

DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH UNIVERSITY FOR TOMORROW?

Locarno, Switzerland (April 30 - May 2, 1997)

Conclusions of the congress:

1

The congress thanks UNESCO and CIRET for the interest which they bring to transdisciplinarity in the world. In particular, the congress has emphasized the importance of this undertaking for the continuation of future projects connected with the University and with higher education. The congress expressed the wish to participate in the major current UNESCO project on transdisciplinarity emerging from the medium term Plan, in those connected with the preparation and the holding of the World Conference on Higher Education (Paris, September 28 - October 2, 1998) and in the next program and budget 29C/5 1998-1999.

2

The congress expressed the wish that the member States themselves become involved during the course of the next decade so that henceforth transdisciplinary thinking will enrich the new vision of the University. In order to help UNESCO, CIRET and the University in their future work, the participants have submitted program plans for action and cooperation between member States to the attention of M. Federico Mayor, Director General of UNESCO, under the form of a **Declaration and Recommendations**.

DECLARATION OF LOCARNO

1

Participants in the International Congress Which University for Tomorrow? Towards a Transdisciplinary Evolution of the University (Monte Verità, Locarno, Switzerland, April 30 - May 2, 1997) fully approve the goal of the CIRET-UNESCO project which was the subject of the proceedings of the congress: to make the University evolve towards a study of the Universal in the context of an unprecedented acceleration of fragmentary knowledge. This evolution is inseparable from transdisciplinary research, that is to say, that which is between, across and beyond all of the disciplines.

2

In spite of extremely varied conditions between universities from one country to another, the disorientation of the University has become worldwide. A number of symptoms function to conceal the general cause of this disorientation: the loss of



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meaning and the universal hunger for meaning. Transdisciplinary education can open the way towards the integral education of the human being which necessarily transmits the quest for meaning.

3

Participants launch a formal call to UNESCO and all its member countries as well as to university authorities worldwide to put in effect all that is needed in order to enable the infusion of complex and transdisciplinary thought in the structures and programs of the University of tomorrow.

4

The University is not only threatened by the absence of meaning, but also by the refusal to share knowledge. The information circulating in cyberspace generates an historically unprecedented richness. Taking into account present developments, the congress fears that the "information poor" will become increasingly poor, and the "information rich" will become increasingly rich. One of the goals of transdisciplinarity is research into the steps which are necessary for adapting the University to the cyber-era. The University must become a free zone of cyber-space-time.

5

Universal sharing of knowledge cannot take place without the emergence of a new tolerance founded on the transdisciplinary attitude, one which implies putting into practice the transcultural, transreligious, transpolitic, and transnational vision; whence the direct and indisputable relation between peace and transdisciplinarity.

6

Transdisciplinarity is globally open. To define it in terms of classical logic would be tantamount to confining it to a single thought. Levels of reality are inseparable from levels of perception and these last levels found the verticality of degrees of transdisciplinarity. Transdisciplinarity entails both a new vision and a lived experience. It is a way of self-transformation oriented towards the knowledge of the self, the unity of knowledge, and the creation of a new art of living.

7

The break between science and culture, which manifested itself over three centuries ago, is one of the most dangerous. On the one hand, there are the holders of pure, hard knowledge; on the other, the practitioners of ambiguous, soft knowledge. This break is inevitably reflected in the functioning of universities which favor the accelerated development of scientific culture at the cost of the negation of the subject and the decline of meaning. Everything must be done in order to reunite these two artificially antagonistic cultures - scientific culture and literary or artistic culture - so that they will move beyond to a new transdisciplinary culture, the preliminary condition for a transformation of mentalities.

8

The most complex key problem of the transdisciplinary evolution of the University is that of the teaching of teachers. Universities could fully contribute to the creation and operation of bona fide "Institutes of the Research for Meaning" which, in their turn, would inevitably have beneficial effects on the survival, the life and the positive influence of universities.

9

An authentic education cannot orient knowledge only towards the exterior pole of the Object under cover of hundreds of research disciplines without at the same time orienting its questioning towards the interior pole of the Subject. From this perspective, transdisciplinary education revalues the role of the deeply rooted intuition, of the imaginary, of sensitivity, and of the body in the transmission of knowledge.

Monte Verità, Locarno, May 2, 1997

Editorial Board of the Declaration: Michel Camus and Basarab Nicolescu

RECOMMANDATIONS

1. CREATION OF AN ITINERANT UNESCO CHAIR

It is recommended that UNESCO create an itinerant chair, if possible in collaboration with the University of the United Nations (Tokyo), which will organize lectures involving the entire community and enabling it to be informed about transdisciplinary ideas and methods. This chair could be supported by the creation of an Internet site which would prepare the international and university community for a theoretical and practical discovery of transdisciplinarity. The aim is to put everything in place so that the seed of complex thought and transdisciplinarity can penetrate the structures and programs of the University of tomorrow.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

It is recommended to universities to make an appeal in the framework of a transdisciplinary approach, notably to philosophy of Nature, philosophy of History and epistemology, with the goal of developing creativity and the meaning of responsibility in leaders of the future. It must introduce courses on all levels in order to sensitize students and awaken them to the harmony between beings and things. These courses should be founded on the history of science and technology as well as on the great multidisciplinary themes of today (especially cosmology and general biology) in order to accustom students to thinking about things with clarity and in their context, with an eye to industrial development and technological innovation,



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and in order to insure that applications will not contradict an ethics of responsibility vis a vis other human beings and the environment.

3. DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIVE TRANSDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCES

It is recommended that CIRET prepare a publication, in all the main UNESCO languages, for the benefit of teachers, which records major examples of innovative experiences : Open University, Academy of Architecture of Ticino (the experience of Mario Botta), American Renaissance in Science Education (the experience of Leon Lederman), the University of Basel (the experience of Werner Arber), the Observatoire pour l'Etude de l'Université du Futur (OEUF) in collaboration with the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale of Lausanne, the Maison des Cultures du Monde, transcultural experiences in Catalonia, etc. The object is a genuine sharing of knowledge and experience.

4. TEACHING OF TEACHERS AND PERMANENT EDUCATION

It is recommended that universities, in the framework of permanent education and continuous instruction:

1. Conceive and actualize programs of teaching which explicitly include transdisciplinarity, and which could, beyond strictly professional aims, permit the flourishing of the human being and take into account social phenomena.

2. Publish lively, didactic accounts of different educational experiences which attest to the problem of complexity and the emergence of meaning as well as to the interest in new pedagogical methods occasioned by transdisciplinarity.

With respect to the teaching of teachers, the congress calls on CIRET to undertake projects with a view towards organizing with NGO's, foundations and universities, four regional ateliers for transdisciplinary research which include the application of the transcultural, transreligious, transpolitical and transnational vision. Special effort must be made so that some of these ateliers take place in, or in close collaboration with, universities of developing countries.

5. TIME FOR TRANSDISCIPLINARITY

It is recommended to university authorities (presidents, heads of departments, etc.) to devote 10% of the teaching time in each discipline to transdisciplinarity.

6. CREATION OF CENTERS OF ORIENTATION, ATELIERS OF RESEARCH AND TRANSDISCIPLINARY SPACES

It is recommended to universities:

1. To create centers of transdisciplinary orientation destined to foster vocations and to enable the discovery of hidden possibilities in each person; at present, the equality of the chances of the students strongly clashes with the inequality of their possibilities.



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2. To create ateliers of transdisciplinary research (free from any ideological, political, or religious control) comprised of researchers from all disciplines. It is a matter of gradually introducing researchers and creators exterior to the University, including musicians, poets, and artists of high caliber, in specific University projects, with a view towards establishing academic dialogue between different cultural approaches, taking account of interior experience and the *culture of the soul*. Co-direction of each atelier will be insured by a teacher in the exact sciences and a teacher in the human sciences or art, each of these being elected by an open process of co-optation. It is a question of each person discovering the experience of sensible and corporeal mediation in order to attempt to live a larger experience in relation with the world, with nature, and with others.

7. SCIENTIFIC CULTURE AND LITERARY OR ARTISTIC CULTURE

In order to reconcile two artificially antagonistic cultures - scientific culture and literary or artistic culture - and to make mentalities evolve, it is recommended to UNESCO, to universities, to CIRET, to NGO's and to foundations to organize transdisciplinary forums including history, philosophy, and sociology of science and history of contemporary art.

8. TRANSDISCIPLINARITY, DEVELOPMENT AND ETHICS

In view of its significant report on "culture and development", it is recommended to UNESCO to contribute to the transdisciplinary vision, notably to that which concerns projects, programs and recommendations touching on:

1. the ethics of the universal,
2. questions concerning women and young people.

9. PEDAGOGICAL INNOVATION AND TRANSDISCIPLINARITY

It is essential to perform the follow-up of the results of experiences bearing witness to the strictly pedagogical innovation linked to the transdisciplinary approach in teaching.

10. MASS MEDIA AND TRANSDISCIPLINARITY

Since the question of transdisciplinarity does not only concern an elite, in order to reach the general public, it is appropriate that CIRET conceive and carry out activities destined for the mass media (television, radio, newspapers, Internet, etc.).

11. MULTIMEDIA AND TRANSDISCIPLINARITY

It is recommended to UNESCO, in the framework of its works on communication, most notably those following the celebration of the centenary of the cinema, to develop programs of encounter between academic knowledge and the creative experience of artists working in different media and using new technologies.



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12. TRANSDISCIPLINARITY AND CYBERSPACE: PILOT ATELIERS

It is recommended to encourage and develop all available technical means with an eye towards giving emergent transdisciplinary education the requisite universal dimension and, more generally, to promote the public domain of information (the virtual memory of the world, the information produced by governmental organizations, as well as the information linked to the regulations of *copyright*).

In this respect it is highly recommended to UNESCO and to the countries concerned to encourage and to develop pilot experiences, such as l'OEUF (Observatoire pour l'Etude de l'Université du Futur), which are founded on the extension of networks, such as Internet, and "invent" the future by insuring planetary activity in continuous feed-back, thereby establishing interactions on the universal level for the first time.

13. PEACE AND TRANSDISCIPLINARITY

It is recommended to encourage, sustain, and publicize experiences and projects showing the contribution of transdisciplinarity in the development of the requirement and the spirit of peace.

Monte Verità, Locarno, May 2, 1997

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A special motion of thanks, unanimously accepted, was addressed to the UNESCO Swiss National Commission, to the Permanent Delegation of Switzerland at UNESCO, to the Division "Culture and UNESCO" of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, to the Department of Education and Culture of the Republic and Canton of Ticino, to the Fondazione Monte Verità, and to the International Association for Video in the Arts and Culture.