

The Museum Visit: Art and Transdisciplinarity

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***Abstract:** The article explores the critical need for contemporary organizations to foster a democratic and meaningful dialogue about life, emphasizing the importance of conscience in career paths and senior management research. It advocates for museums as spaces of reflection, offering an escape from the mechanistic and docile tendencies fostered by technological mediation in human relations. The text highlights the widening gap between management and workers, exacerbated by inequalities and miscommunication, and calls for transdisciplinary scientific research to address these issues. It underscores the impact of unintentional attitudes in pedagogical relationships, both formal and non-formal, and their role in transmitting cultural values and knowledge.*

***Keywords:** democratic dialogue, career conscience, technological mediation, organizational inequality, attitudes, transdisciplinarity.*

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I'm past the age where nothing's easy¹.

In the spring, perhaps, because there is a serious doubt as to the possibility, the choice and, from there, the will in our contemporary societies to live dialogue, mutual aid and cooperation between people. As Mr. Pister used to say: 'History is stuttering'... It could even be said that history is limping, sometimes stumbling.

1. Introduction

Will we have the material conditions and the freedom to dare to engage in the complex, difficult and arduous, but also democratic, human dialogue in contemporary organisations about the meaning of our lives²? Will the place of conscience in a career path finally be on the agenda of contemporary research into 'senior management' (supervision and decision-making; otherwise known as 'executive management')? What if we were to visit the museums, and even build some, so that we could find ourselves there 'eternally', having become a shimmering canvas or a piano composition for a young teenager...? In fact, this text proposes that a visit to the museum is a way of escaping docility in the face of our school machines and, in the presence of art, bringing into play the interface between the world outside and the fantastic and overwhelming world inside, thanks to the often unintentional realisations that living with our past, our history and our creations make it possible. For the museum teaches us through the presence of people who bear witness to and pass through us; it teaches us to discover our impetus, our creative breath, our connection to others and to a human culture that is tenacious, constant in its efforts to evolve, but also to find serenity. The museum, calm, sometimes almost solemn place, is an inhabited place that allows each of us to discover a nature/culture that is beneficial, nourishing and inspiring at the same time... Towards an education through the masterpiece, to the masterpiece, as taught to us by the lineages of journeymen that have existed since the Middle Ages³.

¹ Letter from Albert Camus to René Char, 7 November 1949. In *Albert Camus – René Char Correspondances*, Edition established, presented and annotated by Franck Planeille, Gallimard, Paris, 2007.

² Barbier René in *Le management émancipant: une philosophie interculturelle du sens du travail humain (de l'imaginaire leurrant à l'utopie créatrice* in *Journal des Chercheurs online*, Centre d'Innovation et de Recherche en Pédagogie de Paris (CIRPP), 24 janvier 2011.

³ Pasquier, F. (2016). Espiritualidad y educación. In D. Soto González & A. Buciega Arévalo, *Ser cambio educativo/Las sociedades necesitan una ciudadanía global* (pp. 186-193). Florida universitària, <https://issuu.com/floridauniversitaria/docs/rizomatrans>.

2. The Docile

Many of us have noticed that relations between people in today's organisations (companies, training institutions, commercial agencies, factories, in many families) seem to rely more and more on the mediation of machines thanks to the development of science and technology, which on the face of it is a great contribution to relieving humans of repetitive and tedious tasks. However, although the means of communication are multiplying (telephone, fax, Internet, electronic messages, electronic mail, videoconferences, audioconferences, etc.), understanding between people within contemporary organisations remains rather difficult and complex, as the author has pointed out in Edgar Morin⁴. We are also seeing the emergence of 'docile people' within these same organisations. People who make the machine work, without questioning for whom and in the name of what, simply to 'earn a living', even if it means losing it in the process: it's not just a question of carrying out repetitive tasks or tasks that have no meaning other than to ensure one's subsistence, it can be more insidious. Some machines, even if in a bad way, are at the service of a minority that largely exploits a seemingly bewildered and powerless majority. During a trip to Vietnam in 2013, one of our guides mentioned the suicides of young, exhausted underage women in textile production workshops.

As a result, the gap between the assured management and those who carry out the basic tasks is widening every day, and information between the two circulates little or in a biased way: very often alliances and rejections of middle managers, short-term interests and profit to the detriment of research and a medium- and long-term vision, will intervene in the circulation of information and the demand for better working conditions. Similarly, the situation of inequality in working conditions between those who work in the so-called rich countries and those who carry out their professional life in the so-called 'developing' countries is becoming ever more marked. Archipelagos of poverty on the outskirts of major cities in emerging countries are multiplying, to the virtual indifference of many Western politicians and entrepreneurs.

This distance between entrepreneurs: project designers and investors with a very high level of training and, on the ground, managers with sometimes inadequate training, or even easily corruptible, gives rise to a series of misunderstandings or even misunderstandings, problems linked to an inversion of values: the individual largely prevails over the supposedly common good. The whole panoply of 'flaws' linked to our inability to evolve together and give meaning to our presence in an organisation, at best due to a lack of 'philosophical training', at worst due to our prejudices or to the corruption resulting from a struggle for survival, are thus classified under the terminology of problems due to the 'human

⁴ See a general view in Morin, Edgar in *À propos des sept savoirs*, Ed Plein feux, Mayenne, France, 2000.

factor'. The human falls and wins, Faust signs his contracts, and the circus games continue; under Satan's son and sometimes with blessings to boot. Indeed, in many countries, clerics and monarchs still rule together in corruption.

This observation leads to the need for in-depth reflection on the place, value and meaning that the contribution of transdisciplinary scientific research can have in contemporary organisations for human beings: how is the applicability of this transdisciplinary research conceived, for example? In view of the crises, abuses of power and misunderstandings that scientific knowledge in ill-prepared, corrupt or misinformed hands can trigger?

This is particularly noticeable in North-South development relations. We hear about poverty, that's true, but witnessing it with a feeling of perfect powerlessness because this misery is maintained and the population's cards are dealt in advance according to their purchasing power, is absolutely different.

How much injustice are we witnessing in the name of justice? How much misery in the name of the law? How long will the poor have to pay for the rich? And what is the philosopher to do, alone, in the face of this tidal wave? A text?

Hope for spring, perhaps, and psychoanalyse the devil.

3. Unintentional Attitudes

The original aim of the author's research, from Masters to Doctorate level, was the formative evaluation of unintentional attitudes, which take place during a pedagogical relationship whose mission is to transmit the laws, values and knowledge content of Western culture. The pedagogical relationships studied took place both in the context of formal, school-based education and outside the generally rigid framework of the school institution: in other words, in the context of non-formal education.

After a ten-year study in France and Brazil, and patient metacognitive observation, she realised that unintentional attitudes express the subjectivity of each individual during a learning process, and that their appearance triggers what Paul Ricoeur calls *prima facie* judgements, i.e. ultra-rapid judgements that express the desirability or undesirability of an intention and an action. The other author, for his part, learned first conceptually, and then through observation, the importance of unconscious bodily reactions, parasitic or self-triggered gestures depending on the mood and internal reactions of the people involved⁵.

These different attitudes and internal reactions manifest themselves in the most varied forms of what E. Levinas defines as passivity, fear, trembling or what S. Freud designates as resistance: slips of the tongue, blockages, denials, flight, aggression towards oneself or others. In this sense, unintentional attitudes can make dialogue difficult in the course of a pedagogical relationship: either

⁵ Thieriot Loisel, M. (2024). Artificial Intelligence and Our Secret Mind: Human Mediation in Grey Zones. *Transdisciplinary Journal of Engineering & Science*, 15. Pp. 177-185, <https://doi.org/10.22545/2024/00247>.

between the teacher and the students, or from each individual to himself or herself, or between the different members of a group who are going through a training programme, including training for trainers. Unintentional attitudes could be associated with contemporary research carried out in the United States by Brian Lynch and Donald Nathanson, based on the work of Silvan Tomkins on emotions: fear, disgust, anger, shame, stress, surprise, curiosity and joy.

Conveying emotions such as curiosity, non-intentional attitudes also express the new discoveries, creations and innovations that can be made, alone or with others, when during a development process the subjectivity of each person has a framework, an empty space, where freedom of speech and the prohibition of physical and psychological violence coexist⁶.

This neutral space, or one neutralised by collective vigilance, allow for open and frank dialogue, during which different, sometimes apparently contradictory, points of view and even logics can be articulated and shape the world in a different way.

Non-intentional attitudes therefore refer to:

- 1) The overvaluation of desire
- 2) The devaluation of desire.
- 3) Mutation based on a dialogue of desires

The discovery of shared meaning in a neutral space, through dialogue, between several members of a group, between different groups, or simply between a subject and himself, the opening up to a *Concordia Mundi*: the ability to learn and evolve together is the result of desire.

4. The Overvaluation of Desire

Based on the definition of desire formulated by Jacques Lacan in his *Écrits*, desire is the gap between need and demand. Human desire is complex, which is why it is so difficult to include in our thinking. It expresses both the vital needs of a living organism (the need for protection, earthly nourishment, affection) and a demand for meaning, to understand and be understood rationally.

Human desire seems to be overvalued, by the subject and/or by the group, when the demand for meaning is overvalued despite the satisfaction of the vital needs of a living being. The unconditional preference of others over oneself, of the happiness of others over one's own happiness, is the expression of an age-old ethical thought, which calls for gratuitous action, disinterest, self-forgetfulness, non-recognition and acceptance of the worst, the primacy of the moral over the material, of the collective over the individual. E. Levinas defines this ethical

⁶ Florent Pasquier, Tania Lima, Rodrigo Bonacin. Information and Communication Technologies for transpersonal and transdisciplinary goals: Presentation of a work in progress in Brazil for peace education. *Cahiers COSTECH - Cahiers Connaissance, organisation et systèmes techniques*, 2022, 5, online no paginated, <https://www.costech.utc.fr/CahiersCostech/?article152>; <https://hal.utc.fr/hal-03855949>.

thinking as an other-than-being or the beyond of the essence, a kind of ideal of sanctity where the subject empties himself of himself, off-centre, to make way for the other and sign the unconditional preferability of others... Thus, attesting to its otherness.

This admirable and elevated attitude, adopted by the famous or anonymous heroes who have built Western culture, fully understandable in contexts where the survival of human values that guarantee the transmission of a law and a culture that make it possible for mankind to become twofold, is threatened, also seems an ambiguous and difficult attitude, which deserves to be contextualised, given the massacres, misunderstandings and pointless sacrifices that it has engendered and continues to engender.

While at first sight it seems to herald generosity, it can also harbour the seeds of self-destruction. Indeed, this attitude raises problems when it becomes a categorical imperative, a duty of sacrifice, when, ironically, unconditional love becomes condition, despite the physical and psychological health of a human organism, in the absolutely banal context of an end-of-year exam, such as the baccalaureate. We then witness or take part in insane work rates, in the formation of elitist classes where only the most enduring win, and we set up sacrificial exams that lead to stress, exclusions for some and narcissistic exaltation for others. G. Deleuze goes so far as to describe the education system as a process of indebtedness that takes place in a theatre of cruelty. This relationship of indebtedness between one person and another establishes a relationship of domination submission to knowledge, which constitutes a serious obstacle to the freedom and joy of dialogue and an impediment to the balance necessary for the happy development of the human being. Of course, personal development always gives rise to crises, but these can be experienced calmly, understood as opportunities for mutual learning and as a source of hope for our common evolution.

Learning does not have to be sad or despairing despite its difficulty; it can be supported by an enthusiastic effort when it reveals the genius and success of those involved. Of course, a journey littered with criticism and failure will leave scars, and these traces of suffering will speak for themselves.

5. The Devaluation of Desire

In contrast to the previous situation, and as a response to it, the devaluation of desire refers to the overvaluation of the vital needs of the living organism despite the possibility of elaborating the meaning that desire carries. The sacrificial dimension of Western ethics has been harshly criticised by F. Nietzsche, who revalues the masterly work of the survival instinct, the surpassing of oneself by oneself, made possible by a healthy body in a healthy mind and which makes possible the acquisition of a Gai savour. The philosopher writes making contempt for the body and the salvation of the soul is a sure recipe for decadence.

However, the transgression of a sacrificial ethic does not always lead to

the advent of a new philosophy (apart from the fact that the apology of the superman can lead to Nazism. Throughout a formative journey, when for a variety of reasons (both avowed and disavowed) desire fails to achieve meaning, the impulse that drives desire can be turned against oneself or others (or even trigger a simultaneous movement to destroy oneself and others). Those targeted in this way are the guarantors of Western law and culture. In the course of the learning process, a process of devaluation of the self, of the representative of the culture and of the values conveyed by Western culture takes place, because for many reasons the meaning of the values and the scope of this culture are not understood, because of the sacrifices or abuses it imposes and justifies.

In fact, for a desire to be able to freely access meaning and become humanised, a few observations are necessary and important for all those who live as educators and are educated by a human relationship, in other words, a history, in the West, but also in other cultural contexts: in the East, in North America, in South America...

1. Human desire is both a desire to understand and to be understood, and a desire to satisfy the vital needs of the organism. And when we allow the expression of desire, we must take into account the complexity and richness of its structure. This structure attests to the existence at the source of human desire of an epistemophilic drive, in other words, a drive to understand which, depending on whether or not it is recognised by oneself or by others, can lead to its transformation into a life drive or a death drive. The demand for meaning at the source of desire can only express itself and develop harmoniously in the context of a ban on physical and psychological violence. This safe, neutral framework is essential for the acquisition of the language that will allow each individual to resolve the difficult equation posed by their desire.

2. The complex structure of human desire leads us to make two observations: on the one hand, we must not forget that the living organism, which expresses a demand for meaning and wishes to understand and be understood, also has physical needs that must be satisfied and without which it cannot develop harmoniously. On the other hand, it seems absurd and painful to repress the vital needs of an organism, to hurt it, to attack it, so that the demand for meaning contained in the laws, values and knowledge of a particular culture can be heard.

6. The Ethical Role of Objects of Knowledge in the Context of Transdisciplinary Research: the Museum Visit

Let's analyse how the object of knowledge constructed by two or more people can assume an ethical role of mediation between positions. The white page, but also photos, paintings, collages, songs, theatre, opera and visits to museums, constitute a third, secret place, a zone of non-resistance, and are situated in a zone of further development for the subjects involved in the relationship.

In this sense, the joint creation of knowledge objects, or even their simple

circulation, can play an important role in transdisciplinary research on emotions, because it is this joint creation, or this listening to difference, that can give rise to new meanings that take into account and respect the diversity of human cultures, but also of living things, while creating the conditions for human development in harmony with the nature from which it emerges.

At the age of fourteen, the author's drawing teacher in Paris noticed her diligence and joy at work, and he first opened the door to the natural science room where she learned to sketch the human skeleton. Then he opened the doors of the Louvre to her. That's how she noticed that she wasn't alone with her notebook.

There were whole groups of people drawing, people sitting alone in front of a painting... After a long walk, she found herself small, stunned in front of the Venus de Milo. And she began her sketches. Before so many others and after so many others. In this way, she became part of a group, not of a ballet or an army, but of 'cursed painters' who didn't even know they were cursed.

Based on examples of dialogue drawn from various contexts, in higher education, in the context of the Philosophy class, but also in the course of dialogue between colleagues from several different disciplines, between several heads of departments, in the context of teacher training (but also outside the context of the Institution, with the Guarani Indians), as an adult, his research opened up on a new awareness: awareness of the unintentional, i.e. of the third, novel and sometimes sublime meaning, which is the result of the intersection of desires and knowledge and which attests to the capacity of human development thanks to its curiosity, the capacity to agree and to learn together, sometimes out of context: in an unexpected visit to the museum where the past was waiting for him and began to speak. It is these objects of knowledge patiently worked out in common that can enable us not to despair of a pragmatic utopia: finding meaning together. Sketches, poems, solutions to equations, third-party objects, floating objects, transitional objects, works of art, all prove that the dialogue has taken place, that we have been able to make something of ourselves: together.

She was able to testify that when we take pleasure in writing a text, preparing a lesson, telling a story, drawing a picture, writing a poem, sharing ourselves through culture, the result is better than through constraints, shame, threat, fear or sacrifice.

Of course, the joint development of knowledge implies an awakening to ethics, but a possible ethic that respects the physical and psychological integrity of each person, their freedom of speech, their singular voice: the richness of their subjectivity, their history, the rhythms of their body and their heart. This is when the transfer takes place: the object of knowledge comes to life, it is inhabited, the poetry watches over it, the canvas speaks, the coat of arms protects, the song weeps with joy, the writings bleed, blossom and carry within them the traces of the human. And other human beings can then discover them, reproduce them, take hold of them and share them, as the author has done by working on his piano

and developing his singing, first alone then as a choir, on existing pieces or from contemporary creations.

But aren't these cultural, third party, inhabited objects that we encounter in museums or in everyday life sometimes capable of reconciling us with others, with ourselves? The authors of this chapter did not know Kant or Nietzsche personally, but at different times in their lives, their writings changed their lives. Without ever having seen them, they seem dear and familiar.

7. A Learning Society: The Museum Visit

Learning democracy requires time, investment in philosophical training for the population of managers or in various professional environments, the ability to exercise more humane management or relationships, to be qualified, properly remunerated, to occupy a place as a subject involved in society, there is a requirement that will undoubtedly impose itself by dint of successive demands and negotiations.

A word of warning: is the role of the human being, as Philippe Sollers has denounced, to be 'a prosthesis' or an extension of the machine in a production system? The writer testifies:

'You see humanoids dragging themselves along as prostheses in the absence of thought and in the absence of poetry, which means that their bodies are themselves already programmed to be evacuated.'

What kind of future do we want for today's organisations? Of course, the reality differs from country to country, but the global trend is still towards privatising investment in research and setting up projects that put the brakes on human development.

However, the exercise of philosophy could enable people to mediate effectively in debates on the future of research projects with an ethical aim, because philosophy offers people the exercise of thinking together to be able to live together, to support themselves together, and this is not easy. Thinking together is a very arduous exercise that requires philosophical training.

In today's organisations, will we have the material conditions and the freedom to dare to engage in the complex, difficult and arduous, but also democratic, human dialogue about the meaning of our lives? Will the place of conscience in a career path finally be on the agenda of contemporary research into senior management? What if we were to visit museums, even build some, before finding ourselves there one day, post mortem, as a shimmering canvas or a piano composition for a young teenager?

While a computer equipped with the latest resources from the artificial intelligence sector can predict changes in a human being's behaviour caused by emotional factors and adapt its responses based on the changes observed, the computer itself does not experience any type of emotion. Some people don't either, and alas, the devil doesn't take them. In fact, the computer currently serves

as a behavioural model for many people. Some people want to programme their brains and their lives like clockwork.

Philosophical conflicts, which are often intersubjective in nature and emotionally charged, cannot be resolved by 'brain computers' or 'people machines'. In the same way, dialogical initiative taking in the event of problems or difficulties of understanding, which are often situated, subjective problems, must urgently form part of the training programmes of present or future contemporary leaders. In his contemporary treatises on management, Thierry C. Pauchant draws on philosophers to talk about 'crisis management' and the 'quest for meaning in organisations'. What has happened to authentic leaders? Those with a democratic vision and a concern for ethics? And not a preoccupation with the media, populism and lies? Should we accept culture being reduced to the role of a commodity? Should we renounce the transmission of human values through the circulation of objects of knowledge? Should we follow in the footsteps of Deleuze and the young Vietnamese women and repeat suicide, ultimately the only suitable way to achieve the rank of respected posterity or to leave behind a pseudo-life that is not worth living? In life, philosophers are marginal or mad; in death, they are elevated to the rank of saints or sages. Cursed philosophers, painters, poets, workers?

We want the seasons to come and go, we want spring to return, we want investment in long-term cooperation and solidarity to (re) reconcile us. Alas, today we are losing ground to a trivialisation and a reduction of thought to easy formulas behind which people hide, or surprisingly boast ... avoiding, in any case, the real questions.

Instead of daring to talk to our emotions, we make strategic cuts and anaesthetise our conscience as best we can. In these cases, computers or people machines are said to be more reliable, more efficient at carrying out tasks and to reduce company costs. The point is not to deny the contribution of computers, but to place them at the service of human beings and not the other way round, and to preserve dialogue and the presence of emotions, on the meaning and value of a life story, the weight of a struggle within contemporary organisations.

A second drift then takes place from this first one: the organisational machine created by man perversely begins to control the user when the system breaks down. Imagine the chaos, anguish and problems experienced in a large urban hospital in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 2004, when its computerised telephone system broke down. The technicians worked for 36 hours straight, including the night shift, under immense strain, until the problem was identified and resolved.

So, to compensate for the problems posed by machines, managers in general are demanding increasingly mechanistic and impersonal behaviour from humans, who cannot be replaced by machines. Employees must be neutral, fast, efficient and above all devoid of any ethical conscience – in short, 'objective' and docile.

The aim of the action must always be 'how much does it bring in' and

above all not ‘what sense does it make to the person carrying out the task’.

You have to be malleable, ‘multifunctional’ and ‘desensitised’, according to some up-to-the-minute engineers and terminology learned in North America. Beware of love: therapists will treat you for emotional dependence. These people commodities, consumed and replaced in the same way and whose effectiveness is tested and controlled by computers, are certainly a serious factor in the long-term crisis of meaning for contemporary organisations. Have we all become commercial products to be traded on the market for work paid for by the hour, just as the day labourers were in the days of the Bible, the Middle Ages, or the Industrial Revolution? Aren’t we, professors of the philosophy of education, like a public service that should be offered free of charge to the public?

Indeed, the spirit of Machiavelli is now to be found at the heart of many managerial theories. The quest for meaning and compassion in organisations is far from unanimous. Textbooks devote whole chapters to Machiavelli, who is described as a brilliant precursor of the ‘business class’, asserting that a lawful end justifies unlawful means. Of course...

These spiralling drifts lead us into a strange ballet in which the philosophy teacher becomes the extension or slave of a digital brain, at the service of an inaccessible multinational corporation that lives far away, as in the most mind-boggling science-fiction stories of Huxley and his *Brave New World*. We can also draw a parallel with a disastrous archaic past where tyrants reigned supreme, as in the Aztec or Inca empires, and where human sacrifice regularly appeased the anger of the gods. It’s as if the atonement and suffering of the group for the happiness of a chosen few, often the strongest, most intelligent and most cruel – in short, our devils at the top of the pyramid – were the only possible way for human societies to function, like a beehive for bees. Is the ideal model of society a beehive with its bees?

In fact, in the history of certain primitive or first peoples, peaceful peoples such as the Australian aborigines with their communal values, were made enslaved by more aggressive tribes, or forced to flee and abandon their territory to the enemy. Democracies since Athens have survived only thanks to the imperialism of some, and a peaceful land is one of Teilhard de Chardin’s pious wishes. Basically, it is still very often the pyramid model that reigns supreme in our societies, even if organisations that operate on the basis of cooperative models are an innovative exception. That said, these types of organisation seem essential for our future and are still a possible choice.

Fortunately, until now, the computing machine has neither the ability to choose between several alternatives when faced with an ethical problem, nor the decision-making power, nor the emotional intelligence required to solve the very complex problems faced by humans in today’s organisations. Indeed, we can see that these problems are contextualised and multi-referential in origin, and that ideally they require the players involved having plastic abilities: reflexive, dia-

logic and sensitive, so that they can resolve them calmly, face to face and together, with emotion in a transdisciplinary effort⁷.

When a manager refuses to talk openly with his subordinates because he is following a market logic that is incompatible with an individual's demands for meaning, which would require long-term investment, dismissal or problems with work incapacity are imminent. In the event of conflict or difficulty, the manager feels obliged to take refuge behind faxes, emails and overloaded diaries, or even machine persons, to whom he delegates the task of providing arbitrary responses or veiled threats. The result is that the management of some organisations is modelled on that of large multinational corporations, and is gradually becoming devoid of any ethical questions about the meaning of its existence, insofar as, centred on the need for immediate profit, it is becoming increasingly impersonal and reluctant to make the necessary changes that would make it possible for people, and hence its organisations, to evolve in a 'dignified' way. Albert Einstein, referring to the value of human consciousness⁸, warns us:

'A new way of thinking is needed if humanity is to survive'.

As we have briefly described, we are witnessing what appears to be an irreversible process of replacing the most tedious, even dangerous and repetitive human tasks with machines. In itself, the idea is excellent and laudable; on the face of it, it will save precious time and physical and mental health. Everyone seems to agree on the harmful effects of Taylorism, and the scientific community accepts this replacement without any major problems. The development of automation processes should make it possible to empower people and employ them in more dignified tasks, giving them greater responsibility, autonomy, safety and sometimes even pleasure at work. There's nothing wrong with that. Are we thinking of going back to living without means of transport, communication, television, telephone and cinema, without radio or the Internet? Are we going to give up pharmaceutical research because of biological weapons, or the marvellous rockets because of their costs or the damage caused by missiles? More and more ethical councils are tipping towards the other extreme by rejecting scientific and technological progress. Frequenting sects with medieval practices or trying to return to the wilderness is interesting avoidance strategies and can prove formative for those who practise Gregorian chant talking circles around a campfire, but they do not solve the problems. Soliciting philosophy from scientists in the field is less complicated than it seems. There is a close relationship between the logic of scientific discovery and the development of critical thinking of a philosophical

⁷ Mariana Thieriot Loisel, *Les Mutations Humaines*, Ed. Amalthee 2016, p. 122-128. See also Mar Thieriot, *Les sagesses du monde au pluriel... Les voies d'une mise en voix*, PLASTIR 56, 12/2019, pp. 61-92, available here: <https://www.plasticites-sciences-arts.org/PLASTIR/Thieriot%20P56.pdf>, accessed in 03.-6.2024.

⁸ Lopes Pinheiro, S., & Pasquier, F. (2023). Consciousness and Environmental Education: Transdisciplinary Urgencies from the Post-pandemic Context. *Transdisciplinary Journal of Engineering & Science*, 14. Pp. 81-94, <https://doi.org/10.22545/2023/00223>.

nature. Any teacher who has allowed it has certainly experienced some fascinating dialogues in the classroom with the pupils entrusted to him. The problem of meaning can be found everywhere, and it can only be solved in situ, as André Lacroix teaches in Sherbrooke.

The problem, then, lies not in the growth of scientific and technological research per se, but in the direction given to this growth or, on the contrary, in its absurdity; **when the machine becomes the behavioural model for the individual**. In the short term, the absurdity is gaining ground and humanity, with the support of research, is producing increasingly competitive, aggressive and irrational behaviour, insofar as this competition is already causing it a great deal of harm and yet it persists. The technological boom, with the complicity of the public authorities, has reinforced local underemployment. It is cheaper to employ people who are still young, just trained and still devoid of any ethical conscience.

A constructive and promising response would be to increase transdisciplinary and simultaneous scientific, technological and ethical training for the world's populations, enabling them to develop at a high level through bilateral agreements for mutual support for scientific and technological research on site, which would involve different countries in a rationale of cooperation between university researchers and support for sustainable development and the autonomy of each in relation to the other, with respect and dignity and taking account of ethical, human and environmental problems⁹.

Petty local government, based on corruption and the lure of profit margins made possible by the maintenance of underemployment and cut-price agreements with multinationals and offshoring, does not seem doomed to disappear. Cronyism' continues to replace competence, through intrigue, factionalism and compromise. So, what's to be done? More bloodshed? Couldn't we imagine and implement a quiet, springlike evolution? Do we always have to go into exile? Children and teenagers are here. What will their legacy be?

The choice remains **'to be or to have'**, to use Eric Fromm's beautiful phrase. The heart of the problem of sustainable development of the planet seems to be the ethical and philosophical training of the leaders and managers who sign international economic agreements and promote them in their respective countries. The presence or absence of this philosophical training will determine the direction of scientific discoveries in the field: for or against humans? Bombs or earthly food? Learning the discipline or visiting museums? And in science fiction terms: self-destruction or trips to the Planetarium? We can't want life and death at the same time, and we'll have to accept that one day we'll have to reach out for something that the poet Aragon Paul Eluard wanted the colour of orange in an old, over-listened-to record: Ferrat Chante Aragon in the Collection Disque

⁹ Pasquier, F., & Nicolescu, B. (2019). To be or not to be transdisciplinary, that is the new question. So, how to be transdisciplinary? *Transdisciplinary Journal of Engineering & Science*, 10. Pp. 1-8, <https://doi.org/10.22545/2019/0110/>.

d'or... To move towards a modest, reasoned universal of concord, if human beings choose life. Today 'Concorde' is the name of a plane relegated to a hangar. Having said that, it can emerge from there.

Indeed, it seems necessary in the context of training scientists, even before engaging in the all-important cross-disciplinary debates, to introduce a stage within these disciplines themselves, an 'intra-disciplinary' or even 'meta-disciplinary' stage where scientists can establish an ethical link between their object of study and their conscience. Why do they choose this profession? What values guide them? What is the meaning of his or her discipline in the classroom? We will achieve a better dialogue, from one season to the next, if we encourage the presence of philosophical questioning within the various disciplines... Chance encounters in the museums of the world to contemplate together, remember beauty and create new ones.

We have to recognise that we will have the leaders and organisations we are capable of training throughout the world. For the time being, we are training effective devils, and hell always seem to be paved with good intentions. It therefore seems essential for a contemporary organisation to invest in the philosophical skills of its managers: their capacity for dialogue, self-knowledge, self-education and critical thinking, their sense of justice and friendship, their long-term vision, their taste for in-depth study and research, and their human virtues¹⁰. These virtues, which are at the root of democracy, are very difficult to acquire and complex to pass on. Far from being innate, as the dark history of man has shown, they have to be picked up and perfected every day through dialogue. Sometimes we don't feel like it. There are necessary silences like wastelands. The author's Ikebana teacher taught him so much with her patient hands and her wonderful bouquets. The piano teacher shared with the author that she helped her neighbours with their tax returns. You can bequeath a fortune to your children, but your forebears, your teachers, cannot bequeath their character, their gentleness, their fortitude, the taste for culture that made them human in some way. The chords of Pablo Casals when he played Bach for the thousandth time, Mozart who beat Salieri to the punch by making him take his Requiem in a note after a lifetime of jealousy and persecution, the storming of the Bastille taught for over two centuries without respite as well as all our red-corrected homework on the abolition of slavery, the right of women to vote at last, a face-to-face encounter with the Venus de Milo. Conscience is a matter of self-training in freedom of choice based on knowledge of human values.

If some people insist on seeing our human organisations simply as profit-making enterprises, then our leaders need to orientate their compasses correctly. There can be no humanity without disinterested culture: but what use will literature, museums ... be if humanity is destroyed and we are reduced to slavery by

¹⁰ Pasquier, F. (2022). From Spirituality to Technontology in Education. *Journal of Systemics, Cybernetics and Informatics*, 20(6), pp. 49-52, <https://doi.org/10.54808/JSCI.20.06.49>.

way of brains, to being prostheses for computers in organisations, docile ‘people machines’, and if human is dead in the water and hell become our only homeland? Another bird jumps out of the window.

The only thing we can do, as Levinas advised us, is to bear witness to our constancy of effort and leave the door open to the possibility of a reconciled humanity through philosophical dialogue: leave the door open and the light on. We have a good memory, and all the struggles that humanity has waged and continues to wage for the rights of men, women and children throughout the world, inspired by the French initiative of the Enlightenment, should not, we hope, be in vain.

This new conception of management, centred on the value of the individual and driven by an ethical vision, would characterise the entry into the post-industrial era and, further on, would lay the foundations for another, *post-capitalist* society, which would have learned and respected the value and importance of the act of learning alone and in a group, including from one’s mistakes.

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