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**Subjects of  
University of Synthesis**

## **ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS**

**Planetary Expansion of Consciousness  
For an Ecological Civilization**

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## ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Now we celebrate the “Environment Day” and face a very **critical** moment on the world level. Both unbalance in nature and unbalance in man form a unique eco-systemic unbalance on the planetary scale. We all are aware of dangers threatening outside by and through environmental deterioration (air pollution by toxic gases, earth pollution by radioactive waste, greenhouse effect, ozone hole, and water pollution by industrial waste). But there is a far deeper danger, namely, water pollution within (in our own physiology). Certain social diseases, expanded on the planetary scale (AIDS, dangerous syndrome of acquired immunodeficiency, general use of hard drugs, moral decay and organised crime) all this makes us feel that the genetic heritage of humanity is threatened. And this is serious indeed.

Then, if this is so, we can wonder: “What do we celebrate at this Environment Day?”

Our celebration is that we are aware of the real existence of these troubles, of this **global** challenge (affecting us in one way or another), and of the fact that in case of an eco-system unbalance (including man), all this jeopardises not only the survival of humanity on Earth, but also threatens life itself of Earth.

Also, our celebration is that, to tackle with these troubles, partial answers or fragmented (political, economic or technologic) discourses are insufficient –a **global action** is actually required.

In our opinion, a pedagogic complement to this subject “*Ecological Unbalance and Global Response*” may be this video of the “*World Conference about Environment and Human Development*”, arranged by the “*Global Forum*” and held in Moscow (January 1990), under the sponsorship of the Supreme Soviet, the Soviet Academy of Sciences, and the Russian Orthodox Church.

This “*Conference*”, under the title “*Global Forum II*”, has been transmitted by TV satellite to 114 countries and to 15 nations of the Intersputnik area. In Argentina, thanks to efforts made by the “Link Committee for University of Synthesis”, the Coordination Sub-Secretary of the Presidency of the Republic, declared this “*Conference*” of national interest, and we can watch its development in real time.

On this video, we have watched tremendous damages committed by man against life in the planet –astronauts showing, from the Soviet orbital station, devastation in the Amazon jungle– and, in the face of this patent deterioration in the natural habitat of man, here a question arises.

### **What is our future?**

–An ecological catastrophe?,  
what might be equivalent to the end of the times!  
Or the awakening of an “ecological consciousness?”

Certain prophecies unhesitatingly announce an **apocalyptic future** as the result of an atomic or ecological catastrophe. Thomas Berry, an outstanding philosopher and ecologist, says, at the rate we are going, it is impossible to discard an “earthly mass reaction”.

Other messages are more optimistic and aim at a “**revolution of hope**”. On his last years, Erich Fromm wrote this book: “*The Revolution of Hope*”.

The implied message of the “technological revolution” has much weight on the collective mind in the frame of these revolutions. It is what Thomas Berry calls “technological trance”, namely, the state of consciousness assumed by the technological revolution as a “salvation message”. According to this belief, the technological transcendence can be replaced by the spiritual transcendence.

In short:

Apocalyptic messages, on the one hand,  
Messages of hope, on the other hand.

But, beyond these reductive messages –restricted by a lineal conception of the historic time– “other” vision of the world appears, and “other” questions arise.

### **What are these questions?**

Perhaps is the ecological unbalance, social pathology, and existential crisis of the contemporary man nothing more than the **dark face** of a “new human phenomenon”, which still we are unable to understand?

When the artist who made the video “*Global Forum*” shows the image and voice of the Mother Earth (like a woman) talking to us from the hyperspace, does not he point to a new **cosmic archetype**, now constellated on the collective unconscious of humanity?

Or, quite inadvertently, are we right now in a **new age**, being ourselves of **other time**, and our responses for the time being to our troubles are for other world, for a world that is gone?

In short, as Thomas Berry says, did we start a “New History”, which rather than new answers, is demanding new instruments (new eyes to see and new ears to hear)?

Last year (November 1989), it was pleasant to talk to Professor Manfred Max-Neef, Alternative Nobel Prize in Economy and author of the book *“Barefoot Economy”*, and a member to Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (with branches in Sweden, Canada and Chile); he lectured on *“Development on Human Scale: a Choice for the Future”*, under the auspices of the *Argentine Scientific Society and Link-Committee for University of Synthesis*. After his lecture, we asked his opinion about the future of humanity. He mentioned three possible scenarios on the horizon:

First scenario, **“global catastrophe”** (by nuclear war or ecological catastrophe).

Second scenario, **“social catastrophe”** (by population explosion, underdeveloped countries migrating en masse to wealthier countries for job, or by social implosion, marginalized people rushing en masse into residential areas for food: far more dangerous social outbursts than those outbursts ever known up to these days).

And finally,  
third scenario, **“global solidarity”**.

And I wonder, **What is global solidarity?**

Max-Neef did not develop this subject of “global solidarity”, but emphasised the chain reaction eventually triggered off by individual action and personal testimony in a highly sensitised social mass, like in the world today. And as an instance, he gave that of the black woman in the United States: in a bus, the latter did not give her seat to a white lady, and this seemingly insignificant geste, started a chain reaction in favour of racial non-discrimination.

In my opinion and feeling, this “global solidarity” is far deeper. Beyond its importance as “human brotherhood” or “social ethics”, “global solidarity” implies the awakening of a **cosmic feeling in man**, expansive consciousness in the human being, which makes him feel linked with all living forms together on Earth and with those living forms beyond Earth. The wonderful work –made by the Japanese man in the video, communicating by and through his own voice with the chick moving in the egg, and helping this chick to be born, and later to fly– gives us an example of **this “new function of co-evolutionary participation on a human and cosmic scenario at the same time”**.

It is the sacred art of the new masters: “teaching to fly”. An art that does not deny the technique: on the contrary, it uses both science and technique as suitable tools to the development of consciousness.

At this point, some words about “University of Synthesis”.

### **What is “University of Synthesis”?**

–Rather than a new institution, it is a **new guiding function**, which emerges in a society that right now operates as a global economy and a global village. It is a new tool for the development of an expansive consciousness in the new civilisation of Synthesis, a “bridge” between the Way of Knowledge and the Way of Life.

Since the beginning of the century, several (scientific, social, spiritual) currents try to build a bridge between Knowledge and Life; in other words, this implies a search of the equation of a unified field between laws of the cosmos and laws of man.

University of Synthesis is one of these pedagogic unifying tools, whose purpose is to create suitable conditions to the development of an emerging cosmic consciousness in man.

New organs of knowledge loom right now on the emerging “planetary physiology”.

One of these centres of intelligent force is the University of the United Nations.

In 1967, U Thant, in those days General Secretary to the United Nations, proposed the creation of an educational organism on the international level with the purpose of “promoting world peace and security, development and co-existence among peoples, and spreading of knowledge”. A group of researchers of the University of Michigan was appointed to develop this idea; eventually, after five years of work, in 1973, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed the project “Chart of the University of the United Nations”. This organism began to operate in 1975, in Tokyo, Japan.

But the “UNU” is only constituted by experts, not by students. In my opinion, experts are not enough to developing an ecological consciousness of global solidarity.

If we symbolise in the University of the United Nations the expansive pole of the scientific/technical civilisation, the need for a pole of human interiority (synthesising values) can be noticed, and we represent it as the University of Synthesis.

But the University of Synthesis does not exist yet –it is just an idea in gestation. What about its terrestrial matrix?

Just as the University of the United Nations is sited on the North hemisphere, in Japan, so the pole of University of Synthesis can be brought into action on the South hemisphere, in Argentina.

### **Why Argentina?**

–Because in Argentina there is a conjunction of human, telluric and cosmic forces making a new “geste” possible.

Here in Argentina, the Wisdom of Earth (spiritual tradition of the Deep America) and the Social Consciousness already attained, and the collective Sacrifice of the people, are favourable conditions to get a new synthesis of both material and spiritual values –a physical irradiating point of a solidarity message to the world.