

Global Convergence

Cristovam Buarque

THREE CLOUDS

Three Clouds Cast their Shadows Over the Future of Man.

The first one is the astonishing ecological cloud that threatens the fragile net, which sustains life in the Planet. Global warming already shows its devastating power. The scenarios for the future are all scary, with little differences on the timing and dates of the upcoming tragedy. The future of humanity is threatened by a foreseen disaster, created by the civilizatory path chosen at the past two centuries of industrial civilization.

After four decades of warnings—since the 1968 Report of the Club of Rome, the Stockholm Meeting in

1972, and the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992—, the world entered the 21st century facing the symptoms of global warming and climate change. As of now, futurologists will no longer predict the future: it has arrived. Its effects are visible, its causes are known and its catastrophic evolution demands no foretelling: it can be seen with naked eye.

If the current path is maintained, the agriculture will soon be disorganized, water will be scarce, cities at sea level will be flooded, the economy will shrink, unemployment will grow, quality of life will fall dramatically and the civilizatory patrimony will meet a strong setback. It shall be worse than during the Great Wars; maybe even worse than the fall of the Roman Empire, which was basically restricted to political, social and intellectual aspects.

The second one is the terrible social cloud, which separates humanity in two different parts. After millenniums of building the similarity between human beings, after centuries of increasing mutual respect, and after decades of dreaming about equality utopias, man starts walking backwards. Not only an increasing inequality is being created: we walk toward the rupture of the feeling of similarity between human beings, due to a biological mutation induced by the advancement of medical sciences, biotechnology and genetics, at the service of a minority.

While watching the global warming worsen, the present generation witnesses the increase of the social breach, which divides humankind in two. The quality of life, that has always differentiated the rich from the poor, has grown worse along the 20th century. Now, at the beginning of the 21st century, thanks to scientific and technological resources, a few men live longer—they are stronger, healthier and more intelligent than the great majority. Until recently, the general belief was that the benefits would reach those who remained excluded. Now, we know that the ecological limits and the increasing violence between the included and the excluded will lead to a feeling of strangeness, which will turn into dissimilarity, within the biological, mental and cultural characteristics. Such separation will be much more dramatic than the racial or social apartheid; it will be a rupture in the similarity aspect—a biological mutation produced by the wonders of the technique, to the horror of the ethics.

The third cloud is the tragic intellectual failure in the design of an alternative path for the civilizatory project. After trusting democracy and believing that the State would lead to utopia, man now realizes that the State is authoritarian and democracy is unable to balance the requirements of the global world with the demands of each single nation.

For centuries, the mainstream has formulated several ideas about human evolution and its future. Among them,

the optimism prevailed: the civilization project would be crowned by utopian abundance, freedom, equality, and the resulting peace. To the exception of some fictionists of the second half of the last century, all efforts aimed at drawing technical tools, designing social models and orienting political projects toward abundance. Watt and Marx are icons of an extensive list of intellectuals of such clear blue sky of optimism. The few disputes were raised in accordance with alternatives for the social and political project, the design of utopia and political strategies; there was no disagreement regarding the paradise to be built on Earth.

The warnings of the Club of Rome were entirely refused, either by the rightist liberals, who stated that the market would decide, or by the leftist interventionists, who believed that the technical and political intelligence would win. The social evolution pointed the way to equality, and the technique would solve all problems. The right-wing thinking disdained all warnings about the ecological crisis; the left wing thinking considered such warnings as a conspiracy of the rich against the poor.

When the catastrophe becomes reality, thinkers will become speechless. Liberals realize that their utopia and the extreme wealth coexisted with a Social Gulag of prisoners—people refused at national borders; poor, unemployed, sick people left unattended; hungry children and starving mothers unable to breastfeed. And, the leftists noticed that, along with the failure of the socialist

experiences and the stupendous victory of the capitalism, the basis of their thinking had failed: from Marx to the 21st century, the technical knowledge changed its role. It induced more needs, instead of reducing them; instead of making more products and generating abundance, it started creating new products and generating the scarcity of the unmet desires.

In this scenario of negative synergy, history heads to a disaster—as if a huge meteor produced by men alone—, which is about to hit the Earth. The first step to fight the threats is to overcome one tragedy—the lack of intellectual proposals at facing the other two tragedies. The second step is to design a new utopia, as well as the basis for a new revolution.

THE FAILURE OF DIALECTICS

The trust in the march of man toward utopia has limited analysts to the monitoring of this path, oblivious to the fact that millions of destinies are being led somewhere. The dialectic view confirmed that history was advancing in the right direction. It would be enough to understand it and to let it flow—in democratic regimes—, or to speed it up—in systems of state regulation. Just like the Greek thinkers of the 6th century B.C. started looking at nature from an external viewpoint; as of the 18th century, philosophers started to observe the nature of society, and to search for the logic behind its movements. In spite of their interference in historic movements, such as the

French Revolution, or the Industrial Revolution, the leaders of the social revolutions and the creators of the scientific revolution acted as if they were only analyzing and stimulating a pre-determined movement.

Hegel was the greatest of these analysts, starting from the dialectic principles that guided the evolution of social relations. Marx, who not only analyzed, but also changed reality, merely gave the dialectics some speed, by replacing the focus: instead of the shock between ideas, there came the shock between things in the world — including concepts and social classes. Watt, Ford and Edison created objects, which would have forcibly appeared as a requirement of the evolution.

In fact, intellectuals took the humanity project for granted; and they were platonic, in the sense that they believed that things existed as pure archetypes, stored in the future, waiting to be unrevealed. They believed in the natural evolution of history toward a pre-determined fate. Even though God was denied as the conductor; the pre-determined fate was not forgotten: improvement, perfection and utopia. The social dynamics were invigorating, revitalizing, refreshing. Marx believed that revolution would anticipate some pre-determined goals of a project that was already designed. Utopia existed and was already defined; one should only develop social sciences and anticipate the future.

The dialectics conduct the fate of humanity. The fight against opposites would help materialize an upper

stage of the civilizatory stairway, where the strongest, the best, and the most advanced would be the winners. That was the hegemonic view for the past two hundred years: a conflict between a deist viewpoint, according to which God had a plan for the human society, and the process would lead to it; and, the materialistic view, which believed that the laws of social dialectics would affect society, like the natural dialectics affected nature, either by the idealistic dialectics of Hegel—where the shock of ideas made the new one prevail over the previous one, and that new one would change the reality of the world—, or by the materialistic dialectics of Marx, where the shock of contradictions between social classes would lead to new ideas and to new social realities. The world has changed from Hegel to the present date, since the end of the medieval era, until the latest scientific revolution, stimulated by a constant fight to bring the utopian dreams of human beings into reality.

As of 1950, the risk of a nuclear world war came to light. Still, with the exception of this specific risk, future was promising, either under socialist or capitalist regimes, thanks to the scientific planning, or to the wonders of the market. No crisis, not even the major ones, such as in 1929; no war, not even the Second World War, would threaten the utopian future. The dialectics would overcome any problems, since the winner would impose a better order.

The risk of the hecatomb of a nuclear war brought, for the first time, the feeling that the dialectics would leave no survivors. The winners would also lose, slaughtered together with the enemy. Between the thesis and the antithesis, there was the void—or a catastrophic synthesis. The result was a perception that only the agreement, instead of the shock, would keep humankind alive. Convergence would keep the antagonism. The national agreements against the proliferation of nuclear guns and the end of the USSR virtually eliminated the risk of a catastrophe. The future was again foreseeable and shiny.

Nearly simultaneously with the end of fear, during the Cold War, the reality of the past decades has shown that this risk would not derive only from the possibility of a Third World War, involving the atomic superpowers. A crisis appeared on the path—either automatic, or induced—to the utopia, regardless of the risk of a nuclear hecatomb. The dynamic of recent revolutions—social, global, neoliberal, scientific and technological—brought a new “reality” in the depiction of the future. Instead of a projection of the past running toward the utopia, the future became a series of alternative frames—not as utopian as it seemed before.

Not even the environmental problems, foreseen since the 1960's, seemed to threaten humankind in a catastrophic way. Scarcity was foreseen—by the report of the Club of Rome; the extinction of species was denounced—by actions and manifests of the WWF, or the

Greenpeace. But, the disarticulation of civilization, or worse, the annihilation of human life, or of the entire Planet, were unconsidered facts; were future non-events. The zero growth proposal, as a concrete possibility, gave the hope on an even more promising future. The dialectics between the frenetic growth of the 20th century and the controlled, near zero growth, gave the latter—a most ideological and programmatic alternative—a chance of victory.

More recently, the risk of nuclear, chemical and biological terrorism has scared humankind. However, the risks seemed restricted, geographically limited, but never planetary. They were conditioned on chance, not on a trend; just like the fear provoked by the effects of an old meteor fallen in the Mexican Gulf, or by the knowledge that others might be on the way. Those would have been random facts, oblivious to the mainstream of the civilizational process.

If the environmental crisis were manageable, it would be even easier to build a peaceful society, in respect to all kinds of war. Even a social war would be solved by the growing improvement in the distribution of products. Even while equality was being postponed, the future was a planet with less inequity among human beings. Man would be able to control any threat, using either the technical advancement, or the politics that would guide the social and political path, by means of the shock among opponents, dialectically.

This has changed. The observation of the dynamics of the evolution process, the acceptance of the upcoming forces, the independence with which the vectors of destruction advance, show how helpless and irreversible is the path toward the destruction of humankind. This destruction can be social, by the division among classes; or biological, by the rupture of species; or natural, by environmental degradation; or moral, by an acceptance of the rupture; or intellectual, by the failure or lack of proposals.

The march of technical advancement shows that human beings already possess the instruments to increase life expectancy, the quality of health during those additional years and the individual's intelligence and resistance. However, such scientific gains will not be equally distributed. Currently, there is an embryo of a mutation that will make human beings radically dissimilar, not only in economic and social terms, but also in their biological characteristics.

The break in the sense of resemblance can already be felt, not only by the increase in inequity, which slowly turns into difference, but also by the new antagonism of non-acceptance, of estrangement between them. This will put an end to the dialectics and to the antagonism, since they will be two different species. There will no longer be a shock of interests among equals, but rather the non-perception of similarity. The way rich see the poor and the poor see the rich in countries such as Brazil;

the way African immigrants see Europeans and are seen by them demonstrates that this is no longer a look of similar human beings. It is more like the look between Columbus and the native Indians, or between masters and slaves; worse than the look between servants and nobles; or South African black and white, or members of castes in India. It is an estrangement, dissimilarity, and a look of violence.

The riots in the French suburbs are neither a struggle of classes, nor a fight for simple social demands. They are rather the shocks of estrangement. The crimes committed nowadays in the outskirts of big Brazilian cities do not derive from a political war between classes, but from a polarization that cannot be addressed by political means. It is a war of strangers, like Aztecs and Cortez, a dialectics with no possible synthesis, since opposites do not belong to the same social family, or to the same logical model, and therefore cannot be understood by a single agglutinating philosophy. They are separated minds, completely *apart*.

The solution is more likely in the technique than in politics. Firstly, the police technique that “frames” the excluded; secondly, the bioengineering technique that enhances the difference and turns it into dissimilarity. This would ease the “framing” process of the excluded rebels, turning them into non-human beings, inferior animals, subject to radical treatments, such as extinction itself. A species in between human and irrational beings,

a new “found link,” produced in the future, recreating the “lost link” of the past. Back in time, men separated from their cousins by a natural mutation, and formed the human species. Currently, humankind produces an artificial mutation with its scientific knowledge and comes apart, separating the few chosen and included, from the numerous forgotten and excluded ones.

This is the scenario that threatens humanity from the moral point of view—an ethical suicide of humankind; a self-division.

After a few centuries have passed, forgetfulness will appear; the new humanity will have forgotten the crime of having separated itself from the main body of a humankind that had marched 10 thousand years towards integration and, suddenly, in the middle of the 21st century—counted after the birth of the main spiritual leader of resemblance—faced the disintegration of its similar essence, replacing exclusion by non-recognition.

The option of the man, as of the first decades of the 20th century, seems so distant from the essence of the modern human being that there will hardly exist a possibility of an alternative project for humanity, based on the reduction of consumption. The consumption-oriented elite—the nearly one billion rich and nearly-rich that make the International-First-World-of-the-Rich—, spread in the countries worldwide, will not be willing to give up the individual pleasure of the present consumption, in exchange of the promise of an alternative well-

being for all in a distant future. Besides, the poor and excluded will not be willing to give up a consumption that is beyond their possibilities, but about which they dream desperately, and believe to be possible.

Not only the industrial civilization has made the intellectuals some of the few beneficiaries of their own product—which will never be shared among all in the long run—, but it also imprisoned them within universities, turned into jails of ideas, trapped into a rigid structure of departments, professors, and a bibliography restricted to each area of knowledge, unable to look at the future in a holistic way—or to leave behind its old utopian and dialectic paradigms.

The GDP and the consumption are the gods of the present, and it is not easy to give up a god. The march toward inequality will go on, since it is impossible to ensure the present standards of consumption to everyone. Even worse will be the march toward the environmental destruction, caused by an economic growth that cannot be stopped. In opposite poles, China and the USA are the finest examples: the latter will not give up the present level of consumption, while the first dreams at getting there.

The ecological limits will stop the insane growth in consumption of the past century. However, since it is impossible to decrease the consumption levels within the International-First-World-of-the-Rich, a wall will be raised—a Gold Curtain, to limit consumption to only one

part of the population. The walls built to separate national borders in some countries, and the huge walls of the *shopping centers* in the poor countries are fine examples of the huge curtain that starts to run across the planet. The Gold Curtain will replace the Berlin Wall, as well as the liberal Gulag replaced the Soviet Gulag. And the social *apartheid* will ensure that growth remains restricted to few.

The Gold Curtain will stimulate the violence among the included and the excluded, in a spontaneous and pointless civil war, caused by mutual desire, envy and hate. The perception that equality is impossible will put an end to the dreams of the excluded ones, and will lead the included minority to quickly replace the social apartheid for a biological *apartation*—the rupture of the species. Soon, the curtain will no longer be necessary, since the chasm will be natural, like the one between human beings and irrational animals.

The failure of ideas, unable to blossom because of reality, keeps things exactly as they have been since the industrial revolution. The individualism—the main achievement of the modern thought—will not incorporate the needs of the ordinary life in a world where life itself is under threat. On the other hand, national states, which constitute another modern achievement, will not foster the formulation of ideas to promote a global understanding of the world. Democracy, an old concept, will also avoid alternatives of long-term thinking, without

which the tragedy will be irreversible. The voters—individual, national and acting within the limits of time of their shortsighted life—will be unable to think in a global, historical, ecological and humanistic way.

Maybe, at the bottom of all this lies the confirmation of Arthur Koestler's theory, that part of the human brain has developed with traits of upper intellectuality, while another kept the most primitive traits of the wild life. The result is an intern confrontation, forcibly suicidal, between the rational part, able to extract solar energy from the atoms, and the other that feels the urge of using this power, throwing an atomic bomb over a nation, like a pebble against a window.

Facing this biological inability, this cerebral dialectics where opposites annul and suicide themselves, like kamikazes targeted at each other, the alternative is to move from the dialectics of shock to that of convergence. If consciousness can be found outside, we must search for the convergence between threats, therefore inducing an intellectual mutation toward a brain in which knowledge and feeling live together.

THE CONVERGENCE BETWEEN HUMAN BEINGS AND NATURE

Twenty years ago, during a stroll at the campus of the University of Brasilia—of which I was the Dean—, my 11 year-old daughter asked me why we were putting down some trees. I answered that we were raising

a building there. She frowned and strongly protested against such violence. I told her that we would reforest the area around the new building, with hundreds of trees just like those. She promptly replied: “but none will be the ones that you have killed.”

Nowadays, she has certainly changed her biocentrism by a more utilitarian view. She must believe that putting down trees to erect a building is plainly justifiable. Or, maybe the need to reforest is no longer a concern for her. She has left her childish viewpoint, which gives life and souls to trees. She has grown up and started to think like all the intellectual descendents of the Greek-Judaic-Christian world—to the exception of some few Buddhists, or hippies, or radical ecologists—that see nature as storeroom and waste dump. Storeroom of resources used to produce our consumption goods and waste dump where we toss our leftovers.

This has been the perception since Adam was expelled from Paradise; since the Greeks started seeing us as beings who are apart from nature; since Christianity declared us sons of God—created after His image and likeness; since *Vicco*, Kant, *Hegel*, Marx and all the Western philosophers started treating us as subjects of a transcendental project, turning rocks, plants and animals into human beings and their products, either bombs or symphonies.

The last half of the 20th century strongly reinforced this concept of civilizatory fate, and came out with un-

imaginable means of a voracious use of the storeroom resources, as well as of carelessly throwing the waste away. As a result, the march for construction was replaced by a threat of destruction. And, man will have to choose between despising and protecting nature, understanding that the first option will certainly lead to the civilization suicide—a “civilicide.”

But, man refuses to transform despise in respect, or to change from dialectics to convergence between man and nature. The biocentrism of considering human beings as part of nature does not seem feasible. Every being identifies himself/herself with others, and finds contradictions too. Trees consume the water around. Carnivorous animals eat each other. The difference is that man’s natural intelligence prevents him to disturb the ecological balance, which would lead him to starvation. Man, with both a personal life and a civilizatory project, seems to have no limits, and uses his nature against nature itself, in spite of the awareness of the upcoming disaster. Man’s nature against nature for man, like the scorpion that killed the frog, which helped it across the river.

The harmonious coexistence is impossible, since the classic Greek created a barrier between the world of man and the world of nature. Refusing the “primitive thinking,” according to which people were part of the natural world; man chose to be part of the world of gods, apart from nature. The philosophical evolution only aggravated the distance and consolidated the chasm: the

theory of value, either capitalist or socialist, oriented by the labor or by the market, adds no value to nature.

The human soul shelters a predatory archetype. But, there is also awareness, which should be able to control such damaging instincts. This awareness was able to control human's impulse of making a nuclear war. The convergence between man and nature is a result of another convergence—between awareness and instinct.

THE CONVERGENCE BETWEEN AWARENESS AND INSTINCT

The biggest difficulty for awareness to defeat the instinct lies within each human being, with its individual and shortsighted view, in terms of the long-term civilizational project. In spite of an awareness of the civilizational risk, humanity is mainly the sum of individuals carrying on their own projects, not a harmonious team-spirited collectivity.

Even when broadening the horizon of individuality, each human being relates only with family, friends, neighbors and citizens. A few nets of working colleagues and political coreligionists can also be established. The sense of collectivity is only awakened when threatens occur: family losses, risk of robbery, fire, inundation, political persecution, national war. Apart from the concern of the near surroundings, man's decision-making process is restricted in terms of time, which limits the consequences of his decisions to a few months ahead.

Man is, above all, a shortsighted individualist being, who is unable to feel, share, or relate with the entire humanity and future generations. As if they were a family under the same roof, without personal ties with each other, let alone with those still to be born. These characteristics are unquestionably valid for every other living being; however, irrational beings are unable to make atomic bombs, or to overheat the planet.

Therefore, convergence between man and nature depends mainly on the convergence between human beings.

THE CONVERGENCE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ETHICS

In the year 2000—the symbolic beginning of the future, consolidation of economic globalization and technological power—the president of the most powerful nation in history was elected thanks to a few votes from the city of Miami. Those votes gave him the power to quickly exterminate an entire country, or to increase the march toward the catastrophic global warming. His voters were only focused on their personal interests, or maybe concerned about their town, state, community—such as the exiled Cubans—, or nation. They were only thinking four years ahead, which is the average length of a presidential mandate. None of them, or maybe very few, were thinking about the planet, in the long term, or in the civilization. The constituency does not look far—either in space or time.

Democracy was invented to help manage state-cities and to empower individuals. It is however unable to incorporate humankind, the planet and the future. Since its invention, democracy has been the most creative and ethical of all decision-making system. But, it failed in managing civilization. It has eyes for the nation and for the present, only.

This is rather an ethical, non-political dilemma. The solution lies in the collective decision-making process, in high-level meetings, in international agreements, like the Kyoto protocol. Democracy will still be responsible for the future of each country, provided that countries are seen as part of the Earth Condominium; subject to international rules that will regulate individual actions in face of the best interests of the group, of man and of the planet. To ensure that, convergence between the technique and the ethics must be built.

CONVERGENCE BETWEEN TECHNIQUE AND ETHICS

On September 13, 1987, in the city of Goiania, center of Brazil, two garbage pickers found an old radiotherapy device, which had been dumped in an abandoned hospital building. They sold one of the device's parts to Mr. Devair Alves Ferreira, who found inside it some shiny blue stones. Amazed by the stone's beauty, he took them home, to show his wife and neighbors, and then gave them to his daughter. Later on, he found out what they were.

He found it out at the cost of his life, a few weeks later, and the death of four other people—including his wife and daughter—, as well as the hospitalization of other 49 relatives and neighbors. He found it out after his street and neighborhood were interdicted. He finally found out that the shiny blue stones were made of a sinister force called *radiation*.

Unwillingly, he confirmed the Greek myth of Pandora's box—a trunk that raised man's curiosity, but that could never be opened, since it would release all the evils and sorcerers of the universe. The radiation was the result of a sorcery released by man when the scientific knowledge unveiled the world's secrets. Devair's blue stones were a sample of all threats surrounding men, produced by scientific curiosity and the arts of technology.

The global warming, the rupture of the human species, nuclear and biological terrorism, the new diseases provoked by the ecological lack of balance, or by a new virus escaped from a laboratory, the shock between civilizations in the world of real time and mass transportation—all the risks of the present, derive from the old prediction of Pandora's box.

Even knowing the myth for over 2,500 years, man was unable to be cautious. He opened Pandora's box, and carelessly played with the evils that it contained. Curiously, the myth is still seen as a fantasy, even after other warnings, such as *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, and *Frankenstein*.

The 21st century turned mythology into reality, and now man must control the evil that has been released. It is impossible to return them to the box. We are forced to live with all the demons created by us—the robotic that kills jobs, the powerful weapons in the hands of terrorists, the nuclear waste scattered all over the planet. Searching for control, we have lost it. There is no turning back. We must control the uncontrollable with ethical rules, to orient the liberalism of scientific and technical advancement. We need an ethical regulation to make the convergence between technique and ethics, which will demand another convergence—between science and religion.

CONVERGENCE BETWEEN SCIENCE AND RELIGION

Science and religion had the same starting point. The beliefs were the truth. The evolution of thinking separated these two foundations of the human spirit. As time passed, they not only disconnected from each other, but became radical antagonists, with science despising religion and religion accusing science. Scientists have never burnt a priest, but they helped building the gas chambers that killed Jews, as well as the spikes and arrows used in the crusades against Muslims. They are presently developing the techniques that are about to burn the entire planet. On the other hand, along centuries, cardinals and popes devoted a great deal of time to burn, arrest and

silence the scientists, while leading wars in the name of their respective gods. Scientists have always declared themselves against wars, but unashamedly created the guns; while priests preached against hell, even though they have incited so many religious wars.

The future will demand the convergence between science and religion, provided that religion accepts the truth revealed by scientific means, and that faith explores the space of the yet unexplained. Nonetheless, as science faces the ecological and social catastrophe created by technology, it will need a set of values, principles and transcendental projects that will hardly derive from logic; they will have to come from faith.

Without a religious value, a faith in humanity, there is no reason to save the planet, or the civilization. Laws will hardly be designed for this purpose; besides, they will not be enough to beat the short-term limited view. Likewise, laws against murders and crimes would never be able to reduce violence, if they did not carry a feeling of sin.

The salvation of the planet will demand a planetary conversion and the development of a new religion of human beings and for human beings, able to create an intergenerational communion, and a ritual of patrimony transference—a sort of adoration of the future generations. The ecological balance must be seen as vital for life and for humanity in the future. Man will need to pay tribute to the permanence of human beings and of their evolutionary project.

Religions have shown too much concern with heaven and too little with humanity, while sciences have worried too much about the present and have forgotten the future. They have focused on the sins of each individual, therefore leaving humankind free to make its own mistakes. They have threatened each man with hell, but left humanity free to sinfully warm the planet and separate men. Concerned in saving each one, they forgot the salvation of all.

Religions need to create a concept of sin against humanity, and consequently, of sin against nature. Crimes against humanity already exist as such; however, they are little respected, since they have not been understood as sins. No religion worships humanity, or respects history as a sublime path. The clouds hanging over humanity will demand a religious sense, without which the march toward disaster will hardly be stopped.

Buddhists, Christians, Jews, Muslims, Animists, Shintoists, Ecologists and followers of other religions must gather in a new creed that goes across all of them, and puts in its core the entire humanity and the projects for the future generations.

CONVERGENCE BETWEEN POOR AND RICH

The Mediterranean is a small band of blue water separating two civilizations radically different. The passage from Africa to Europe can be done in less than one

hour, on a small boat. However, this is a journey from one world to another.

Such difference will neither be overcome by economic—or military dialectics—, nor by the mass migration of millions of poor Africans in the search of social and economic opportunities in Europe. The only alternative is a convergence between the rich North and the poor South. But, such convergences will not happen in the international sphere if, within each country, poor and rich are unable to converge.

Until recently, equality was the objective, and economy was the path. The egalitarian utopia was based on the economic dialectics between the poor workers that were exploited by the rich capitalists. This conflict would only be solved if workers took power and subverted the order and the economic structure, taking the place of the rich and implementing social justice.

Reality has shown that this dialectic possibility is no longer feasible. Globalization, neoliberalism, and the failure of socialism have withdrawn from dialectics the traditional struggle between social classes, as the way to justice and equality. Nowadays, qualified workers are increasingly incorporating their share of the benefits of progress, while a huge mass of unemployed is created. This divides society between workers, capitalists and the excluded poor. Also, the world integration ties the economic structure and prevents isolated national solutions.

Besides, capital itself has changed from wealth to knowledge. Inequality is no longer a result of the dialectics between capital and work, but rather between the ones with access to knowledge and the ones without it. The struggle against inequality is only possible if the educational gap is replaced by a convergence in the access to knowledge.

**CONVERGENCE BETWEEN THE ONES
WITH ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE AND
THE ONES WITHOUT IT**

A qualified engineer of any country in the world is part of the International-First-World-of-the-Rich; has consumption standards similar to that of his employers, and lives a daily reality that is completely different from that of his poor fellow citizens. A wall separates the ones with knowledge and the ones without it. The alternative for the years to come is the destruction of such wall between them, which can only be achieved through a worldwide revolution in the educational field. The 21st century revolution will be the destruction of the knowledge wall.

THE SWEET REVOLUTION

The global world needs a global revolution: the adoption of every child in the world, ensuring them an education of the same quality—regardless of their family income, their nationality, gender or race.

For two centuries, utopists stood for a mankind that was economically equal, thanks to the nationalization of the means of production, according to socialists, or thanks to the economic growth, according to the capitalists. Reality has shown that both proposals were incorrect. The three clouds show that humanity must abandon the utopian dream, or accept the march toward tragedy.

The search for convergence requires another design of utopia, and different revolutionary means

a) *Connective Global Utopia*

Instead of equality in terms of income and consumption, global humanity must dream of an utopian integrated world, where everyone is connected and interlinked, with limitless access to the necessary equipment and to open dialogue.

The world is presently divided between the ones with access to a huge net of communication, and the ones without it. Exclusion hampers the access to the cultural advantages of globalization and innovation to nearly 4/5 of humanity, due to the lack of education.

The utopia would be to include them all—from the material viewpoint, by facilitating the access to essential goods and services; and, from the cultural viewpoint, by the cultural integration brought up by globalization. This can only be possible with a revolution concerning education of all human beings, starting with children.

b) The Educational Revolution

After the Second World War, the world has lived a period of internationalization of the social revolution, and the creation of international organizations to boost economic development. The results were unsatisfactory. Two walls still separate the population of each country: the walls of inequality and delay. None of them will be destroyed by the old concepts of economic revolution.

The 21st century requires another international movement, in defense of the world's education. The global revolution consists in making the world apply its income—of more than US\$ 40 trillions—, as well as its technical capacity, in the production of modern pedagogical equipment—to make the new educational revolution.

UNESCO can play a significant role in world's convergence—certainly, a more successful and less costly one—, just like the World Bank and others did in the economy growth, after the Second World War.

Such revolution will promote a convergence capable of stopping the weapons of terrorism, global warming and rupture of the species. It will stimulate thinking/reasoning and will blow away the clouds that darken the future. Only education can change the consumption standards that induce to the ecological crisis, and create a new scientific and technological advancement, oriented to stop global warming. Only education will eliminate exclusion and implement social integration. It will enable

the creation of connected humankind; the breaking of religious and cultural prejudices, and the strengthening of diversity. Education will induce a new intellectual revolution, no longer focused on sciences, but producing a true Renaissance, 500 years after the creation of the basis of rationalism, which, in the 20th century, ignored ethical and aesthetical values.

This new Renaissance will lead to the convergence between specialization and the holistic vision, between immediate hedonism and human beings' feelings of belonging, and between man and nature. Above all, it will immediately lead to the coexistence of Eastern and Western habits, cultures and religions, thus bringing about the benefits of integration of these two complementary visions: individualism and collectivity; anthropocentrism and naturalism; linear progress and circular history; modernism and traditionalism.