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**Workshop “Spiritualities and identities in the dialogue of civilizations”
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For a « universal human ascent»

Five fundamentals proposed by L.J. Lebreton (1897-1966), French economist, whose theory and methods continue to inspire many development actors within the network animated by the L.J. Lebreton Centre.

1. Reinstating the human being at the source and heart of all development.

A peasant-song in Guatemala says: “They can kill my body but they can never kill the joy I feel when I dream of freedom.” Thus, the human economy, an economy centered on the human being, is that which has confidence in human resources, including the spiritual.

2. Reconstitute the social fabric

We live in a world where people run in all directions, in search of some meaning. It becomes important to recuperate, to master one’s own space and time. And this is done in a permanent tension between very structured social organizations and open community relations. For Lebreton, the horizontal dimension takes precedence over sectoral divisions. One must conciliate the territories of belonging with networks of relations, social and economic organizations with community relations.

According to L.J. Lebreton, territorial planning must be regulated in relation to the following priority objectives:

- Offer an expansive life environment, respecting familiar grounds and the human rhythm.
- Create territorial communities “within man’s reach”.
- Affirm the predominance of territorial communities responsible for essential goods, over economic organizations.
- Assure an ascendant and decentralized democratic construction.

3. Renew democratic participation

Lebreton has always expressed some reservations about parliamentary democracy, and he wanted a democracy that is at the same time social, economic and political from the base. Today, we must organize a participatory and representative democracy. And in it, the associations are the “lungs” of democracy.

4. Link together the local and global

In 1958, he wrote a book which was entitled: “Suicide or Survival of the West”. And I quote: “It is not a question of standardizing the world”

5. Lebreton’s last theme is: Open up to a dialogue of civilizations and of transcendence.
But, I will not elaborate on this as this has been well developed by other speakers.

There was an example that Lebreton liked to use a lot. It was a biblical story: the parable of the good Samaritan. A Samaritan, an outcast, sees by the road an unfortunate person who had been robbed, probably crushed by our civilization. For this man, does religion mean that we

pass him by, saying “let us pray for him”, or does it mean that, on the contrary, we must provide him with the means to heal himself and allow him to continue on his way?