donella Meadows (1941-2001).⁵ The reaction to the report of the Club of Rome reveals the predominant force of optimism regarding the historical project of Man, both on the side of the capitalist developmentists as well as on the side of the Marxists.⁶ Called neo-Malthusianism, the book was left aside by the prevailing school of thought.

It took a few decades and the empirical realization of global warming for the theoretical projections of the Club of Rome to be able to confirm the limits to growth. Yet such limits only take place if beside the idea of growth is kept the idea that solidarity is part of the historical project of man: the idea that we are all on the same Boat.

5 Donella Meadows, Jorge Randers and Dennis Meadows, *The Limits to Growth*, 1972.

6 In 1980, an article of the author was refused by the Cebrap magazine, which argued that the idea of limits to growth was an invention of imperialism to avoid the growth of the Third World. Article "The Fetishism of Energy" was published later by the *Revista Pernambucana de Desenvolvimento*, January-June, 1982, v. 9, n. 1, Recife (PE).

When we limit the number of people benefiting from progress, the limits to growth disappear. By reducing the amount of passengers, the ferryBoat can remain on its path, without ethics but in environmental balance.

THE BOAT WITHOUT A COMPASS

Since the last decades of the XX century, the long period of optimism of the Renaissance and of the revolution in Science and Technique begins to reveal its failure. It happens at the same time: globalization knocking down national, social, political and cultural borders which, however, remain alive in politics; and the realization that the ecological balance is threatened by the forces of knowledge and the continuation and expansion of inequality. The conquests and successes of civilization where the cause of their own failure in different aspects:

The current reality is one of failure on different fronts:

- a) *Failure of finance*. In order to finance the growth of the economy, banks have to finance evermore finance the consumption that makes production dynamic and for longer periods of time, but such trend has reached its limit in many countries as was shown through the large crisis started in 1998.
- b) *Fiscal failure*. The search for making social services universal—health, education, pensions being paid earlier and in higher amounts, expenditures on infrastructure—depleted the fiscal capacity to build social justice with public resources.

- c) *Failure of knowledge.* The advance of knowledge is leading to the usage of science and technology for the development of societies more efficient at a micro level, but unfair and unsustainable at the macro level.
- d) *Failure of politics.* The long development of democracy undergoes a crisis when the social and economic crisis presents itself in a planetary and enduring scale, while political leaders has to look for the individual vote of each voter, responding to his immediate and personal interests.⁷
- e) *Failure of solidarity.* Man acquired planetary power yet remains selfish. Solidarity, except for very special saints, only occurs when there is a surplus of resources available.⁸ When resources become limited, solidarity vanishes first among individuals of different nations and then among neighbors in a same country.
- f) *Failure of the economy.* The economy failed as it cannot go on transforming nature into products at the speed it was used to without harming the

7 On this failure, refer to text by author: “The 21st Century Challenges to Politicians” (presented on 15-12-2009 when on the official mission of the parliamentary meeting at COP 15, UN Conference on Climate Change, Kopenhagen.

8 The film *2012* is a good example of such and applies well to the title of this text. At the moment of boarding the saving barges, the struggle would not allow for solidarity.

environment, without causing financial crises nor making people unequal.

- g) *Failure of intelligence.* Modern world has built concepts which reveal failure of intelligence. The development of modern weapons, regardless of them being of mass construction or those ironically called intelligent, shows the failure of logic when considering intelligent what is not ethical. Intelligence moves away from sensibility. Humanist intelligence failed to the point of one being able to say that the use of crematory furnaces was an intelligent way to solve a problem; that it was not chosen cleverly or at least by an intelligence married to the general welfare.
- h) *Failure of ethics.* Actually, the failure of intelligence is due to ethics being molded by technical progress rather than conditioning it to moral values. The ethics that strives for equity and fights death penalty, slavery and authoritarianism loses strength.
- i) *Failure of order.* As a whole, human society has got into an immense disorder. In the past decades we have seen moral values, geopolitics, national political structures, scientific paradigms, demographics, social-political systems and the ecology getting disorganized.
- j) *Failure of humanism.* The idea that Man was the master of nature was fragilized through the perception of a rebellious nature causing the phenomenon

of global warming, of the economic product not improving life anymore, of power causing radiation leakages from nuclear plants, of the destruction of biodiversity and of the immense lakes caused by hydropower plants.

- k) *Failure of success*. What surprises most is the fact that all those failures result from success, not of the failure, of the civilization born from the Renaissance and developed from the Industrial Revolution. It is a situation different from the failures of previous times, which were due to flaws and frailties rather than to efficiency and strength.

The context of this failure leads to the risk of there being several disasters, interrupting the cycle of optimism in the human project:

- a) *ecological*, through global warming and pollution, including the nuclear kind;
- b) *aging*, with changes in the age pyramid;
- c) *unemployment*, caused by technical progress;
- d) *inequity*, through the increase of distance between classes;
- e) *dissimilitude*, through the possibility of the use of biotechnology to make human beings different among themselves;
- f) *chaos*, especially of the urban kind;
- g) *vulnerability*, though the growing risk of international contamination in all sectors;
- h) *scarcity*, of natural resources and therefore of food and energy;

- i) *migration*, with intense flow of people throughout the Globe in search of survival and making pressure over local life conditions in the rich sectors;

Such failures brought to mankind the need to address problems as follows:

- a) *water*: how to preserve it?;
- b) *energy*: how to generate it?;
- c) *biodiversity and forest*: how to keep?;
- d) *climate change*: how to avoid or to adapt oneself?;
- e) *new progress indicators*: how to create and accept them?;
- f) *consumption standards*: how to modify them?;
- g) *poverty*: how to overcome it?;
- h) *science and technology*: how to condition it to ethical values?;
- i) *cities*: what to do about them?;
- j) *production and distribution standards*: how to provide efficiency?;
- k) *sustainable development*: what does it mean and how to promote it?;
- l) *green economy*: how to elaborate it and adopt it?;
- m) *happy decrease*: what are its consequences and possibilities?;
- n) *world governance*: how to achieve it?

As a matter of fact, the goals to be reached proved for very long not to be viable neither enough for all. The Boat has lost its compass: it cannot take everyone to the future that has been designed throughout the past two centuries.

Having come to this conclusion, there are three alternatives for the search for a compass:

A. *The shipwreck*: caused by the acceptance of the human tragedy of inevitably going on with its civilization process, which aims at the increase of production and the distribution of it among all, but knowing that such path leads to environmental disaster. Mankind would hardly disappear, but would undergo another throwback in a proportion equivalent or even larger to the one that took place after the fall of the Roman Empire, now made worse by the difficulties placed by an unbalanced environment where human beings would have to survive. Such alternative would confirm the idea of the incapacity of human beings to control their destiny, foreseen by Arthur Koestler (1905-1983) already in the 1950's, in the sense that the human being is the product of a mistake in the evolutionary process when it evolved to the point of having an unlimitedly rational brain, capable of explaining and manipulating reality, but bearing primitive instincts incapable of controlling the use of rational force. A suicidal brain capable of creating the Atom Bomb as well as to use it over its own species and the world it lives in. Koestler was not seeing yet the Other Bomb, the one of the Economy, producing and consuming in a voracious and uncontrolled manner and with a slow and silent explosion.

B. *The exclusive Boat*, which follows the same path of the human project of making the economy grow, rejecting solidarity and the distribution purpose, adopting

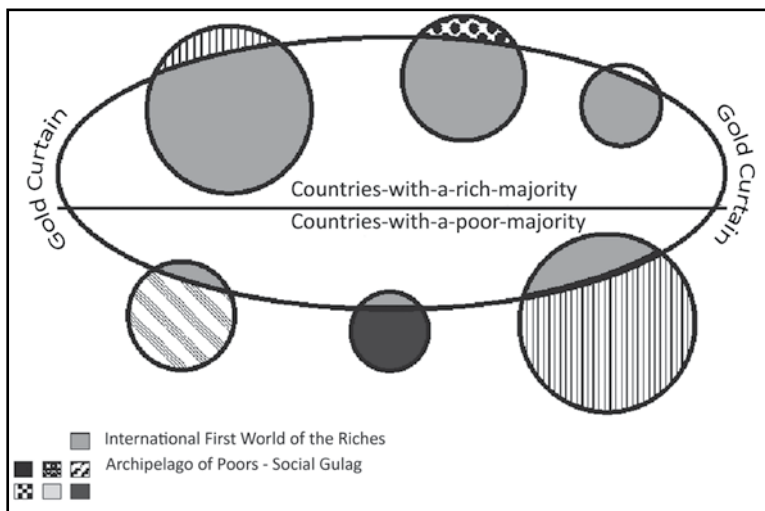
exclusion as a way to maintain ecological balance. It is the alternative adopted by the South African *apartheid* and by the Brazilian *apartação*,⁹ that is now beginning to be defended by philosophers but most of all by politicians in search of voters with an impatient and local perception, like in the speech of Ms Le Pen to the Tunisians when she makes clear that the Boat of France is not for everyone. It is the alternative shown by the movie *2012*, the mercantilist manifestation of Noah's Arc, where the fair is paid to keep ecological viability for few. Without changing production and consumption standards, it socially excludes. It is also the failure of the triangle based on democracy, social justice and growth, given the break-up with the ethics of equality.¹⁰

C. *A new orientation to the Boat.* Should we not want to sink together or exclude many, Our Boat must avoid disaster by fighting its causes and changing path through a civilization alternative; acknowledging that the Boat must have room for all of us, of today and the future. For the

9 Ver do autor *O que É Apartação, o Apartheid Social Brasileiro*, São Paulo, Editora Brasiliense, 1994.

10 What Ms. Le Pen said has much to do with the more discrete explanation given by President Obama at the meeting in Copenhagen, in the sense that there is no president of the World, that each president speaks and is committed to his voters. At that meeting, only one president spoke to all: President Mohamed Nasheed, of the Maldives. His voters have a feeling and a purpose that goes far beyond the country frontiers as global warming will lead to the flooding of all its islands. In order to survive, the Maldives require a planetary ecological balance.

ethics of solidarity to survive and to keep everyone, of today and the future, on the same Our Boat, it will be mandatory to opt for breaking up with the current way of growing, to bring down the Gold Curtain¹¹ which spreads throughout the Planet dividing each country within itself and which internationally separates the rich from the poor. The overthrowing of the Gold Curtain would make room for everyone on Our Boat, yet with another standard for production and consumption.



EDUCATIONISM: A NEW HUMANISM

Mankind finds itself at a crossroad: should we allow the Boat for All to stay on its way to shipwreck?

¹¹ On this, refer to book by the author, *A Cortina de Ouro*, São Paulo, Editora Brasiliense, 1994.

Should we choose the Boat for Few, keeping the same path and limiting the number of passengers? Or should we invent a new path, a new civilization project guided by a new humanism?

This crossroad is the consequence of a natural and cultural history that started long time ago.

The present *Homo crucis* is the result of an evolution that provoked several mutations since *Homo sapiens*.

1. Seven Turns and a Crossroad

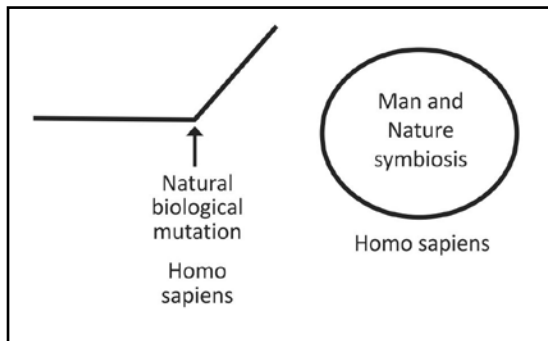
The natural history of mankind shows a constant changing, until the present stage of civilization. Usually, this long story occurred in the form of simple, steady, imperceptible developments. In other times, however it implied deep changes, mutations, as if the course of humanity made a turn. After each mutation, a new kind of man appeared, profoundly different from its earlier stage.

The observation of this historical process allows us to identify turns where the human mutations took place, until it reached the present stage of civilization: a crossroad where humankind will choose the path to the future. For the first time, humanity can anticipate which road leading to the future must be followed. All the previous turns happened spontaneously, for natural and cultural reasons, under the influence of biology, environment and intelligence, but without an anticipation of the direction to be followed. Today, humankind can foresee the risks and possibilities ahead.

a) *Homo sapiens*. The first of these historical turns was the biological mutation, which occurred probably in

Africa, between 400,000 and 100,000 years ago. This biological mutation, that gave rise to the civilization as it is today, was the result of the natural history of the Cosmos, of Earth, and finally of Life in the Planet over the past 400 million years, and of the pre-humans that exist for about 7 million years.

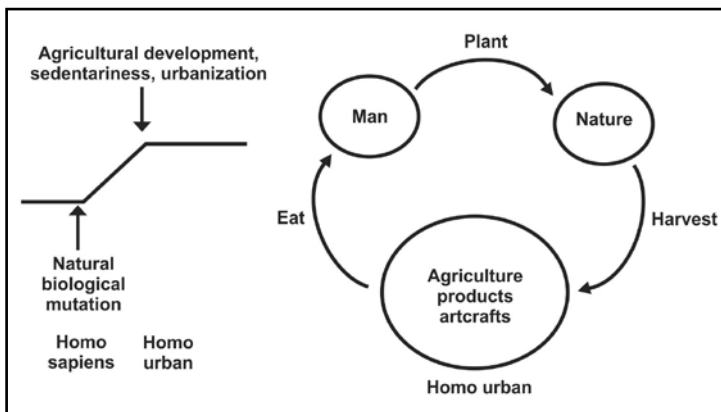
A natural, largely random process, turned mixed DNAs into a new biological being with a more powerful brain than the one of other animals. *Homo sapiens* appeared. Had this biological mutation not occurred, the entire history of humankind would still be on hold, as it still happens to other animal species that, after hundreds of millions of years, have not suffered a biological mutation to give them the ability to think, as happened to the *Homo sapiens*.



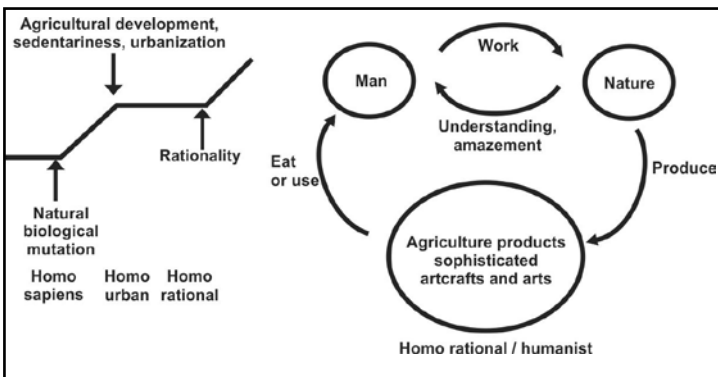
b) *Homo urban*. For thousands of years, this new animal developed a sophisticated language and the ability to use their hands to make tools, dominated the fire, created art forms, and developed habits. But he remained nomadic, living out or hunting and extracting, as many

Homo sapiens groups still live today. About 10,000 years ago, in several parts of the Globe, especially in Mesopotamia, the first possibilities of agricultural production and therefore of life in settled communities occurred. Mankind was making its second turn: the one of sedentary farming, creating the conditions for the emergence of *Homo urban*.

Although the same biological being, *Homo urban* differentiated himself from *Homo sapiens*, to an extent that he could be considered a new man. Metaphorically, it is legitimate to say that sedentarism and urban life is a social, economic and cultural mutation from the *Homo sapiens*. This turn allowed systematic dialogue, the accumulation of physical and intellectual assets that gradually created memory and written language, and developed the dynamic and evolving thinking, gathering more and more abstract, speculative and explanatory power.

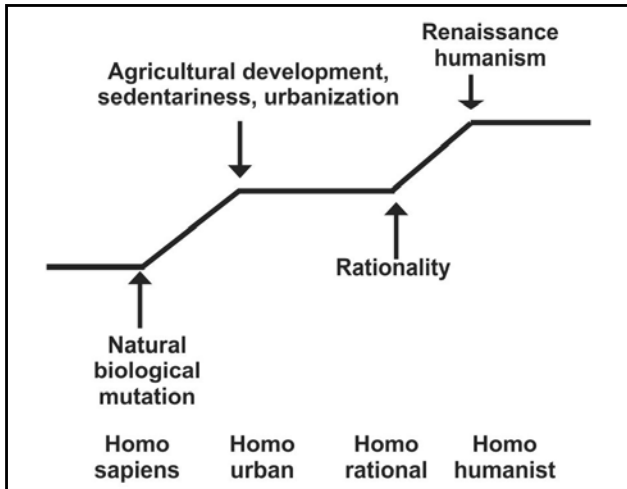


c) *Homo rational*. Without the urban evolution, it would not have been possible the following turn, in Greece, around 2500 years ago, when men developed the logical reasoning. Again, a new man appears, sapiens, sedentary, urban, and reason-biased: the *Homo rational*. He was capable of a sophisticated thinking, of developing logic, able not only to think, but also to realize this ability, differentiating himself from the rest of nature. A being possessing not only the intelligence of the *Homo sapiens*, but also with the ability to look at the world at a distance, for being different and able to translate what he saw into intellectual models. The specific formation of rational thinking in Greece lasted for centuries, but it is fair to say that suddenly—if compared with the history of *Homo sapiens*—, a group of beings, living close to each other and exchanging ideas, gave the big logic, analytical, and reasoning leap. This turn started the development of the scientific and technological potential and the formulation of ideas of democracy, tragedy, ethics, aesthetics that brought civilization to its present status.



d) *Homo humanist*. The fall of Rome, in the hands of the barbarians, abruptly interrupted the development of rationality. The end of the Greco-Roman classicism and the predominance of the Catholic Church built a barrier, made of faith and orthodoxy, which obstructed the rational debate. For almost a thousand years, *Homo rational* struggled to make rationality advance. However, in Western Europe, as of the fourteenth century, the rationality met both a rebirth and a leverage: scientific knowledge and artistic skills have allowed the emergence of modern aesthetics and thinking.

The new renaissance man not only laid the foundations of science and contemporary arts, but also the basis of humanism: separated faith from reason, discovered individuality, created the artistic painting as we know it, in addition to classifying the Earth as a small piece of matter, like billions of others, in the center of the cosmos, but giving a higher dimension to humans, giving rise to humanism. As the Earth diminished, the man grew. The *Homo renaissance* is also the *Homo humanist*: able to scientifically understand the world and to explain it with the use of mathematics, but also to understand his position and strength, regardless of any Divine will, and dream about utopias in this life built by man's hands and brain.



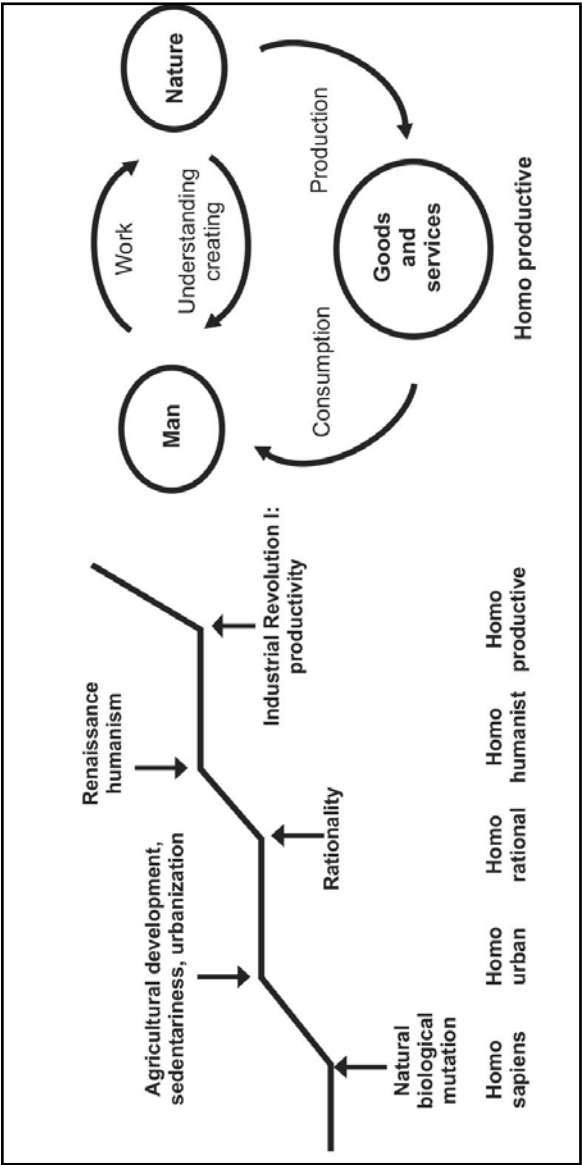
e) *Homo productive*. So far, civilization advanced in arts, philosophy, and science, but without fundamental leaps in the productive technologies used by man to transform nature in the goods and services used in daily social life. Despite all the leaps in the rational and humanistic thinking, the intelligence was still mainly used for philosophical speculation and the descriptions of science. Few revolutions occurred in the development of techniques to raise productivity in the economic life. Agriculture advanced little since the Mesopotamian and Egyptian irrigation techniques, industrial process differed little from the exploitation of energy using water, the wheel, the wind and domesticated animals.

It was only after a few decades between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, in England mostly, that the scientific thinking was put into use, aimed at the technical development, mainly to increase the production

of industrial goods. Many advances such as the discovery of the wealth in the American continent, the navigation and inventions such as the train, the loom, the telegraph, and the energy of steam, led to the Industrial Revolution. The *Homo industrial* appeared in the form of *Homo productive*. For the first time, mankind was using its thinking abilities to increase the production, so as to meet their needs, in the market. The productions are enriched by the amount of knowledge used in inventions and in the dissemination of new techniques.

Homo industrial, in the form of *Homo productive*, was a new type of man, facing the high productivity and the market as means of meeting human needs as efficiently as possible: producing more and reducing the required effort. This revolution helped consolidating man's feeling of power over nature and to brought about the dream of utopia, not as Homo humanist of renaissance's "anywhere", but as a "here & soon."

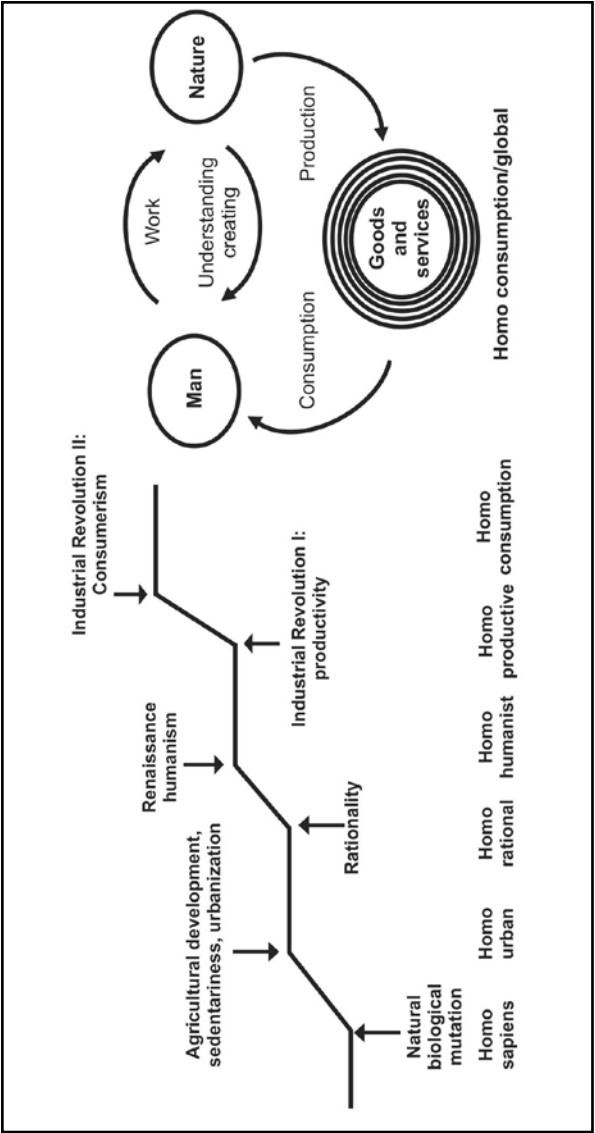
Industrial utopians arise with both capitalist and socialist perspectives. Everybody believed that history would evolve to a better world by simply increasing the productivity, and that the technical progress itself would induce social changes unlike any other turns made by civilization. The dispute was reduced to the best production and distribution system, on how the economy would produce—not on what it would produce. The historical reality would be very surprising in the upcoming turns.



f) *Homo consumer*. As of the early nineteenth century, especially in the U.S., the rationality started to be employed more in creating new products than in new ways of producing them. Mankind make the turn that created *Homo consumer*.

Humanity, that had arisen, settled down, acquired rational thinking, and developed its technical ability to produce more and faster, began—as of the early nineteenth century—to use intelligence to invent new products. The creativity from within the plant, to create new production methods, went off the factory, to create new products. Instead of reducing needs, rational intelligence started presenting new needs. Necessity was replaced by demand, driven by the originality of new products and by advertising techniques.

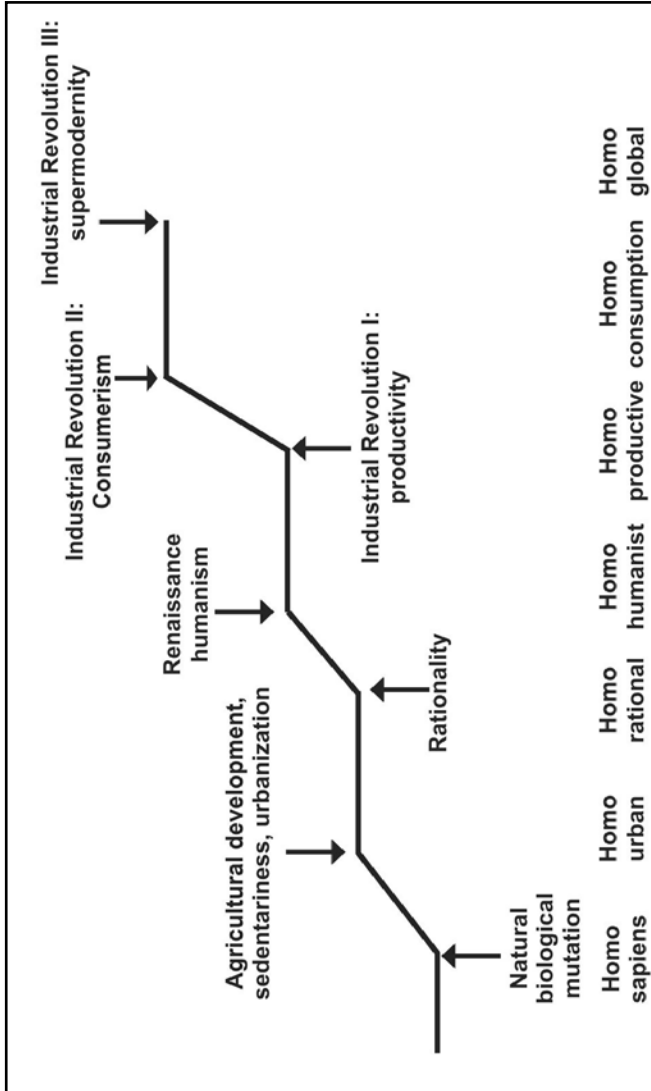
Homo consumer is a different man: he is driven by the voracious consumption. His utopian goal lays on increasing consumption, as if he had become a machine ready to devour every product of an economy apparently detached of man's will. Although each turn previously made was determinant to mold humanity as it is today, it was the *Homo consumer* turn that determined the present state of civilization. However, even with the logic of intellectual curiosity and search for reduction needs by means of the least effort, the consumerist option still requires a logical explanation—why does man looks to consume more, instead of work less, or enjoy the free time.

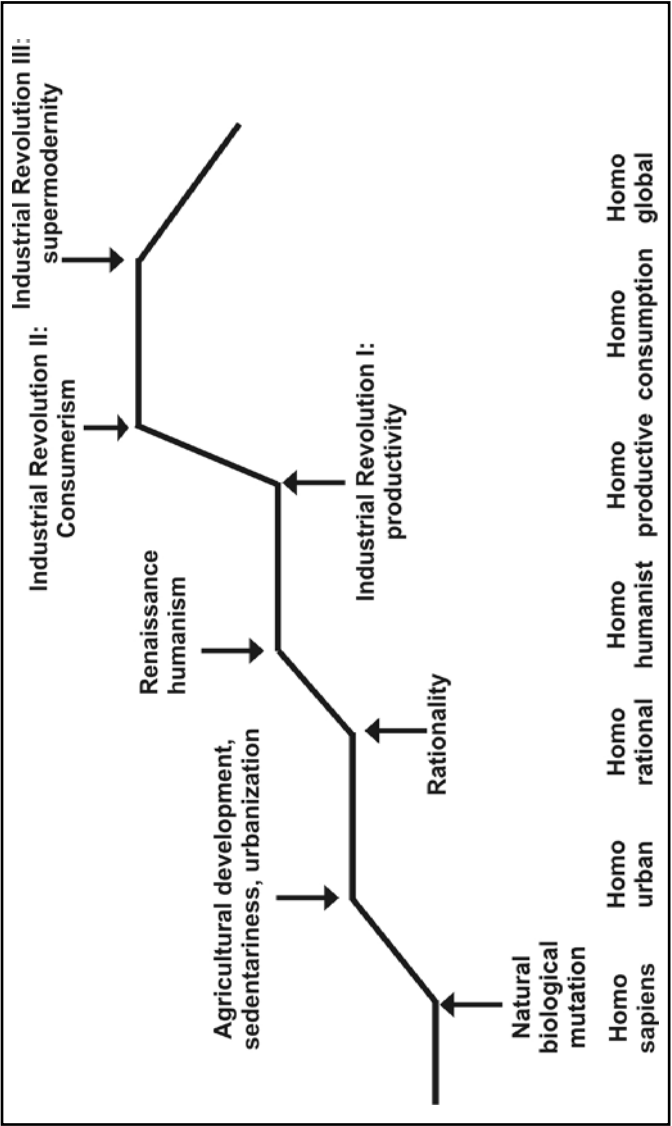


g) *Homo global*. During the last three decades, the *Homo consumer* spread all over the globe. He made another historical turn and became *Homo global*. His main feature is to keep the voracious desire for consumption at a planetary market scale: an urbanized world, united in the access to information, tastes, habits, and an uncontrolled thirst for new goods. Products are outdated and replaced at breakneck pace; while society wastes human lifetime (spent on unnecessary work or on paralyzing traffic jams), devastate nature and its resources, destroy cultures, and threatens life.

The observation of the current civilization shows a humanity that is both integrated and divided; each country crossed by a “Golden Curtain” that separates the riches from the poor by visible or invisible walls, and unites the riches of the world. One could say that this is a “civilization of walls” separating social groups, more brutally than before, when walls protected countries and cities in the medieval times.

The ecological and moral crises—global warming and growing social inequality—threaten the continuation of the natural course of history. If a different path is not taken, *Homo global* will be heading to an ecological crisis of catastrophic proportions at planetary scale, and to a level of inequalities that will lead to a division of humanity: two beings so different that may not recognize each other as the same species, causing a rupture in the feeling of similarity among human beings.



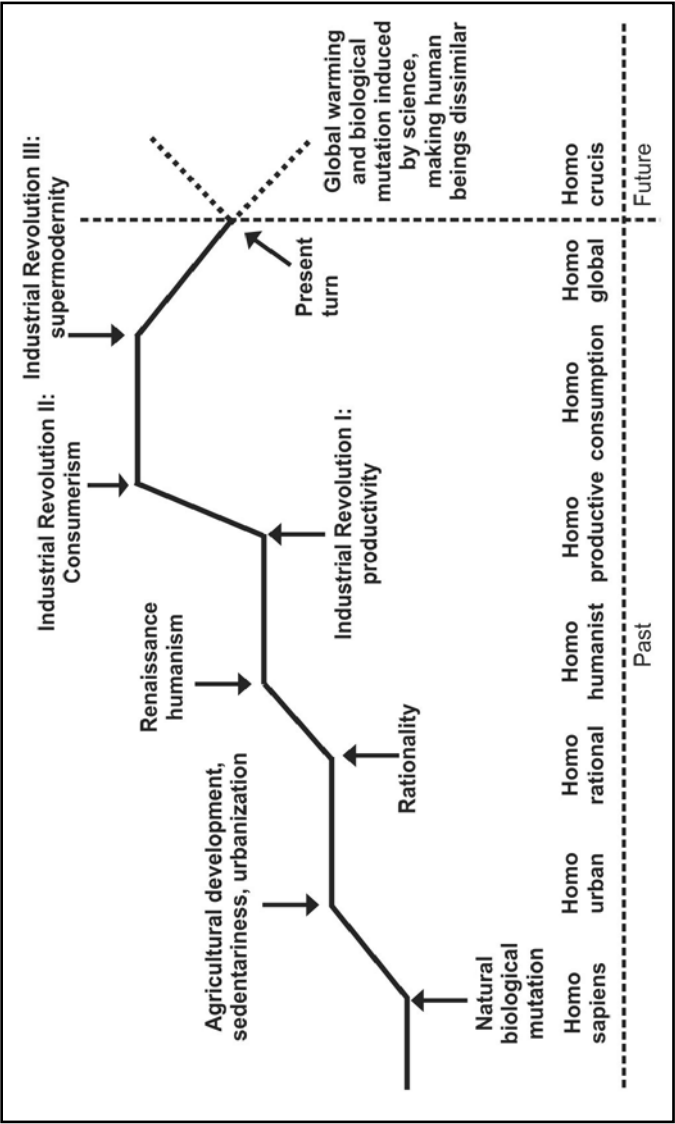


h) *Homo cruces*. *Homo global*'s greedy consumerism and thirst for technological power led humanity and civilization to a major crossroad in man's history: we're *Homo crucis*. But unlike our ancestors, for the first time we are able to experience the anguish of anticipating the potential risks ahead, aware that we can control the destiny of our species, born a few million years ago.

In the coming decades, humanity has two options: to continue the same course of evolution, moving towards the ecological destruction and a biological mutation scientifically induced to benefit only one part of human beings, or to reorient the future, subjecting the civilization advancement to the ecological balance and to equal rights ensured to all humans.

If the choice is to remain in the course of the past, another turner will be made, and a *Neo Homo sapiens* will emerge—smarter, healthier, living longer than the traditional *Homo sapiens*. A repetition of what already happened in the past, when *Homo sapiens* and *Homo neanderthalensis* were contemporaries, now with *Homo sapiens* and the *Neo Homo sapiens* being contemporary. But if the option is for a complete reorientation, the new turn will result in a new kind of man.

In the first case, the *Neo Homo sapiens* evolution will be the result of scientific and technological advancements, controlling humankind, and the continuation of the dehumanization of humanism at its present state. In the second case, technical advance will be subject to ethics, and a new man will be the product of a new humanism.



2. The Dehumanization of Humanism

Homo sapiens was created by the forces of nature, their civilization has been formed by the forces of intelligence. This intelligence however has proven to fail in the guiding of civilization. The humanism has emerged as the possibility of looking at the cosmic phenomenon centered on humans, placing human beings as much more than mere cosmic dust. But humanity was forgotten, and humanism began to threaten the integrity of humanity.

Humanism was crucial for the cultural differentiation between the classic and the contemporary world. It resulted from the merge of the recovered classical Greek thinking with the sense of the primacy of man over the Earth and the supernatural prospects of a man with a fate. Humanism consolidated man as a being apart from the rest of nature: separated and dominant. This vision not only prevailed, but was consolidated by the absolute domination and transformation of nature by man.

While the humanism consolidated itself, it began a course of dehumanization: the atomic bomb is a single symbol of the creation of an esquizofrenic civilization. The human being dominated nature, using the technology that he created, and humanity started to be dominated by technology, that now defines the characteristics of the social system, destroying the environment and increasing social inequality.

We continue to walk in the path to the contempt and depredation of any culture that does not adapt to the mainstream of technological advance and new developments

of the industrial economy. As a result, as foreseen in the Greek myths, “the sorcerer’s apprentice lost control of his work,” “opened Pandora’s Box,” “Prometheus was chained”, and “Sisyphus started carrying rocks in an illogical and self-consuming work.” Instead of reaching the promised freedom, humanity was trapped by human technological progress.

In this situation, enraged humanism dehumanized itself and shows its true colors—ecological unbalance and ethical wickedness—and faces a determinant crossroads. It shall either destroy its habitat and civilization, or redirect its project, launched by the new humanism.

3. The New Humanism

The new humanism must be built upon eight pillars.

a) Planetary Politics

One of the great achievements of humanism was the discovery and consolidation of the individuality of human beings. It has removed the old dilution of the individual within social classes, ensuring personality to each person. Following the discovery and acceptance of the importance of the individual, democracy has allowed the building of modern national states, and citizenship—the Greek creation that indicated the commitment of city residents to the city itself—began to indicate the level of commitment to the whole country.

The planetary crisis requires an intricate change: from citizenship to *planetany*, meaning the individual commitment to the fate of humankind and of the Earth.

Without abandoning individuality, this new humanism must be sensible to the importance of all of human beings, to the feeling of global solidarity. Any different choice will mean the end of humanism.

b) Respect to Diversity

Humanism is a product of the Western world. It was arrogant in the conversion and genocide against indigenous peoples of America, in prison and enslavement of Africans, in the destruction of cultures, even inside Europe, by widespread anti-Semitism, anti-Gypsies, anti-Islamism. The Eurocentric views of Homo industry—productive, consumerist or global (capitalist or socialist)—considered other cultures as inferior, rearward, sentenced to death. The new humanism must get rid of Eurocentrism, must become acentric and respect cultural diversity, considering the variety of cultures as a civilizational wealth indicator.

c) Respect to the Environment

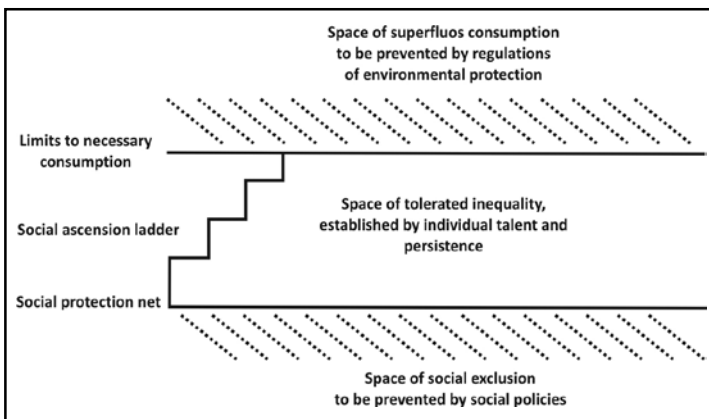
Humanism was irresponsibly arrogant in regard to nature. It has destroyed natural resources, undermined the ecological balance and consequently threatens the continuity of civilization, seeing no value in nature. Only human labor or a price set by the market generate value on a threatened and worthless planet. The value of trees was lumber; of animals was meat, leather. The new humanism must assign value to nature, even in his “raw” condition.

The new humanism should seek a civilization fully integrated to the environmental balance. The economic

output should not be measured only by the sum of material goods and services – the GDP. It must, on the opposite, take into account any cost due to wastes occurred during the production process.

d) *Limits of Inequality*

Humanism was the basis for the equality dream, but capitalism widened inequalities to an extent that allows differences in life expectancy according to the personal income. Socialism, on the other hand, tried to force an unattained equality, by sacrificing individual liberties. The new humanism must ensure equal opportunities that will act as a ladder of social ascent, drawing an ecological line to define limits to the consumption that depletes the environment and institute a safety net for those in need of protection; it shall protect the dispossessed, thus accepting the inequality resulting of effort and innate talents, provided that they are within those ecological limits.



e) *Humanist Production*

The idea of human production as a symbol of progress and the recognition of human labor as the source of value were creations of the *Homo productive*. The idea of labor value, instead of land value, made man the value-maker and put workers in the center of the production process. However, this great leap, that fit the time of *Homo productive*, has changed into an anti-humanism factor, when the value was transformed in price, defined by the mystic market forces.

After the humanism improvement from the mystic idea of a metaphysical theory of value, humanism accepted the mystic market forces as beyond human control. Explanations replace justice, demands replace will, and consumerism desires replace the fulfillment of needs. The new humanism must redefine the march of the nations and of humankind towards an ecologically balanced production process. Besides, it must assign value to non-tradable goods, those produced and consumed outside the market. The aesthetic creation and leisure time should be considered as a positive result of the production process.

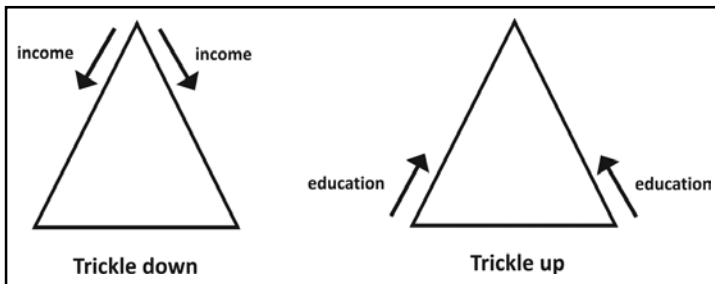
Moreover, the new humanism must be freed of the imprisonment of productivity, seeing man as an entity that exercises freedom, not as a flesh-and-bone tool that will operate other production tools. The new humanism must abolish slavery that endures, when it imprisons man as a mere piece of the production process.

f) *Integration Through Education*

Homo industrial's humanism promised a world of equal income, thanks to the economy. Capitalism said that the increase in production and the laws of the market would lead to a “trickle down”, distributing the income from top to bottom of the social pyramid; whereas in socialism, the distribution would be ensured by the state and the laws of planning.

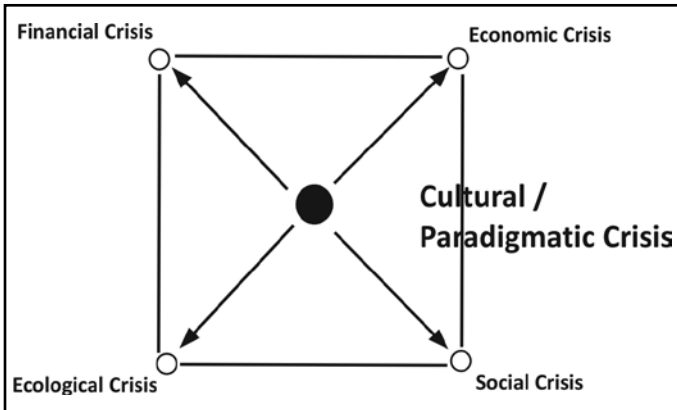
Under capitalism, there was a distribution of consumption goods, especially among half the members of the social pyramid. However, culture, and health are still concentrated in the top. Under socialism, there was restriction to the consumption and no freedom of choice, even of culture, health and educational goods.

Nowadays, under the new knowledge and human capital economy, the key to economic progress and social justice must be sought in quality education for all. The challenge of the new humanism is to ensure that each child has access to equally good education, regardless of race, family income or place of residence. The capitalism “trickle down” will no longer come from the market, but instead from a “trickle up” induced by education.



Humanism created the idea that revolution and utopia would be provided by the economy, both in capitalism and socialism. The new humanism believes the only possible revolution and utopia will be provided by education: by the educationism.

The long-term purpose of this process will be the integration of all peoples around the world, using all available techniques in a planetary network. More than the global economic integration, the utopian purpose of the new humanism should be the cultural respect and assimilation around the Planet.



g) *Subordination of the Technical*

Advancement to Ethical Principles

The industrial process of civilization is characterized by the pursuit of the technical modernity, defined by the use of up-to-date technology. This required the

creation of an economic rationality that justifies products of cutting-edge technology and leaves behind the social goals, thus relegating ethical values. The new humanism must use ethical values as vectors that set up the social goals, and will see them as the foundation of an economic rationality that defines all technical choices. Even here, techniques should be chosen according to ethical and aesthetical standards, not only in terms of economic efficiency.

The technical modernity, defined by the originality of technology and of humanism, will be replaced, in the new humanism, by the ethical modernity. For instance, instead of being defined by the number of private cars in circulation, modern transportation would be judged by its results: reduction in travel time, user comfort, punctuality, universal access.

h) *A New Vocabulary: New Words
for a New Vision of the World*

Humanism was a time of new words explosion. The new vision of the world required these new words. Five hundred years later, the world is eager for new words and new definitions for old words.

Development, progress, wealth, growth, poverty, Third World, socialism, capitalism, sustainable, employment, civilization, primitive are some words that need new definition. New words are needed to explain new concepts:

- Hot to name the new progress and development that will submit the values of wealth to the ethical

values, such as ecological balance, poverty abolition, and cultural diversity?

- How to name the assemblage of people that are integrated worldwide by culture, consumption and purposes, regardless of the country they live?
- How to name the new utopia that is beyond development, communism or any of the existing terms?
- How to name the workers that are no longer proletarians, but instead well-paid operator of intelligent tools?
- How to name the rational knowledge that is committed to ethical and aesthetical values?
- How to name the “good” goods, so different of the “bad” goods that destroy instead of create?
- How to name the new social product that indicates much more than the GNP or the HDI?
- How to name the new planetary political sentiment that will replace citizenship?

4. *Peace among Civilizations*

a) Avatar Is Here—Dialogue among Cultures and with Nature

Quite possibly, no book reflects better the war between civilizations than the movie *Avatar*. Using today’s cinematographic language, the movie shows the war that happens nowadays between the western civilization and other peoples worldwide, through the metaphor of the struggle between brutal humans with their heavy

technology and highly spiritualized extraterrestrials, integrated among them and with nature. Perhaps the greatest proof of the dehumanization of humanism is the human soldier of the Avatar movie, who dresses like a huge robot and gives a superior force to a heartless man, with the unique purpose of destroying nature and the people he considers as inferior.

In the movie, aliens are destroyed, mechanized, and the antiecological humanity continues, possibly preparing itself for another expedition to destroy the “primitive” Avatars. In the reality of modern civilization, the war happens on Earth, and defeat is unthinkable for nations in possession of advanced technologies. Nonetheless, the *Homo global* carries its self-destruction.

The new humanism needs to pacify the struggle between cultures: see each culture as a wealth on its own, and the relationship between them is greater than the sum of the parts. East and West, Christians and Islamic, cultures can certainly be richest together than separated—or at war. The same applies to relationships between the global *Homo sapiens* and the hundreds of groups which still live a more primitive life.

b) *The NEFA—New Education for All*

The new humanism will not allow civilization to be controlled by forces that are stronger than human will—either the market or the technical advance—nor will be tempted by the utopia imposed by an authoritarian

social engineering. Like Einstein trying to dialogue with God—in whom he did not believe—to learn how he had drawn all the details of the world, the new humanism must imagine the ideal way to build a civilization that is democratic, tolerant, efficient for humanity and for each human being, and that respects nature. The only way is the dialogue between people and between men and nature. The new humanism will promote the dialogue between cultures and mother Earth.

Like in the old humanism, before *Homo productive*, the innovative path is education. But a new education that ensures:

- i. ethics in personal behavior;
- ii. social solidarity;
- iii. respect for nature;
- iv. respect for diversity;
- v. indignation against the injustices and prejudices
- vi. proper training for the use of computers;
- vii. full learning of at least one foreign language;
- viii. taste for culture;
- ix. social habits and physically health;
- x. learning of Mathematics and Science;
- xi. ability to learn and relearn after school;
- xii. lifelong and permanent learning.

This new education can not be restricted to a few human beings. It must be spread all over the Globe, especially among children. The basis is a worldwide program of a new education for all and of a reform of the university.

The *Homo global* is a product from the economic globalization built as of World War II, thanks to the role of international financial institutions, started in Bretton Woods. The new man will be the product of an international effort for global education.

c) *A World Program for Education*

After the World War II, humankind saw an economic development jump all over the Earth, especially thanks to an international financial effort: a commitment of the international financial system, and many other institutions, to rescue the after-war Europe and to induce the take-off at developing countries. After half a hundred years, humankind looks around and sees a wonderful world of comfort, productivity, wealth, together with an atrocious world of poverty, inequality, cultural and ecological depredation, energy depletion, social deprivation. The near future needs a similar global effort, now on education for all, everywhere.

This is highly possible, if we can summon a global education program, a sort of New Global Marshall Plan to educate people, especially children of the world. This plan would cost around US\$ 200 billion per year, in some years from now. The equivalent to less than 0.5% (5/1000) of the world personal income, or to 10% of the U.S. banking system rescue package (US\$2 trillion) in the 2008 crisis, nearly equivalent to what President Obama will spend in education for American children (US\$ 127 billion), as part of the economy rescue plan (US\$ 819 billion).

Instead of the world financial system, UNESCO could be the center of the new global educational development to rescue humankind from the wreckage of a two-century industrial civilization mistakes.