A New Enlightenment and Education Towards a Bioeconomic Society

Jóse Angel López Herrerías

Facultad de Educación, Universidad Complutense, Madrid, Spain

ABSTRACT

The change of century with a new millennium means the conscious beginning of a crucial “axial time”. The characteristics of this axial time are: (a) the collective conscience born from the global interplanetary knowledge that the world suffers from lack of ethics together with situations characterised by exclusion, violence, exploitation and the need for human rights. (b) at the same time there is an increasing awareness of the need to demand respect and application of other values and attitudes between people and groups co-participating in the global affairs.

From the pedagogical point of view this is a problem relating to the cultural reality and the psychological dominance and their relationship from the cultural to the psychic and vice versa. A typology of these realities makes us aware of four models: modernity, post-modernity, ultra-modernity and meta-modernity. Here the meta-modernity is defined as the psycho-cultural pedagogic alternative based on other values and in the new systems of rules generating identities, which make possible responses capable of overcoming the conflicts of the new and complex “axial time”. Bioeconomics as a science and as a pedagogic tool is well placed in this model.

INTRODUCTION

In order to learn the values and attitudes in any field within the complex set of human disputes it is necessary to discern and get to know what sense of reality and awareness have those people who are involved in that specific area of experience. It is now with the third millennium dawning and everything becoming globalised and interdependent that it is so necessary to fulfil those values once again agreed upon in the 1948 Universal Declaration of the Human Rights and the 1998 Universal Declaration of Human Genome and Human Rights and in so many meetings dealing with the planet’s problems such as the population explosion, immigration, human exploitation and the 1992 Declaration on
environmental degradation. The human experience of people and their communities and these with all other aspects of reality, be it natural or cultural, is evidently a global challenge affecting all and each one of the citizens which can become crystallised through the concept of sustainability.

A new psycho-culture of more justice, peace and sustainability of human existence and the planet may emerge if new, daring and creative thought is given to the formulations of many attitudes and values which up to now have not been functional in relation to the called-for demands. In this respect one of the most important aspects in any psycho-culture is the vision it has of the human being itself. It deals with the problem of the ‘self’, of one’s own ascribed identity. Upon analysis of this question four different models of visualising the conscience are formed; modern, post-modern, ultra-modern and meta-modern. Each one of these models (styles) offers a vision and structure of the psycho-culture and at the same time they present a different way of understanding life in communities and their relationship with the ecological context of all human groups and nature (Zubiri, 1987).

Modernity, an expression manifested in the western world starting from Greece to the illustrated XVIII century the ‘self’ has been defined as an individual capable of recognising the truth and measuring the reality. The self was the ‘meta-narrations’ in the logical organon that would bring about hierarchies, differences, and power of the strongest … During the XIX and XX centuries negative and rather destructive experiences started undermining that modern vision through re-evaluations of the conscience either post-modern or ultra-modern in which the personal conscience was defined either as a diluted ‘self’ or as an exaggerated one respectively. However, there is a clear need that our civilisation requires a new alternative to the concept of ‘self’ which may be called meta-modern one which in consonance with the present ethical, biological, socioeconomic an environmental knowledge would consider the "self-ascribed personal conscience" as an interdependent absolutely relative self. Here the ‘self’ is not defined as substance “that does not need anything else to exist” but rather as a participant structure understood as an open reality and relative in such a way that all persons and communities would see each other as equal and equally dignified given the fact that we are all completely interdependent.

This horizon of an absolutely, relative ‘self’ supported by the sciences can furthermore make the experience progress more effective in the sense of making us aware of being related also in every biological encounter aiming to achieve the right conditions of life; that is justice, equality and dignity which in turn would make sustainability and the good life of the communities better and more durable. In this unavoidable challenge several variables can be distinguished:
a) as we observe the complex and dialectical human activity two aspects are evident in any anthropological presence: the psychic as the personal reference and the cultural as the external reference in a feedback to the biohuman capacities. In other words, the ‘concave self’ and the ‘convex self’ respectively.

b) the most demanding and basic question a person faces is to reach the identifying construction of the ‘self’ through which each human being becomes and is the fulfiller and subject of vital experience. And finally

c) these two above-mentioned variants, the relational or psycho-cultural and the identifying ‘self’ interrelate, interact in endless ways so that a determined way of living, the relational variant, is going to influence the identifying one and vice versa. For example: a psycho-cultural context, relation, in which the human actions are marked by the spirit of competition and exploitation (cultural patterns) will undoubtedly bring about human beings, identification, who will be instilled with excessive individualism leading to disintegration and exclusion or vice versa: an individualistic and exclusive identification brings about a culture of exploitation. This indicates thousands of occasions within the psycho-cultural context in which the human experience takes place (López Herreras, 1985).

What psycho-cultural relations and what type of personal identity can we propose in order to encourage more ethical and more sustainable societies? It is the purpose of this paper to look for and find an answer to this question in such a way as to take into account Mohammadian’s belief (2000: 106) “… the ecological crisis … is determined by our socio-cultural, scientific, educational and ethical beliefs which also affect our relationship with nature.”

1. The New Programme of Illustration from the Viewpoint of the Illustration

We are post-modern which is the same as saying we are post-illustrated. From 1789–1989 there appears an illuminated time and lived through the illustrated neurons. Today, spurred by technology, by the many unresolved problems and by the unsustainable schizophrenia of talking about desirable achievements but living the contrary experiences we have certain urgent need to promote a New Illustration and other forms of living and becoming educated in new attitudes. An innovative form of thought and another way of projecting the human experience in our personal selves and other complementary aspects of life are required. These may be grouped and compiled in the three Relative Cultural Totalities of the economic, the social and the ideological (Hall, 1977). The original judgement to start with is the following: to know that it is
possible to provide for conduct from a potential source of action in which the human aspect is manifested as a being, willing to meet, to dialogue, be *fraternal* and to recognise the inevitable inter-dependence with each other and the positive interactions with the biosphere.

To know that each one of us is and exists in relation to the community which make us from the initial biological possibility, the concrete conscience, the ‘self’ through which we get to know ourselves. The most personal part of us is certainly the co-responsibility shared by all of us. We are humans in as much as we are *humanly born* among brothers and we make and inter-change our existence in an inevitable encounter of all through a bioeconomic experience. This is underlined by Mohammadian (2000: 193): “Humanity’s conduct has to change to a bioeconomically oriented one where the population will act according to the biological and socioeconomic realities and will be also very conscious of the imperativeness of these realities. This will require the suppression of our selfish desires and severing our links with the destructive competitive neoclassical model of socioeconomic activity in favour of a constructive cooperative bioeconomic activity based on the *bioeconomic ethical model.*”

Right now this scientific information once accepted, believed and put in practice would open for us a new horizon to another history. This is the scientific knowledge of the maximum practical and normative application which could render a new meaning to all other scientific and technical contributions. The greatest normative proposition aimed at improvement and change is to learn, as a true principle for our human construction, that we are in so far as our growth is stimulated by humanising conditions and words capable of humanising us. Each one of us believes from the subjective ‘self’ in an absolute ‘self’ (I am) with unalienable rights. Nevertheless, a basic and highly important principle should not be forgotten: that is we can know ourselves as a conscious-self-subject in relation to others; the absolute ‘self’ is absolutely relative.

The illustrated times of modernity have pivoted around two great events (1) the Industrial Revolution and the Political Revolutions (1776, independence of North America and 1789 Declaration of Human & Citizen’s Rights) and (2) two great ideals: Liberty and Equality and the belief in constant human progress. Enthusiastic and positive as was the time of Illustration it helped us to overcome the fear and ignorance with the help of the Goddess of Reason and ushered in the new: the new definition of virtue; the new moral values; the reform of the system of justice; the separation of powers; the popular education and the lack of justification of social inequalities due to natural inequality. Notwithstanding, the budding achievements and hopes of the illustrated times are very soon threatened by the tremendously complicated 20th century from the very beginning after the First World War. *The decadence of the West* by O. Spengler was written in 1921. Modernity was washed
away by the tumultuous events such as fascism, the Second World War, colonisation, exploitation, hunger ...

We have become post-moderns or ultra-moderns. Moreover, the two great proclaimed revolutions exercised in the political as well as in the economical, the indomitable law of the market and the raped democracies, the abolition of private property and the state totalitarianism have all failed; this last one with the demise of the Bolshevik revolution in 1989. The global market capitalism has also failed because it has not been capable to adequately respond to the frequent needs and challenges of the our world. Gray (2000), among others, has criticised the exalted place of the psycho-cultural in the economy arguing that it has reinforced the concept of competition thus supporting the development of a few in detriment of the majority. All of this has happened as an evolutionary and incremental consequence of the loss of the classic moral philosophy of Smith (1723–1790) according to which the market’s “invisible hand” would correct the “private avarice” of the market for the benefit of the “public virtue” and the good of all.

2. The Post-modern Response to the Crisis of Modernity

The present psycho-culture has become post-modern (Lyotard, 1984; Vattimo, 1985, Lipovetsky, 1993, 1994.) The most direct and clear definition of post-modernism states that it is the psycho-culture of happening, of the daily living; the absence of meta-narrations; something close to forgetting all about the proposed ideas or important and grandiloquent general beliefs in case they would have the same desired results as in the previous experience. We thought of ourselves as free, developed and economically strong and we have been deprived of freedom, known different types of violence and in traumatic poverty never before known. What then? As the Spanish poet Leon Felipe has said “Don’t tell me more stories”.

We are post-moderns, distrustful, unethical and as the common Spanish saying referring to enjoying the weekend goes: live that there are only two days meaning the lack of ideals, values and beliefs or rather those values and ideals which permit us to see ourselves devoid of values which could have the same load of frustration and suspense as those of the previous ones; the non-commitment of a ‘diluted self’ weakened by convenience. We have turned ourselves towards economic individualism with utilitarian values and its world comprising the consumption society; an individual with “weak options” devoid of criteria due to the radical criticism of metaphysics and of all pretensions to truth. In this respect the meta-modern proposition pretends to contribute a new metaphysics supported by the personal identification of the ‘self-with-the-other.’
Another complementary definition of this post-modernism is also known as Baroque Times (culture), that is much withered leaves in the environment but no real trunk as guiding reference thus permitting us to clarify the end results and what we do. It is the psycho-culture of the happy instantaneous moment; the egoistic pleasure over all else and of the scarcity or null hopes of something better occurring thus allowing the pleasure of the moment. The culture of happening: the hollow concave and convex consumers and consumed; for sure devoid of projects and suffering of “affluence” as diagnosed by the Fuller et al. (1997) in respect to the young, and not so young who seem to be living for the enjoyment of machines, of products and the rest of exaggerated egotism.

This post-modern psycho-cultural identity does not appear to be the sort of adequate education in order to respond to the challenges of our time. It is the identity of identification, of the fact that all is the same or that nothing matters which can hardly generate a representation of the ‘self’ capable of promoting the desired behaviour for sustainability. It is the pendular movement towards exactly those areas deemed useless by modernity. It is a formula representing the conscience emptied of that which generates the same definition. It is a radical attempt of the same human expression, empty of conscience: the era of emptiness, the human light (Rojas Marcos, 1992) given that it embodies the realisation of the proper bio-grafra devoid of a demanding valuable dictionary and rules of the proper personal lexicon. It is the ‘self’ reduced, impoverished but animated only by the immediate experiences of that which is convenient and places in reality this unconscious ‘self’ of the existential whirlwind without clear and defined and definitive guidelines.

This psycho-cultural era of post-modernism has found in the communication media the most useful mediator for supporting and inspiring the situation, in an apparent form, but in a radically deceiving manner. The media are the intuitive instruments, permanent, suggestive and inspiring, which having generated the sensation of liberty by appealing to the innate personality structure, very easily subject us to the language, interests, beliefs and ideas which are convenient to certain groups of power.

These groups of power are omnipresent in the modern as well as in the post-modern psycho-culture or in any other era. At any rate, these minority groups pretend to tell the rest of the world how to think, understand and activate it but with their own rules and norms of the game. What are important in the modern game plan are generalities and absolute values whereas in the post-modern what matters are particularities, superficiality and the relative regarding the exigencies of each occasion. There are no obvious desirable psycho-cultural styles to educate people in order to be more cooperative, more peace-loving, more respectful of the differences, less exploitative of each other and the environment but more capable of promoting a socioeconomic lifestyle.
which would be bioeconomic. That is to be considerate of the biological and ethical realities making possible the fruition of a bioeconomic development. However, it is also possible to carry on with other psycho-cultural methods in order to construct other types of identities and with other impressions and possibly more effective languages as means of delivery.

3. The Ultra-modern Alternative to the Crisis of Modernity and the New Bioeconomic and Ethical Challenges

How can societies be made more just, equitable, free and sustainable socially, culturally and economically? In other words, how to create new identities of other cultures which are no less than the external moulding of other psyches soundly reasoned for equality, justice and coevolution. The extreme formulae of the illustrated modernity and the post-illustrated post-modernity exactly due to the way they create identities do not appear to be a valuable answer. The former, due to the dogmatic crystallisation of the possible identity rejecting all proposition which not falling in the accepted psycho-cultural schemes of modernity. And the latter, due to exaggerated relativeness thus impeding the presence of people capable of dialogue and accepting other proposals due to the fact that all of them are evaluated the same way and considering only those which are thought to be of momentary interest and profit from a post-modern point of view. In any case post-modernity is the exaggerated, immediate and socially opportunistic embodiment of one of the most valuable social principles of modernity; namely liberty.

Moreover, another manifestation of the psycho-culture is real: the reaction of the ultra. The Latin prefix ultra, beyond there is used here in a pejorative sense and applies to whoever finds himself/herself empty and reduced in the conscious representation of his/her ‘self’ from the post-modern perspective or believing deceived by the negative consequences of the general affirmations from the modern perspective. This type of individual intuitive and devoid of adequate personal representation finds itself crystallised in radical messages and beliefs exhibited in whatever reality and presumably captured as threatening. It is ultra in psycho-sociocultural construction of its identity which, threatened and reduced in the representation of the ‘self’, acts in a violent manner in order to show self-affirmation. In the political sphere it is the aggressive intransigent nationalist; in the social it is as a member of a group looking for recognition and takes shelter in radical symbols, acts and language … facing other ways of conducting or manifesting. In the economical, the person is compulsively devoted to conspicuous consumption and improvement of results by fierce competition deprecating the consequences of the ‘self’ actions and ignoring if they are of immediate danger for the global ecosystem.
The ultra-modern psycho-cultural identity does not appear either to be an adequate style of education for development given the fact that it tends to overcome the deficiencies and responds to the challenges of present times with a style that would generate even more negative results than the desired positive ones. In this way, ultramodern actions radically change in a negative way the ideas and the behaviour thus rendering an adequate response to the challenges of our times very difficult. The questions facing us are: how to live a more intercultural psycho-culture if those of a specific society are violently closed in the defence of its beliefs and values? How to promote proposals of non-violence and peace if, in an ultra-modern manner, some feel in an exaggerated way members of a nationality and as absolute support of a way of seeing and feeling the experiences of life as opposed to others? How to overcome the forces opposing sustainability in order to have less inequality and exploitation? Ultramodernity is the extreme vivid appearance of those who support the other great and valuable principle of modernity which, in addition to liberty, is equality. This is an equality ad intra meaning that it is accepted only by those which form part of determined and defined minorities radically excluding all others given the fact that those others are not recognised as equals (López Herreras, 1996).

4. The Meta-modern Response to these Challenges: the New Human Individual for this other Development: the Bioeconomic Development

As already alluded to, these challenges require another type of education, one capable of generating another psycho-cultural identity. Is this at all possible? It depends on the strength of ideas and beliefs that we have. If, for example we identify with social neoDarwinism, reason and languages could be found (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994). We would be doomed to live in a society where the demands of a biology are regulated for the sake of natural survival without any impediment to the strongest and the unresponsive selection product and the selection power of what should exist. But if we consider the problem from an anthropological and psychological point of view, and at least consider the reasons and the verbal expressions which would take us near the synthesis of the impression or grammatical category (grammatologie) as the way to explain human construction it is possible to think and understand a new human culmination culturally full of hope. Each one and all of us are a biological reality, born to be bio-graphed (Ortega, 1971; Gomez Arboleya, 1957.) This capacity to be biographed derives from the human psychic peculiarity which ontologically and psychically is united and manifested in that we are beings of words (Aristotle, 1951; Chomski, 1971; Heidegger, 1974).
Aristotle in the *Politics* (1951: 67) describes in a beautiful and expressive way that a human being is a unique individual in that it possesses the gift of the *word* and this makes him to be the “man” of the city and this power is “man’s exclusive gift, in contrast to other animals, having only he the sense of the good, of the just and the unjust.” Heidegger (1974) while pondering over this matter has distinguished between *Rede* (radical predisposition for language) and *sprache* (the different languages that each individual learns while socialising). Chomski (1971) becomes a follower of Plato’s theory of the innate knowledge so that he could explain the marvellous process of how a new-born could be able to so quickly learn a language. This is important if it is remembered that it is a process of immense complexity and one that could not be worked out unless the new-born were not an individual with innate human power or differentiation; a being evolved and developed to connect openly with the reality; that is with the world and in the Heideggerian expression “an entity open to being” and a being developed for whatever eventuality.

Nevertheless, this peculiar bio-psycho individual cannot attain fulfilment unless he makes socio-cultural contacts. To be human is bio-psycho-socio-cultural reality; in pairs we are defined undoubtedly by the four characteristics: the *concave self* and the *convex self*. The concavity of each person is different but with some similarities and the convexity of each one is also different but with some resembling sequences. The *concave self* is the inward socio-cultural being and the *convex self* is the psychical projection to the outside. Vigotski’s historical-cultural paradigm (1977) and Mead’s symbolic interactionism (1972) synthesise these ideas. The Russian psychologist summarises in a masterly way these points of view “We are impressions which are synthesised in words.” According to the American psychologist “Spirit is born from communication.”

Therefore, the crucial problem is to generate gaps in the psycho-cultural circuit, from the concave self and convex self and vice versa, so that the *impressions*, which form the identity of the conscience, the *personal representation of the self* will bring about a human being capable of responding in a more ethical and more cooperative manner to the challenges of the new era. This will have to be achieved by another type of education causing a dramatic change in the dominant and established circuit. We must remember the institutions such as the family, the school, the business circle, the various associations … Each one with its own level of radical demands but all of them committed to each other. The challenge is to construct another type of identity and generate another type of existential dictionary but this cannot be done in a vacuum. It must be achieved in a socio-cultural context, and itself, by psychic expansion having its own rules and its lexical selection. And here is the key to peace or war, exploitation or equality, acceptance or
repulse of the different or the bioeconomic development ... All of this is in the personal and differentiated manner of achieving identity and conscious representation of the personal self 'self' in which we exist.

In honour of Aristotelian texts on metaphysics, which have played during long periods of time such an important part in our intellectualisation, I consider here meta a valid prefix for the construction of the psycho-cultural. The desirable synthesis of how we should construct and behave ourselves in the circuit of the selves (egos) could be expressed as a meta-modern occupation. We have already seen that the representational modernity is founded upon absolute beliefs and ideals which form the psycho-cultural identity for maintaining the free individuality and rejecting all that which might not be assumable for this truthful, defined, closed up and abstract horizon. In this proposal, the self-conscience, following the Cartesian or Kantian sense (metaphysics) was the foundation of knowledge of the subjectivity of the conscience. A theory of knowledge assuming (a) that I could know with universal truth (b) that what I know is part of something and (c) that this something is 'myself' (ego).

These assumptions have been an obstacle, as has been clearly shown, that it is difficult to achieve a psycho-culture capable of answers for the new challenges indicated. On the contrary it is the life style that delays and impedes the dreamed up expectations of the valuable equality, the projected liberty and of the brotherly respect among the human beings for drawing us closer to inter-cultural affinities, to non-exploitation, to peace and to sustainability (Mohammadian, 2000: 137–169). At the same time, the representational post-modernity facilitates answers to these challenges which however are empty reactions promoted by the more or less hypocritical groups in power without courage to participate in the vital citizenship. It is understandable that these reactions therefore, cannot reach the desired goals having their roots in human psycho-cultural manipulation having weak manifested conscience of the self at the service of communication media and the interest of the opportunistic propaganda and those who exploit. This is the result of a philosophy for which the 'self' is not considered a being, not even a real 'self' but rather a proclaimed one, a state of things, a set of related experiences to my life in relation to the environment.

The first alternative proposal to those two ways without the possibility of success for the psycho-cultural construction demanded, the modern and the post-modern, consist in the affirmation of the ultra-modern conscience but which is another false and equivocal way. The ultra-modernity cannot respond favourably to these challenges required of the manifested conscience open and predisposed to equality, liberty and respect given the fact that it exaggerates the ideals and values of the proper and unique socio-cultural experience. The individual, the national ... the proper are converted in exaggerated and irrational field of defence
insecure and reactive in recognising the weak and impoverished manifested conscience of the self (ego).

The education of our psycho-culture, at the beginning of a new millennium, demanded by the global interconnectedness of the technologies, of the global market and of the authenticity of undesirable ethical behaviour, has to become a definite meta-modern achievement for us in order to become happy and feel good, recognisable as persons, knowing ourselves adequately relational and consciously leaving our impressions. This is the inevitable living demand of our personal self, of our opening of being, as beings of the spoken word in the world. This awareness of the valuable, of the ideal cannot be communicated in order to respond to the actual challenges of our humanising process neither from postmodernism, unknown empty conscience and utilisable for alienation nor from ultra-modernism an absolute reactive conscience opposing without delay the process of communication, of the encounter with others achieved with no excuse.

We have to be in peace with ourselves and with other beings whom we have to accept and whom we should not exploit—neither ourselves nor the environment. There remains only one valid alternative for constructing the psycho-cultural which synthesises adequately either extremes. To be conscious of the self, modernity, but that at the same time this conscious should be legitimised in what permits it to be converted in a renovated answer to the humanising challenges which the same human history has brought upon us. It appears that we human beings cannot overcome the negative of the exploitation, the rejection of war, the subjugation or to achieve equality, the intercultural affinity, peace and dignity unless we become conscious of the reality of coevolution. Unless we understand that the principal point of any discourse or proposal for the solution is that our conscience of self is an affirmation defined from a relative viewpoint; that is to say that we are all brothers and inevitably brothers. This is beautifully expressed in the poetry of Pablo Neruda: “Sube a nacer conmigo, hermano: ascend, brother, with me to be born anew.”

All the branches of the sciences, biology, anthropology, psychology, sociology and pedagogy offer us a radical and profound word: meta (beyond) what is apparent and immediate: that our conscience acquires an adequate representation of the self through the dialogue with the others. Each one of us knows an absolute, the conscience of the self, words through which I know myself to be open to reality or in the words of Kant “superior to all other beings of nature.” Well, this absolute and radical relativity, this communicational reference, is the impression of the footprints. The education of the present era and the present answers, demanded now more than ever, to the everpresent challenges must be met without delay and is quite clear what has to transmit with the programmes, examples and discourses. That is, whatever is meant by being human is pure contingency of the brotherly equality.
All attempts to justify the differences from the viewpoints of tradition, apprehensions, languages, the seat of family, the wealth—and all sorts of stories which are intended to bring about domination are contradictions, a hypocrisy rendering dangerous the human existence, freedom, equality and respect. Besides, before anything else, it is a manifested desire to carry on with the status quo and the best way of not responding to the challenges of exploitation, rejection, wars and subjugation of some by the others. It could be that it will serve us well to get some training in stimulating a conscience of the ‘self’ from the meta-modern model of the radical fraternal humanity.

Fraternity and cooperation are the pillars of support of the meta-modern proposal of the psycho-culture able to overcome the very demanding challenges of our era and make possible appearance of life styles able to generate equity, participation and intercultural sustainability. At any rate, what has to be emphasised here is that the human fraternity is not only a religious value, or a poetic expression or even a mystic solicitude… has had its value and still today can serve as an intuitive complement of a profound dimension of reality. Nevertheless, the most radical, characteristic and crucial aspect of our time is not that we are immersed in technology and globalisation, important as they are, but that it is possible to know from scientific explanations of all types, biochemical, biological, philosophical, sociological, psychological that we are totally interdependent beings. Nothing that we are, whatever we have, achieve and whoever we should be depends not only on the ‘self’, the referred conscience, but on the complement of human community in which we are submerged.

Thus, it may be stated, if it is to be understood well, that today the message of fraternity does not have any subliminal religious projection but it is the post-illustrated post-modern reason which is capable, and in this consists the historic advance of becoming human, of overcoming sufficient rationality able to comprehend that we are inevitably fraternal beings: that nobody has any rational basis to generate life forms which are dominant, lead to rejection—of nobody and of nothing. Whoever thinks that one has the right or power to do to others, what is indicated above, does not mean that the person is not religious or is not sensitive but is quite clearly an ignorant or an accepted ill-educated who in the name of interests, conveniences and anxieties ignores the physico-psycho-cultural law of human nature: a person is, has, possesses, controls, dominates… only in, with, from, for the others. The meta-modernity is the effort to bring to fruition this fundamental information of the Con-Science that we are all dependent upon each other. This is the conscience and the knowledge that brings us closer to the theory of bioeconomics as a concrete response as how to enter in the worlds of human and of nature. As stated by Mohammadian (2000: 233–4). “This needs the unification of the “two cultures” not only the scientific and the
literary but also of the developed and under-developed, of the rich and the poor and the educated and the uneducated ones.”

4.1 On Bioeconomic Discourse: Meta-modernity
Biology today may well concentrate its attention on the problem of economic development given the fact that this is the one area of human endeavour which quite easily can provoke the biological destruction in all its aspects as previously indicated and the planet as a whole. As such has said, among many others Gray (2000: 254–5). “What is beyond any doubt is that to organise the international economy as a unique free global market promotes instability, puts pressure on the workers with the weight of new technologies and free commerce without restrictions and does not contain any mechanism that would permit control of the activities endangering the global equilibrium. If, as it appears, the global warming is a real threat, the free global market is without institutions capable of confronting it. To organise the world economy as a universal free market supposes, in effect, putting in danger the future of the planet in believing that these great problems will be solved by themselves thanks to the collateral effects of the uncontrolled benefits.” He goes on to state that “Nevertheless, the substitutions of global laissez-faire by a regimen managing the global economy is, at the moment, a project so ideal as the universal free market. Such a regimen could only be established if the great world economic powers are and act in agreement and make cooperation in conflicts of interest arising from whatever more ambitious intention other than the mere management of the crisis be almost impossible to achieve. There does not exist any necessary consensus about the means and ends of politics of population control and the conservation of the environment.”

Therefore, what appears to come naturally to our conscience is that the established centres of power, and the totality of the civil society must demand a real and efficient dialogue, one that would compel us to understand ourselves from other suppositions in the process of production, accumulation and just distribution of properties so that the planet can be the inhabitable common home for all humans. This will not be achieved from the suppositions maintained in the western liberal tradition justifying accumulation and hoarding without any dialogue and practically maintained and helped with the acquiescence of the powers. There is no choice; either we believe that we are all the same and nobody has the right to accumulate anything more than satisfying the basic needs or we will be for ever maintaining a shred of hope repeating messages until another social explosion. We will lament again for having fallen in the same cycles of wars, violence, of hunger, of destruction whereas really the world has been permanently in these same states without anybody having the clear determination to eradicate them.

In June 2000 the U.N., the OCDE, the World Bank and the IMF
presented in Geneva a cooperative document: A Better World for All with the same old messages that the rich countries have to reduce poverty in all its forms by the middle of 2015; that as such the world will be a better place and “safer” and it is not just sufficient to have economic growth without investing in health and education. Obviously, these statements are a good example of what has been said and what we have become accustomed to but which bear little truth and fall short in decision and determination. Some brief examples: (a) it is not a question of making the world a better place for all: a minority now has the best; it is a question of making it better for the exploited majority. (b) a hidden interest is expressed by the reason why something should be done to make the world a better and safer place: because the dominant minority could be insecure. (c) naturally, if there is no investment in health and education there will hardly be economic growth. In any case we should all do more, especially those who have more, and live a just existence demanded of us by the human fraternity; originating from DNA to the more sublime of our spiritual products. Brothers to be brothers ... in spite of us or with gratitude and happiness.

4.2 The Bioeconomic Meta-modernity Requires Psycho-cultural Meta-modernity
To learn to be a cultured person in a different way is to learn to live together in groups in a peaceful sustainable manner and in harmony with the environment. In addition having accepted as a key condition for such a construction is the vision of the person as a being absolutely relative; a being who is similar to us biologically and who is susceptible to participative conscience. Some aspects of this psycho-cultural meta-modernidad to be realised are:

(a) **Develop** the spirit of cooperation more than the competition: where do we find the possibilities for projecting the type of education required for sustainability? Is the human being cooperative or competitive in nature? Is the human being predetermined to solve problems and arrange the worlds by violent means? There are arguments in favour and in contra of both concepts and from an ambivalent point of view we can pronounce more vigorously in favour of one or the other. Following Mohammadian’s ideas we can make the following affirmations:

–does not appear to be either more real or more radical the interpretation of human as competitive than as cooperative; the ideal synergy between cooperation and competition must not proceed from coercion but from popular consensus and a conscious choice (Mohammadian, 2000: 182)

–the warmongering climate of the 19th century and the reputation of Darwinism do not appear to be sufficient condition for interpreting history and the human possibilities from the viewpoint of violence for violence sake.
neoDarwinism has nourished the belief, in accordance with the published theory of Darwin, that the survival of the fittest is based on competition and aggression. It does not have to be so. In actual fact and under the present conditions of environmental degradation and socioeconomic inequality the adequate circumstances for sustainable living could be better through cooperation and altruism and not competition alone.

–the need for love and cooperation and not hate and confrontation has been widely shown by much research; nevertheless a small dose of competition will act as an incentive for citizens to cooperate.

There seems to be no strong evidence to affirm that the human nature might be aggressive and be innately destructive. Even if it were so, there is no reason to think that it would be impossible to learn to cooperate through cultural education. At any rate it is highly convenient to provoke the sociocultural conditions (human convexity) in order to bring about a valuable bioeconomic education and consequently some personal attitudes (human concavity) for achieving this result. Interactions between individuals and the environment can either facilitate or make difficult the cooperative synergy. To make viable the spirit of cooperation is the best way towards a bioeconomically-sustainable existence.

(b) **Acknowledge** we are beings of thought and feeling: the dominant psycho-cultural tradition has amputated the human synergy by underscoring the intellectual knowledge and ignoring the creative value of feelings of what really affects us. Our complete dedication to the usefulness of “knowing-doing” is making us forget our capacity of realisation, affection, empathy and our personal community vitality that can be the source of complex and irreducible world of feelings. Therefore, when we are challenged by problems which transcend resolution by the practical mind and which are ruled by their own internal criteria we are left defeated and very incompetent to find the most adequate solution. The fact is that there are challenges of such global complexity such as planetary cultural relations which are not susceptible to technical solutions. These are conflicts which appeal to more profound, affective and ethical solutions than those obtained from equations of efficacy and efficiency. Therefore, nowadays the planet and the way human beings interact between themselves and with the environment cannot be scrutinised from a mental horizon of logic of opportunity and convenience which will always be decisional criteria of a few and not the majority who can neither know nor obviously decide. Certainly the psycho-cultural magma that will allow us to project a *bioeconomic culture* requires a mature conscience, one that can reach
fulfilment, one capable to experience life in all its aspects, not only technologically standardised rules but also through the ethics that emerges out of a deep understanding of a give and take relation.

(c) **Know** we are politically and economically co-responsible beings. That is to work intensely towards a really more ethical democracy, one that would attain ample participation and dialogue; the new challenges being so drastic that they require new ways to cope with them. Evidently, “*with more of the same*” we will not achieve any valid results. If the groups of power remain as closed elite and stay linked to small private groups, acting only according to their own interests we cannot expect any change in making decisions and taking action. “More of the same” means taking that life in the community and that of the community with its environment will each day be more degraded and less *bioeconomically* sustainable. That is the reason why we must inevitably find new ways to make progress towards the kind of citizenship and political presence which will enable everyone to express themselves and that their words will be taken into account and put into practice. However, this proposal demands that all of us commit ourselves and feel responsible for the decisions, actions or omissions within our circumstances.

4.3 **Education towards a sustainable psycho-cultural meta-modernity**

It is essential to learn and study other values in depth in order to achieve the above-mentioned goals and to this aim, learn and scrutinise other attitudes necessary to reach these values. But: What attitudes and values are needed to create a solid metamodern ‘*self*’ and the cooperative psycho-culture that comes from the proposal namely, the absolutely relative ‘*self*’?

Let us begin with the values since they are the pillars as well as the source of energy of the new attitudes to be learnt. The values are the cultural beacons, the attitudes are the personal way of acting the values become incorporated in the culture through subjective attitudes which are lived by the people. The values are ethical proposals for the culture which acting as ideals they enlighten and guide decisions. They are the unavoidable selective moulds resulting from the merging of the permanent encounter of self and life.

(A) **Values for a sustainable psycho-cultural meta-modernity:**

(1) **Respectful dialoguing:** to be truthfully aware that every and each person is co-participant of all actions, therefore no body should be silenced. To impede, deny or not listen to the words of every person in any context is to generate the foundations for violence, hence obstructing the precious and valuable goal of *sustainability*. 
(2) solitary creativity: all of us should visualise ourselves as creative, hard working persons and generators of goods not for individual hoarding but to be used by all. All of us and all that belong to us are interdependent realities. This ethical principle founded upon the actual knowledge of human reality has to become the dominant motive of all our conducts and interactions. To exert ourselves in order to accumulate by exploiting in an uncontrolled manner not only is unethical and also not rational but contradicts the knowledge we have gained about the interdependency and harmony between all aspects and circumstances of the reality.

(3) freedom with commitment: freedom cannot be defined or defended from the standpoint of a separated and impossible tendency to achieve only from the interests of isolated individual. Freedom can be achieved with an effort towards autonomy, towards the construction of one’s own personality but also inevitably linked to others. Therefore, liberty, rather than extricating from egoism of others, has to be a permanent desire to commit with others in liberating ourselves from ignorance, fears and the imposed truth which have not been critically and creatively reviewed.

(B) Attitudes corresponding to above-mentioned values: attitudes are the set of “affective-intellectual” conducts which have been formed in the psyche of each person and derived from the continuous communicational process between the conscience and the complex interactive world:

(1) attitudes of empathy and respect: to know how to live the encounter with others in a receptive interchange and not from the position of power and hierarchy which lead us to believe we are superior to others.

(2) attitudes of acceptance and interest for that which is different: to be able to perceive and analyse what is different but enriching and valuable and not as something threatening and negative from which we have to defend.

(3) attitude of responsible availability: to always feel ready to converse with others knowing that each dialogue and its inherent contemplation is as firm and concrete as if we were conversing with ourselves.

4.4 How and Where to Learn these Attitudes and Values Coherent with the Bioeconomic Meta-modernity?

The place where they can be learned is evidently in the context of socialisation, that is in the family, school, the formal and informal groups of friends, associations and organisations. These clusters have a clear dominant tendency of action: to maintain those values and attitudes which are representative of symbols of power, the maintenance of reality
and of security. It is always difficult to provoke changes due to the fact that it implies symbolic and psycho-cultural violence because it opposes what has been predominantly the status quo and justified and preserved lifestyle until that moment in time. It is similar to living and doing that for which you are not trained although you might want it. In this process those who have more responsibility and capacity for change are those who by their examples and acceptance of more risks are willing to engage in learning the new and the innovative. Nevertheless this is quite uncommon; those who can from the position of politics, economics and very frequently by opinion and thought tend to conserve the establishment and the status quo as a definite means of security and preservation of their own power.

However, and without doubt, the institution most appropriate to serve as a lively stage to exert freedom and ethical rationality at all levels and circumstances is the school where knowledge and empathy necessary for the sustainability psycho-culture can be developed. This can be achieved through lectures, dialogues, analysis of news and conflictive events so that all daily events related to the lifestyles of human groups between themselves and between them and nature do not escape attention and are taken care of through justice, respect and liberty as equals. This requires that the teaching-learning process becomes potentially a process appreciated for its own value and consequently less as an institution of control, one of permanent “obligatory” grading and the threat of examinations and their repetitions for saying what is established and stipulated by the professorial “authority.”

Such schools as a happy committed community of families open to dialogue and with the help of the communication media would provide the right place for all of us to learn and feel more clearly implicated in the well-being of others and our planet. To achieve these goals is urgent and do not permit acceptance of the dominant mode of thinking. Change or destruction? The day to day routine could offer us occasions to change towards other values and other attitudes, an emotional task for all of us and something exhilarating and worthy to believe in. Mohammadian (2000: 227) summarises it as “The bioeconomic educative process is based on the holistic philosophy of education about the environment [...] through the environment, [...] and all of this for the environment [...] using an interdisciplinary methodology.”

In order to highlight the visualisation of the conscience discussed above the four models and their psycho-cultural characteristics are presented in the following table.
Main Characteristics of the Four Psycho-cultural Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Ideas/Beliefs</th>
<th>Concept of Self</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Modernity:</strong></td>
<td>Stratified</td>
<td>Inequality</td>
<td>Absolute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reductionist;</td>
<td>Hierarchy;</td>
<td>Strong/Weak</td>
<td>Graded/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological</td>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>Competitive, Individualist,</td>
<td>Hierarchical;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>progress</td>
<td></td>
<td>disciplinary</td>
<td>Solipsistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-modernity:</strong></td>
<td>With other</td>
<td>By means of which problems</td>
<td>With typical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predominant;</td>
<td>scheme and</td>
<td>and challenges are reiterated</td>
<td>weakening of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation of</td>
<td>methodologies</td>
<td>without adequate revision</td>
<td>‘self’ and of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>earlier behaviour</td>
<td>Fragmented.</td>
<td></td>
<td>communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>rendering them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>easy to manipulate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and deceive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ultra-modernity:</strong></td>
<td>Of the modern</td>
<td>Which manifest Virulent, negative</td>
<td>Domineering,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction</td>
<td>proposals</td>
<td>self-asserting attitudes</td>
<td>aggressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excerbated and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>expression of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reduced in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>‘self’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foundations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meta-modernity:</strong></td>
<td>Open;</td>
<td>Equality;</td>
<td>Absolutely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bioeconomics</td>
<td>Renovating;</td>
<td>Cooperate;</td>
<td>relative;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holistic,</td>
<td>Particpative;</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary</td>
<td>Interdependent;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interactive</td>
<td>Dialogue-oriented</td>
<td>dialogue</td>
<td>Shaped “between”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rational conduct</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of H. bioeconomicus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Between” (Zwischen: Buber, 1982)

CONCLUSION

Accepting the new era of planetary interdependence and economic globalisation:
1. there is a demand for a new Illustration; a new and renovated horizon and definition of the human reality, the person who, as a biographic structure and “a being open to reality” could be moulded in a new and renovated manner.
2. that a human style derived from the modern, post-modern and ultra-modern proposals are not sufficient alternatives for the unresolved questions and challenges of the present cultural reality.
that however the *meta-modern* proposal referring to economic, social and ethical problems is thought to be valid given the fact that it proposes a vision of a valuable ethical being, a person who is cooperative and willing to partake of community responsibilities for the following reasons:

–coinciding this vision with the knowledge imparted by human sciences founded on the premise that we are really and truly beings more from the relational than the abstract and closed individuality;

–that it provides a horizon of reality which by being valid for proposing coherent and responsible alternatives for the present problems permits human growth in relation to the reality of equality, justice and responsibility;

–so that the relations of people between themselves and of these with the environment could be adequate for a *bioeconomic (sustainable) development.*

**NOTES**


2. **La Déclaration des droits de l’homme et du citoyen**, adoptada por la Asamblea Constituyente el 26/8/1789: Article Premier: “Les hommes naissent et demeurent libres et égaux en droits. Les distinctions sociales ne peuvent être fondées que sur l’utilité commune.” Article 6 “...Tous les citoyens, étant égaux à ses yeux, son également admissibles a toutes dignités, places et emplois publics, selon leurs capacités, et sans autre distinction que celle de leurs vertus et de leurs talents.”

3. Grammatical category (grammatologie) a philosophical category much used by the contemporary French philosopher J. Derrida, 1967: “The yes of the living present is originally an impression.” Or “One has to think of the native being from the point of view of the impression and not vice versa” which quite definitely synthesises scientific achievements of psychology: the symbolic interactionism of G.H. Mead (1972) and the historical-cultural paradigm of Vigotski (1977) which prove the dependency for the personal construction of the conscience and the interchanges with the others in the various interchangeable contexts.

4. B.R. Barber (2000: 46) in *Un lugar para todos* (A place for all), an enlightened essay about democracy and the civil society states “The social relations in a civil democratic society are profound and more profitable than the ones established by the markets or by the economic interaction of production and consumption.” He adds (p. 55): “Our way of understanding what is meant to be a citizen and a politician has changed thanks to strongly democratic civil society. Without an independent civil sector the politicians could change with great facility to public professionals removed from the reach of the electorates while the citizens will be reduced to private entities greatly antagonistic, or ungrateful clients of some services supplied by the government consuming them avidly without being ready to pay for them.”
REFERENCES
