



**Notes on *EcHumanism, Holistic Governance,*  
*Pragdealism, and E-co-mmunication:*  
Instruments for a 21C World-view, Governance and Practice**

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# **Notes on *EcHumanism, Holistic Governance, Pragdealism, and E-co-communication*: Instruments for a 21C World-view, Governance and Practice**

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## **1 Introduction**

Technological visions are usually imaginative and exciting and take us into realms of unheard of possibilities and frontiers where reality and fiction tend to blur into each other. Often however technological visions are also devoid of soul and cast humans as secondary players in a historical plot inexorably unfolding towards the envisioned techno-future. This paper portrays a different vision. A vision that highlights the potential for a much better world than the one we live today; and accords humanity the lead role in shaping the plot and choreography of the ICT-based knowledge society. In so doing, it develops a number of interrelated conceptual instruments to help grasp consistently the nature and scope of both the challenges facing humanity and the potential responses available to it.

## **2 Starting Point – Globalization**

The paper starts by positing “globalization” as the long-term outcome of the content, directions and dynamics of the multiple factors and processes that predominantly shape the evolution of society today. These factors and processes involve from (micro) attitudes and preferences of individuals to (macro) computerized working of the international financial system, and many others such as the increasing primacy of knowledge, technology and networks in all spheres of life. In their ensemble, they form a powerful force of societal development that, today, makes “globalization” our future – a future that belongs to a kind of historical “continuum” that has seen humanity coming ever closer particularly in the last three to four centuries.

### *2.1 Today’s Globalization and Its Limitations*

More than any other time in history, the knowledge society emerging at present is stimulating and networking flows of people, tangible and intangible elements and factors, impacts, relationships and interactions on a global scale. This process of ‘globalization’ however is not fulfilling its potential to generate a quantum leap towards the development of a human civilization capable of growing and living in harmony within itself and with the planet. The reason lies in the dominant “power-maximizing” governance of this process that privileges the flourishing of certain global flows over others and in certain directions over others. The result cripples the full potential to reach the “global village” in which freedom, democracy, justice and peace would reach global plenitude in harmony with the planet.

Globalization is not negative *per se*, it is the “tribal globalization” that favours the powerful within and between continents, countries, nations, regions, organizations and communities that is problematic. Thus unbridled and directionally-biased globalization of flows of money and goods has been highly profitable for the dominant economies, while for many developing countries it has meant crises, unfair subsidies and protectionism against their main products (particularly agricultural), and

huge debts that have resulted in large flows of capital travelling from the weak to the powerful economies. There is little "globalization" of labour markets and access to medicines that could alleviate poverty and crippling illnesses in the poorest developing economies, while "aid flows" are relatively pitiful and normally with strings attached when compared with investments of hundreds of billions in subsidies and war expenditure.

## 2.2 “Echumanist Globalization” or Echumanization

The vision depicted in this paper sees the potential for a better world than the one unfolding today. In this better world social and planetary responsibility plays a major role in globalization. Thus the paper envisages, for instance, the strengthening of a "globalization of solidarity," as ex-President of Costa Rica Luis Alberto Monge has put it. Indeed, it envisages the 21<sup>st</sup> century as a “crossroad century” – a century in which humanity will be faced with, and forced to, change and pursue an effective and balanced globalization of multiple interacting flows: including, financial, production, trade, profits, power but, also, flows of responsibility, solidarity, good-will, health, education, jobs, knowledge, culture, experience, etc.

The harmonious globalization of the totality of these flows will help shift the evolution of societies towards sustainable development and the knowledge society for all. This globalization is well beyond the current limited and biased process of “power-maximizing” globalization. It entails the globalization of the best of humanity for all humanity and the planet and, consequently, the globalization of efforts to combat all evils. For this reason, it is preferable to call it "*humanization*"<sup>1</sup> or better "*echumanization*" to reflect the synthesis of the fundamental concepts of ecological,<sup>2</sup> holistic,<sup>3</sup> universal,<sup>4</sup> and humanist<sup>5</sup> required for an effective shift from “power-maximizing” globalization to sustainable development. In this sense, *echumanism* is a true shift in world-view, or, following Kuhn, a *paradigm* shift that implies evolving towards governances and institutions that favour human- and ecologically-centred processes of development. In practice, it means de-emphasizing the dominant role of “power-maximization” while, simultaneously emphasizing “social and planetary responsibility” in the governance/s that drive the individual and social behaviour responsible for the present evolution of the humanity and the planet.

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<sup>1</sup> *Humanization* has the limitation that it does not immediately evocates “environment” (the earth) and thus may be construed as reinforcing anthropocentrism. On its favour, it does capture the fact that humanity has become and it is likely to continue to be the dominant force in shaping the future of the planet and all species, including itself. In this respect, if humanity were to succeed (by whatever reason) in shifting globalization to include the best of humanity, then we could look at the future and ourselves with greater certainty that we have avoided the path to disaster.

<sup>2</sup> **eco- 1** : habitat or environment <*ecospecies*> **and 2** : ecological or environmental <*ecocatastrophe*> **ecol·o·gy** in the sense of the totality or pattern of relations between organisms and their environment

<sup>3</sup> **holistic** – including or involving all of something, especially all of somebody’s physical, mental, and social conditions, not just physical symptoms, in the treatment of illness (Encarta, 2003)

<sup>4</sup> **Universal** in the sense of affecting, relating to, or including everyone in a particular group or situation (Encarta, 2003)

<sup>5</sup> **hu·man·ism** in the sense of a doctrine, attitude, or way of life centered on human interests or values

### 2.3 “Echumanism” Implies a Holistic Approach to Governance

The collective appropriation and enactment of an *echumanist* governance -particularly in the social sectors that profit most from the present societal order - is today a hugely complex and difficult process. To see why it is necessary to grasp governance/s in a holistic perspective. *Holistic governance* is:

...the written and unwritten "legislation" that governs the behaviour, relations, interactions, calculations, transactions and conflict resolution between individual, groups, departments, companies, governments and so on from local to global levels and vice-versa. Governance shapes old and new constituency-building processes, such as the Internet or, more broadly, the information society, but it is also created and destroyed by them. It includes formal and informal organizational structures and decision-making steps, procedures, rules-of-thumb and routines for resource, rewards and punishment allocation. It includes power relations between individual and collective players at intra-organizational, inter-organizational as well as societal levels. It also includes 'mindsets' resulting from different historical conjunctions such as crises, booms, re-organizations and so on.

As such “holistic governance” is not just legislative rules. It is rather the whole ensemble of "rules of the game" that conditions and influences the behaviour of individuals, communities, organizations and societies in their specific states of developments. In this sense, it is closer to culture - deeply ingrained and resilient to change without a strong and compelling reason: negative or positive.

Here lies the depth and extent of the difficulty for humanity to change. Ultimately, it is the dialectics of “man and its circumstances”<sup>6</sup> that must change, through a process of co-(r)evolution that brings about the ‘extinction’ of *homo potentatus* and of the associated power structures and institutions that today drive the world as if they were quasi-autonomous of people. As Ortega y Gasset put it: “*Yo soy yo y mi circunstancia, y sino la salvo a ella no me salvo yo.*” Furthermore, the ‘extinction’ of *homo poteres* and its circumstance should simultaneously give rise to *homo ‘echumanus’* - just like the caterpillar’s transformation into a butterfly brings about a new more beautiful expression of essentially the same being. In society such expression would imply the transformation from a *power-maximizing globalization* into the *echumanization* of sustainable development.

Today, the principles of *echumanism* are visible in the thoughts and life-styles of a significant proportion of people. Yet it would be wishful thinking to believe that the force and the conditions exist for a widespread and deep *echumanist* transformation of the world. Today, we are still very much at the mercy of the “quasi-autonomous’ forces driving “power-maximizing” globalization. Admittedly, the complexity of world development with its high degree of fragmentation and power-maximization does not lend itself to easy systematic management. It is thus much easier to surrender responsibilities to apparently spontaneous mechanisms that have "naturally" tended to favour the most powerful interests and, of course benefiting many people, but simultaneously excluding a huge part of humanity.

An *echumanist* transformation will not be easygoing. It is most likely to be preceded

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<sup>6</sup> “I am myself and my circumstance, if I do not save it I do not save myself.” Ortega y Gasset, J., *Meditaciones del ‘Quijote’* in *Obras Completas, Vol 1*, Madrid: Revista de Occidente (1946-1983), 1914, p.322.

by individual and collective uncertainties, threats and identity crises leading to deep soul-searching and questioning of the prevailing synthesis of world-views, life-styles, institutions and the processes that sustain them. This deep crisis will simultaneously fertilize the seeds of *echumanization* that people carry within them and that for centuries have blossomed now and then in the inspiring lives of artists, scholars, spiritual leaders and others but have never truly dominated the development of society(ies).

Is the 21C about to change this? Is there anything we can do? Many assessments and predictions projecting the present state of the world into the future envisage dire consequences if humanity does not mend its predominant forms of development. Should we then maintain a “business-as-usual” attitude and wait until the time<sup>7</sup> and conditions for change get more fertile? Or should we take up the challenge and try to do something now? In my view, if the assessments and predictions are correct, or even if there is a chance that they will be correct, then we have little options but to face this challenge now and with our full minds and hearts. And this is exactly where people and organizations embracing the dream of a better society have the key role of refining this dream and carrying it forward into reality through becoming examples of social responsibility, solidarity and effective actions, because as Gandhi wisely wrote: “we must become the change we want to see.”

### **3 Dissolving Borders and Embracing Contradictions .... Rejecting Reductionisms**

Humanity is a specie of great contradictions. It is capable of the most horrendous crimes and of the most beautiful altruism at the same time. As individuals, we are ‘battlefields’ between selfish and generous tendencies, between love and hate and so many other pairs that in different degrees and complex combinations help characterize human behaviour. A simple interpretation of this contradictory nature is the dualist Maniquean world-view of “good” and “evil,” sometimes advocated by “power-maximizers” to justify domination and often war.

In society this contradictory nature is essential to the opportunities and problems of today. It is essential to the content, direction and reach of processes of development and under-development and to our simultaneous concerns, hopes, dreams and nightmares for the future.

Thus the 20th century saw the fastest scientific, technological, and societal changes lived by the most developed in all its planetary existence. Yet, the unprecedented scale of the human and ecological development and impact has created both:

✍️✍️The means to eradicate or reduce significantly hunger, poverty, sickness, illiteracy, homelessness and other evils that affect large parts of humanity; and

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<sup>7</sup> “When will this time be? Nobody can tell for sure because it is not a matter of reaching known absolute limits, it is largely a matter of perceptions, particularly although not exclusively, by the most powerful sectors of society who drive and benefit most from the present order.” (Molina, A., *A Vision for a Better World in a Crossroad Century: The Dream of the Information Society for All and the Global e-Inclusion Movement*, TechMaPP, The University of Edinburgh, 2002.

✍️✍️The processes that have taken humanity through catastrophes such as two World Wars and today to the brink of, for instance, ecological catastrophe.

This contradictory reality is making the 21C a *crossroad century* and must be faced and handled for the sake of life and the planet.

### 3.1 *Re-balancing Governance and Life*

Evidence tends to confirm the contradictory nature of the processes we are living through at the present time, that is, the presence of major problems for humanity and the planet together with the potential to eradicate or greatly reduce these problems and their consequences.

We see the presence of elements and foundations of an *echumanist* world-view, governance and life-styles clearly operating today. Thus, many organizations, communities and people are working to improve the life of fellow human beings and the environment across the world and, increasingly, this ecological and human solidarity (*echu-solidarity or echu-responsibility*) is global in its reach, scope and results. Furthermore, the people carrying out these activities are not exclusive to any kind of organization, although there are organizations and countless projects that are exclusively purporting social responsibility and solidarity. But we also find many *echu-solidarity* initiatives, projects and actions in the realms of government, industry, academia and civil society organizations of all kinds.

The problem is that, in spite of all the advances, the existing *echu-manization* effort is simply not enough to counter-balance the impact of *power-maximization*. To shift the balance towards *echumanization*, a much larger scale of *echu-responsible* systematic and cooperative action is required. This would involve every type organization and community in their own spheres of activity. It would be at every possible geographical levels, joining forces, sharing, learning, innovating, and using old and new technology, to create transparent and sustainable solutions that, gradually, by the force of its benefits for all should create a more fertile ground for the flourishing of *echumanization*. I believe that this *crossroad century* will lend force to *echumanization* in a context of rapid and global communications. And very much in line with our contradictory nature - the worst the tendency to catastrophe gets, the stronger will be the whirl-wind of change that, sweeping across the minds of people, institutional structures, dominant governances, will eventually lead us to take seriously the goals of sustainable development and a knowledge society for all. The question is: how bad must it get for such a big and complex societal change? This will depend on the resilience of the planet and the capacity of power-maximizing structures and governance to adapt themselves to the problems, as well as on the qualitative and quantitative growth of *echumanism*.

### 3.2 *Big Ideals – Pragmatic Actions. Making Dreams a Reality*

The development of ICTs and the knowledge society in the 21st century is giving rise to new concepts such as e-government, e-democracy, and e-citizenship, together with new forms of ICT-based organizations, voting, campaigning, communicating, interacting, etc. A process of societal learning is at its early stages, offering plenty of room for creating and trying new ideas, actions, programmes, governance, etc. This is

a great opportunity to advance from today's *tribal globalization* towards *echumanization* and, particularly towards the knowledge society for all. After all, if it is not at these times of challenges, opportunities, threats and changes, when is it going to be that we soul-search deeply and find ways to aim, work and progress towards a better world?

The key is to *place people and the planet at the centre of the reflection and action*, sharing and joining forces to build innovatively on the opportunities opened by the new technology and the many e-inclusion initiatives already taking place at all levels of society by all types of organizations communities and individuals. The interaction between these two major factors alone should generate a movement of global reach that would help enhance quantitatively and qualitatively the impact of current and future *echumanist* ideas, initiatives, results and opinion at all levels, especially the grassroots.

This is the essence of *global 'programmatic' movements* conceived as loosely-coordinated self-referential social instruments to help innovations and transformations in targeted areas or dimensions directly fostering the realization of a knowledge society for all.<sup>8</sup> There can be many such global programmatic movements and they can interact to form larger forces for innovation and change for a better world. In essence, these targeted movements can all be seen as expressions of a general *echumanization* movement focused on people and the planet, especially the eradication of poverty and associated evils, the flourishing of justice, peace and sustainable development of human capacities for the benefit of all and the environment (i.e., the knowledge society for all).

Of course, you may doubt, as I do myself, about whether this is really possible, or it is simply an impossible dream, an exercise in idealism<sup>9</sup> or utopia<sup>10</sup> that may be nice to imagine but far-fetched from the "real reality" with its today's fashionable "pragmatic<sup>11</sup> utilitarian solutions" that, for some reason, end up rather frequently by re-producing the situation in the contradictory form described by Noble: "change without change."<sup>12</sup>

I happen to believe however that utopias, idealism, dreams, visions of a better world do play an important role in the development of people and humanity as a whole, provided they avoid sectarianism and extremes that tend to end up by violently

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<sup>8</sup> A movement must be understood as a "boundless, free flowing association of people sharing and pursuing in myriad ways the realisation of a dream. It is a space for leadership, creativity, innovation, emulation, cooperation, competition, fulfilment and disappointments in pursuit of change. It may be partly coordinated or simply loosely associated through mechanisms for sharing and learning about different experiences. The bond –whatever its manifestation- is simply the shared dream and the desire to do something about it." (See Molina, A., *The Digital Divide and The Stockholm and Rome Challenge*, Paper presented at the Third Global Forum: "Fostering Democracy and Development through e-Government," Naples, Italy, 15-17 March 2001.)

<sup>9</sup> **ide·al·ism: 2 a** : the practice of forming ideals or living under their influence **b** : something that is idealized. (*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 2003)

<sup>10</sup> **utopian** in the sense of one that believes in the perfectibility of human society and **2** : one that proposes or advocates utopian schemes (Ibid.)

<sup>11</sup> **Pragmatism** A philosophical view that a theory or concept should be evaluated in terms of how it works and its consequences as the standard for action and thought (Encarta 2003)

<sup>12</sup> Noble, D., *America by Design: Science and Technology and the Rise of Corporate Capitalism*, A. Knopf, New York, 1977.

discriminating and excluding other people and communities. Unfortunately, idealism and dreams of a better world are too often reduced to rhetoric and disregarded, even “disqualified” in the face of overwhelming pragmatism, often associated with pressures to accept and play according to the “real reality” of power maximization.

Both extremes are negative and crippling of the rich multi-dimensionality of humanity and society. At the same time they are not exclusive of each other, something very much in line with the fact that, we, human beings are “creatures of contradiction.” And here lies precisely the path forward, in an apparently contradictory “pragmatic idealism,” that invites people to do two things simultaneously:

- ☞☞ To dream and aspire for a better world, for instance, in the form of “a knowledge society for all,” that is, a world without poverty, free, just, democratic, transparent and peaceful. An *echumanist* society that places the environment and people at the centre of its development and pursues ‘development as freedom,’ to use the concept on Nobel Prize Amartya Sen.<sup>13</sup>
- ☞☞ To seek to advance the realization of the dream in a form that is pragmatically well-informed, feasible, innovative, implementable and fruitful, in accordance with the magnitude of the challenge, difficulties and opportunities presented by the state of development of the circumstances in which the effort to advance the dream takes place.

In fact, this is nothing new and surely all movements that have helped change the world have had these two components; and this is valid today as it will be in the future. Thus, as we face the challenges of this “crossroad century,” of the “knowledge society for all,” I think that the first step is to embrace and live the apparently contradictory *pragmatic idealism* in full. Let us be *pragdealists* by blending dreams of a better world with practical actions to advance it, or even better let’s be *praxdealists* by blending dreams, science and practical actions for a better world for all. I believe many people across the world are implicitly pursuing *pragdealism* in their thought and actions. This force must be multiplied by the thousands in the positive and sharing environment of programmatic movements for a better world.

Today the potential exist to create new forms of democracy, empowerment and participation, eliminating the arrogant exercise of power by rulers who at the end of the day are perfect incarnations of the Machiavellian game of politics as the “art of

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<sup>13</sup> "Development can be seen ... as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy... Development requires the re moval of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as sytematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states. Despite unprecedented increases in overall opulence, the contemporary world denies elementary freedoms to vast numbers -perhaps the majority- of people. Sometimes the lack of substantive freedoms relate directly to economic poverty, which robs people of the freedom to satisfy hunger, or to achieve sufficient nutrition, or to obtain remedies for treatable illnesses, or the opportunity to be adequately clothed or sheltered, or to enjoy clean water or sanitary facilities. In other cases, the unfreedom links closely to the lack of public facilities and social care, such as the absence of epidemiological programs, or of organized arrangements for health care or educational facilities, or of effective institutions for the maintenance of local peace or order. In still other cases, the violation of freedom results directly from a denial of political and civil liberties by authoritarian regimes and from imposed restrictions on the freedom to partic ipate in the social, political and economic life of the community." (Sen, A., *Development as Freedom*, OUP, Oxford, 199, pp.1-2)

remaining in power.”<sup>14</sup> People feel largely disempowered by this traditional style of institutional politics and they are turning increasingly to grassroots organizations and protest movements that are making their presence felt in a global scale taking advantage of the opportunities of the networking technologies. As the century goes by and society grows ever more networked, we can expect this tendency to grow stronger with the result that movements will become a central ingredient of democracy, empowerment, distributed leadership, participation and change. Programmatic movements will emerge using the new technology to innovate democratic forms of governance around focused, flexible, transparent and accountable programmes of action for a better world. They will bring together all relevant stakeholders from governments, private sector, civil society, community and individuals on a global scale, and they will interact and relate with other movements creating the force for change from present *tribal globalization* to *echumanization*.

#### 4 What Does it Mean for Each One of Us and Technology

The discussion started by saying that, often, technological visions are devoid of soul. In contrast, this paper has given humanity and the environment centre-stage in an *echumanist vision* that places technology at the service of people and the planet. Since this future is not guaranteed, however, the vision is simultaneously a goal and a challenge - to *make a reality of the “knowledge society for all,” a society in which democracy, social and environmental responsibility, cultural diversity and achievement, transparency, justice and peace constitute the dominant governance of sustainable human and planetary development.*

The future of human society and the world is not pre-determined. It is in our hands to invent it and realize it, taking advantage of the opportunities and benefits brought about by the new technologies. For this to happen, however, technological visions and developments must be infused with a soul that transcends power-maximization and makes *echumanism* the *raison d’être* for development.

In practice, for each one of us, this means to take choices, options from the circumstances in which we find, or are, ourselves. It means continuing or starting journeys from *power-maximizing* towards *echumanist* world-views, governances and practices. It means to leave behind, transcend *homo potentatus* and embrace *homo ‘echumanus.’* It means the rejection of all reductionism, the dissolving of borders that divide us from each other and from the environment. It means embracing life with all its contradictions, enjoying and be enriched by cultural diversity and the simple fact of living together in the journey of the Earth-ship through the infinity of the Universe.

For scientists, technologists researchers, etc., building the technical infrastructures, processes, products, knowledge and environments of today and the future, it means reflecting about their constructions, about the social drives that are shaping them, about the legacies and inheritances they are creating and leaving to humankind, countless species and indeed the environment as a whole. Difficult as it is inside today’s power-maximizing governance, scientists, technologist, companies, etc. have

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<sup>14</sup> Machiavelli, N., *The Prince*, Written in 1513. Full text translation by W.K. Marriott found in [http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/prince/prince\\_contents.html](http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/prince/prince_contents.html)

the choice to direct talents and efforts to generate knowledge, products, and processes that improve the lot of people and the environment and, ultimately, foster an *echumanist* society where intellect, actions and spirit are integrated in harmony.

I do not see as an option to sit and wait for the cadaver of *homo potentatus* to pass by. By the time this may come to happen, we may well be ourselves in danger of extinction, just as the 30,000 species facing extinction today. Instead we must work to transform radically the balance of influences in favour of *homo echumanus*, being *pragdealists*, planting seeds into even the infertile ‘terrain’ of today’s societies, and continue to nurture them with perseverance for, one day, they will blossom, defining their own spaces and transforming the planet into a better world.

Among the many processes already pointing in *echumanist* directions are the UN Millennium Goals, Agenda 21 and, of course, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, etc. In technology, there is a long tradition of *echumanist pragdealism*, for instance, in the form of the alternative technology or appropriate technology movements and, also, the green movement. Recently, one of the most innovative and radical developments is the free/libre and open source software (FLOSS) movement.

The radical FLOSS idea originated with Richard Stallman who back in September 1983, announced that he was to commence work on a Unix-like software system called GNU (for GNU’s not Unix) that everyone would be free to use, change, share, and improve. Work started in 1984 and in 1985 Stallman released the first major product of the system (GNU Emacs), along with his GNU Manifesto on free software.<sup>15</sup> He also created the Free Software Foundation (FSF) to give institutional visibility to the GNU project. Most critically, Stallman began to lay down the licensing principles that would bring about a fundamental challenge to the “proprietary” way of doing business. He sought “to give users all possible freedom consistent with respecting the freedom of other users”<sup>16</sup> by asking users to adopt the same licensing approach. The strategic implications of this step have only recently become fully visible. Users were now free to modify the software on condition of publishing their modifications and giving the same right to other users in relation to the “modified” work, and so on. This freedom is decomposed into four fundamental components in the GNU website:<sup>17</sup>

- Freedom 0 - the freedom to run a program, for any purpose
- Freedom 1 - the freedom to study how a program works, and adapt it to your needs
- Freedom 2 - the freedom to redistribute copies of a program so you can help your neighbour
- Freedom 3 - the freedom to improve the program, and release your improvements to the public, so that the whole community benefits

As Stallman developed more software this “revolutionary” licensing approach was, in 1986, generalised from “GNU Emacs” to simply “software.” Thus a generic copyright cover for all GNU project software emerged – the GNU General Public License (GPL). Version 1.0 of the GPL was eventually published in 1989. These original developments and others that followed, particularly the development of Linux by Linus Torvalds, set the foundations for the emergence of the FLOSS movement that

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<sup>15</sup> The concept of “free” in Stallman’s meaning is related to “freedom” rather than “gratis.”

<sup>16</sup> Personal communication with R. Stallman, 13 April 2003.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-sw.html>

today is threatening to alter profoundly the economics of the software industry, particularly substituting the oligopolistic exclusive control of software by a model that opens the possibility for the development of software capacities by many more individuals, organisations and regions, thus spreading more widely the benefits of information and communications technologies and the knowledge society.

Another expression is the *global e-inclusion movement (GeM)*, an emerging process that is, in essence, an *echumanization* movement focused on the human- and ecologically-centred development and implementation of ICTs. The ultimate goal is to contribute decisively to the reduction of poverty by half by year 2015! (and to eradicate it by year 2030!) while advancing towards the “knowledge society for all,” a society in which democracy, cultural diversity and achievement, transparency, inclusiveness, justice, peace constitute the driving force of sustainable development.

These are only two examples among multiple possibilities and options that already exist or can be created for each one of us to take part in the great debates and actions that will shape the society of the future. As said at the start of this Notes, “technological visions take us into realms of unheard of possibilities and frontiers where reality and fiction tend to blur into each other.” Technological visions dissolve borders and give us a sense of unlimited horizon of achievement. The same should be the case for *holistic sociotechnical visions* featuring the future of humanity and the world. They should also give us the sense of unlimited horizon of achievement, erasing borders, nurturing *pragdealism* and motivating us to transform the dream of *echumanism* into reality since today in the long journey of this crossroad century.

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