



Editorial

Sharing our convictions

This special issue of *Development and Civilisations* was produced last September, in Mazille, near Mâcon (France). It was here where we all met, in a convent “cut off from the noise but open to the world”, to reflect on the current relevance of Louis-Joseph Lebret’s thought. Some of us had worked with him, others, without having known him, made reference to his thinking and his actions over the years, and others still discovered they closely shared it.

This gathering was the fruit of a conviction. Facing the serious challenges of our world, the principles and orientation of Fr. Lebret, the approach he used, the spirituality that inspired him, are today issues of burning relevance.

We identify with him in saying no to injustice, lies, greed. We share his conviction that it is possible to live in a world where all can benefit from basic goods and fulfil themselves, if the most underprivileged define their needs themselves, if those who try to build locally a more human world, in the spirit of solidarity, are listened to and supported.

What we refer to today as the International Lebret network is composed of such men and women. We want to discover the others and invite them to join this network for them to know that they are not alone, for them to be recognized and supported and for the lessons from their experiences to be known by political leaders.

With these in mind, we set about to defining what our network wishes to be: its values, its ideas and its approach will directly be inspired by Lebret’s thought and actions. We will give our network a name that speaks to all. We do believe that today, Louis-Joseph Lebret continues to be a reference we can and should be proud of.

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A new dynamism

To reflect over the relevance of Louis-Joseph Lebret’s thought today and the identity of the international network led by the Lebret-Irfed Centre: such was the purpose of our seminar organized in Mazille (France) last September. This special issue, a combination of reference material and new contributions, draws the lessons from this meeting.

How can we implement Louis-Joseph Lebret’s teaching today ? First by refusing simplistic solutions: the world is much too complex for there to be one sole cause of injustice and oppression. On the contrary, everyone can act in their own environment and share their questions and experiences with partners in different parts of the world in order to head for a more humane world.

We must start first by changing ourselves: we have to work along with the groups we belong to, in the countries we live in. As L.-J. Lebret firmly believed fifty years ago, alternatives can be built, now, where we are. Promoting local initiatives, acting to make our institutions evolve for them to become stronger and more democratic, are realistic ambitions. Having a hold on the world we live in is imperative.

To be in solidarity with our African, Asian, Latin American partners in their efforts to build a more humane world is not only to feel pity or be indignant; it first means to go and see them and observe the complexity of their situations. It means to observe, along with them, the local realities in which they are immersed and to listen to them; it is with them that we must then analyse, discern, seek the causes. In the end, it is for them to decide which actions they wish to take, and for us to see how we can contribute to realizing them.

The testimonies gathered in this issue are testimonies of life, action and involvement. Around us, agitators of mankind are gathered, active despite national or global constraints. It is this network that we must widen to make “Lebret’s thinking” live, and to give impact, ambition and modernity to its founding message.

Admittedly, many do not know the name of Lebret nor his works. Yet they have values and modes of action that are quite close, convinced as he was that the human adventure has meaning and that it cannot be reduced to neither the accumulation of goods nor to the search for one’s own interests or the interests of one’s social group. It is now for us to tell them who we are so that they can decide to join us if they wish so.

Development and Civilisations, the Lebret-Irfed Centre’s publication, will participate in this effort of re-foundation. Our columns are open to you. The relevance of L.-J. Lebret’s works and message remains just like the necessity to know how to detach oneself at times in order to re-invent tomorrow’s ways of involvement. We are neither rigid nor nostalgic. We want to face the world as it is. Time has come to quench our thirst for a new dynamism, and to make of it the driving force of our future projects.

The Lebret – Irfed Centre

Biographical notes

Louis-Joseph Lebret, born in Bretagne the 26th June, 1897, pursued studies for Marine officers at the Naval School. His religious vocation becoming affirmed, he left the Navy and entered the Dominican order. Assigned to Saint-Malo in 1929, he organized a large-scale social and trade union action involving fishermen all over the French coast. He paved the way to participatory research.

In 1941, he created, in the Lyons region, Economy and Humanism, which aimed at studying human and social realities in all their complexity and entirety, offering to "put the economy at the service of man". He was also the pioneer of a new concept and practice of territorial planning, with François Perroux, both being at the origin of the concept of "Human economy" aimed at "developing the whole person and every person".

As early as 1947, he was invited to Brazil where he involved himself in similarly inspired projects. He repeated the visit several times and was recognized by the UN as the foremost expert on matters concerning disparities of living conditions in the world.

On March 1958, this calling to open-up internationally led him to found IRFED (International Institute of Research and Training, Education and Development), in order to promote the methodology of a harmonized integral development.

While he pursued, with his team members, his action in Latin America, he was called, as early as 1958, to advise the head of the first Senegalese government, Mamadou Dia, on his strategy and practice of development. Along similar lines, he worked in South Vietnam between January 1959 and November 1960. From 1960 to 1964, at the request of President Chehab of Lebanon, he led an IRFED team to conduct a socio-economic study of the country.

The IRFED publication, "Development and Civilisations", whose title corresponds to the Lebre

t-team's concerns, contributed to the capitalisation of ideas and experiences.

Parallel to these activities, L.-J. Lebre

t was invited by Pope Paul VI - with whom he had a particularly memorable audience - to attend the Vatican Council II, as expert. He would then be the main instigator of the encyclical on the development of peoples (*Populorum Progressio*, in 1967). He was also called upon to represent the Holy See at the first UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), held in Geneva in 1965.

He died in Paris on the 20th of July, 1966.

Louis-Joseph Lebre

Confronting the shock of decolonisation and development

by Roland Colin*

Fr. Lebret's itinerary was that of an intellectual who was open to modernity as much as he was convinced that both economic and technological progress must remain at the service of Man. His adventure was also that of a team, to which we are the heirs.

Throughout his active life, Louis-Joseph Lebre

t experienced a series of stages which came with the global upheaval that was until then unknown in history. His involvement grew more and more intense regarding the ideas and forces that have led to today's issues. He was at the same time a pioneer and a visionary with the paradox of firmness in action and the admirable humility of a human spirit that constantly threw questions at the future in order to uncover its meaning.

For Fr. Lebre

A passion for the community

t, the calling par excellence of the individual is building direction, the line to follow, confronting the unknown, without losing sight of the course of history.

The first stage of his itinerary was marked by the choice to restore the human and global dimension of the economic and the social. This was the fruit of his action in the service of the fishing sector and sea workers. A methodological orientation emerged which allows linking the comprehension of realities to their transformation. We can qualify this as participatory research, wherein the actor finds the means to comprehend, to question, clarifying his own experience within the given context, to be able to act by becoming author of his own project.

* French Overseas Administrator in French Sudan (presently Mali), Roland Colin later became Cabinet director of Mamadou Dia in Senegal during the crucial phase of moving towards independence. In 1966, he succeeded Fr. Lebre

t as head of IRFED. He is honorary president of Development and Civilisations Lebre

t-IRFED, has published "*Senegal notre pirogue, au soleil de la liberté – journal de bord*", 1955-1980, Présence Africaine, Paris 2007.

were intensely engaged in clarifying and mastering the concept of community. Let's take as example the pioneering job with the Boimondeau Community. At this stage, Henri Desroche took an important place as partner to his master, Louis-Joseph Lebre

t. Both were bent on grasping the human sense in Marxism, by freeing it from simplistic materialism, so that its contributions to the social movement may be kept by the new human economy, and in no way giving up on its essential spiritual opening.

Third stage: despite and through the same upheavals in the institutions within which Louis-Joseph Lebre

t pursued his trajectory, the message had reverberations outside of the old Europe. There he was, solicited as expert on development by the U.N., where his message touching on the globality had a vital impact. This was followed by a line of pioneering involvements in Latin America where he acted as initiator of a strategy of global development, enriched by the methodologies and experiences of the previous stages. Once more concerned about linking research with action, he proposed a multidisciplinary approach, whose steps would be described in "Concrete Dynamics of Development".

Up to this point, L.-J. Lebre

t had as partners, institutions and State powers which were born of Western cultures with strong Judeo-Christian connotation (in particular, Brazil, Colombia, Chile). A good number among them came within a Christian Democratic political line confronted by the rise in popular movements influenced by the Marxist vision. Thus, the question of social justice was crucial. Louis-Joseph Lebre

t would make of this the essential paradigm of his reflections on development.

Fourth stage: In France, the teams in Economy and Humanism had differing opinions regarding these involvements abroad. Fr. Lebreton then felt the need to find a more appropriate tool to face the indispensable opening-up to the world which he had to deal with. To this end, he founded IRFED in 1958, and this marked a deeply new involvement in Africa.

Involvement in Africa

L.-J. Lebreton agreed to be adviser on development for Mamadou Dia, head of the Senegalese government. He was then forced to reckon with two issues which he had not met in the past: that of decolonisation, which Africa directly experienced; and that of commitment to a human economy beyond the lands of Judeo-Christian civilisation, in the Islamic world. Sometime later, this opening to Islam would be reinforced by a collaboration between IRFED and the Lebanese government presided by a Christian inside an inter-religious coalition.

L.-J. Lebreton accompanied this movement with the creation of a research sector which he named "Values and Civilisations" and launched the journal "Development and Civilisations", destined to be a forum of ideas and experiences. At the same time, he was invited by Pope John XXIII as expert in Vatican Council II. There, he would

champion this perception of development, the start of a decisive role which he would play in the elaboration of the encyclical, *Populorum Progressio*.

Fr. Lebreton left these undertakings in July 1966 and, in the role of successor which he asked me to assume, I received his testament-message. It is essentially contained in two strong propositions:

"I have piloted the boat," he told me, "on the basis of my culture. It is your turn to continue, in the same direction, on the basis of your culture that you yourselves will elaborate in future history. Secondly, it is essential to widen Ecumenism beyond the Christian world."

It is in this direction that we have pursued and it seems to me that those slogans are now even more pertinent. Primarily, in this illusory globalised world, which in reality confuses the global with the totalitarianism of money, of the market economy and profit, the line indicated by Louis-Joseph Lebreton is to affirm the re-organisation of the world on the basis of a global vision of man, as a person and as a group. That development – one must not fear the word – is based on the project of men, of women, of intergenerational solidarity, in their community of life, that is to say, in their space of solidarity whose harmonisation must be imagined, re-imagined.

Affirm the reorganisation of the world

It is this participatory democracy that Mamadou Dia, the Muslim, and L.-J. Lebreton, the Christian, had laboured to implement in Independent Senegal - a concrete experience from which many lessons can be learned up to now. Dia had firmly opted for participatory development based on grassroots communities, of open, cooperative communities - as opposed to communalism, in initiatives moving from bottom to top. Education for all, shared education was the keyword. It was on this path that IRFED developed, after Lebreton.

Development and Civilisations

Likewise, it is clear that this open solidarity must consider and put to practice the respect and cooperation of different ways of realizing the human project in history. Since the creation of "Values and Civilisations", of "Development and Civilisations", the teachings of Lebreton, which are of great actuality, always move in the same direction: the accent is put on the real, the lived, the exchanges between actors of different cultures in the human community, exchanging, capitalizing, theorizing and uniting their experiences. Working together for "the whole person and every person": the well-known concept, obviously retains implications for the future.

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www.lebreton-irfed.org/spip.php?article146

All these books available at the Lebreton-Irfed Centre.

Achille Biffumbu (D.R. Congo): Reflecting together

Rural development worker in the region of Kivu, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, involved with organisations defending the rights of Pygmies and other indigenous communities. Launched the Bushengwa project in 2007, an alternative practical training initiative for the rural youth and, in 2009, the creation of an agro – ecological farm.

“We must all act as Fr. Lebre’s co-heirs. I am not the only one who shares his heritage. I’m not the only one who shares the concerns he struggled for during many years. On the contrary, I belong to a family, a network, along with other people who have the same vision .

My priority, in this shared heritage is to reach a collective reflection stemming from our respective commitments. To be able to share values for greater solidarity towards the rural youth in crisis, small farmers, rural women, that

have become victims of all kinds of discrimination while they are called upon to feed the people, to feed the town, to feed the village.

It is this collective effort of reflection which is for me of utmost importance and which comes within Lebre’s teaching, since we do this through action-research, around small activities. Activities which lead us to situate ourselves in the world as it is today, and to take up commitments. The added value of our network is that it is a space which not only gives us

opportunities for exchanges, but also in sharing successful stories and possible solutions. For instance, during a seminar in India organized by the Lebre – Irfed Centre, I was able to discover certain dynamics that could be exchanged and used in one’s work. Added to serving as a space for exchanges, the network should enable us to share our competences with each other.

Let us each try to gain more ground. For us to pull through together, better.”

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Testimonies collected by Morgane Retière.
They are available (in French) on our website www.lebre-irfed.org
Qui sommes-nous / Notre vision

Lily Razafimbelo (Madagascar): For the integral development of the person

Heads the Information and Documentation Centre for Science and Technology attached to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. Since the beginning of the political crisis in the country in January 2009, she has been involved in the Citizens and citizens organisations collective, in the research for consensual inclusive and pacific solutions to get out of the crisis. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the Lebre – Irfed Centre.

“The key element in Louis – Joseph Lebre’s thought, is that of enabling the change from a less human society to a more human one.

Indeed, the context in Madagascar, in Africa, in the last decades gives me the impression of a world which does not consider the human person as an actor of his or her own development, transformation and promotion and of the others he or she lives with.

For me, the second teaching we get from Fr. Lebre is the notion of the integral development of the person. It means not only to take into account the material needs, but also to consider the person in all dimensions - physical, moral, economic, political, cultural... We must not reduce persons to an economic, not to say “economist”, frame.

The third point is that development is a process, an approach which Lebre’s thinking calls for. There are always moments when the fight gets more intense, but the struggle remains permanent, which amounts to not accepting the situation as it is, and not to give up.

Finally, Fr. Lebre’s teaching goes in the direction of an ethics of development. It is by no means a miraculous formula. Personally, I have always used the approach “look, discern and analyze, act and transform” and Lebre’s teaching has reinforced this.

I claim this heritage of Fr. Lebre, this thought, this vision, even if it may not seem “fashionable”. It is up to us to initiate actions, collectively, within the framework of Lebre’s dynamics. This approach makes people less passive,

face up to situations and not accept the offences to the public good.

The network ? It creates the possibility of exchanging, listening to others. It helps us to place ourselves, to reconsider one’s action thanks to meeting other people who live in specific contexts, in specific places. It is not something abstract, it is a concrete notion, anchored on concrete realities.

Let us re-examine Lebre’s thought as a call to enter these dynamics, an approach towards personal, collective transformation of mentalities, and also of structures that obstruct from being fully human. We inherited this dynamics of spirituality, in the broad sense of the term, centred on the human person and his or her fulfilment.”

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Louis Pilard (France): Responding to hunger today

Agricultural engineer, former director of the Crédit Agricole regional agency. A member of BRES (Bretagne Espérance Solidarité) and administrator of the "Semaines sociales" in Brittany.

"The first target for the millennium, set in 2000 by the UN, is to reduce extreme poverty and hunger by 2015. In 2010, alarming signs show that the major question of the coming decades is knowing how the earth could feed 9 billions of human beings without destroying itself.

Experts affirm that agriculture can satisfy the needs of mankind. Yet, this quantitative response is not enough. The way of producing matters just as well, for it has effects on our environment, on our eco-systems and on human relationships. The present trend, which submits food policies to competition poses heavy threats.

Ever since 1943, Louis-Joseph Lebet asserted the need for food democracy, based on "principles and perspectives of a sustainable human economy". He underlined the fact that monoculture, along with emigration from the rural areas, was a source of impoverishment for people. He affirmed that the primary needs, among which food, had

to be satisfied "within a limited area, within human reach".

The world balance must depend on partial balances. What is at stake is the organisation of the territories, the relations of people to their land, the links between people.

The answers one gives are not neutral, where the evolution of peoples is concerned. Thus, the Western models of agricultural development are not necessarily valid for developing countries. These countries have to create their own way, using agronomical and scientific progress, those already achieved and those to be invented, in order to combine the growth of their food production, the respect for the eco-systems, the farmers' income and thus an animated social life in all territories. Brittany today, along with many regions in the world, stands at the crossroads !

L.-J. Lebet had this intuition. He implemented it in many countries. He had foreseen the distortedly

competitive market could not be the only answer to these challenges .

It is common place to say we live in an era of networks. It is a fact. For instance, agricultural research is organized in networks. The debate should not be left to experts only. Local actors have things to teach us.

The Lebet network has a role to play, based on the exchanges between the members in different countries, including in France. For example, regarding the issue of food and agriculture, the exchange of information between experiences lived in different contexts, provided one tackles the concrete and goes beyond assertive principles and wishful thinking. In this perspective, BRES has published three issues of the review Cahier de BRES.

To quote Dom Helder Camara when he came to Rennes in 1983, "Lebet is a prophet of modern times".

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L.A. Samy (India): Towards one humanity

Executive director of AREDS (Association of rural Education and Development Service) in Tamil Nadu, south-eastern part of India founded some 30 years back. He is also member of the District Planning Committee. He is a convener of Forum for Livelihood Rights – Tamil Nadu, a network of NGOs. He is Vice-President for Asia of the Lebet-Irfed Centre.

"The Logo of AREDS, clearly explains our mission and our dream," Towards one Humanity".

This means that each of us on this planet is first and primarily a human person. Any other dimension is a secondary identity that should help realize the primary identity, bypassing or transcending all temporal and material." Only person-centred collective actions and initiatives will lead to a process of sustainable development of each person and every person. And this requires to link, get supported and recognized through global networking partnerships.

As you may know, in India, especially in rural India, the caste system denies the person's ability to exercise one's economic, social and cultural rights and this is why even one's human dignity has to be demythologized with awareness education and actions towards collective actions and collective living experiences.

Hence the main focus of our programme strategy and objectives is "Education and Organisation" of the most vulnerable groups, the dalits, unorganised labourers, women. AREDS initiates programmes and projects that lead them to collectively

realize "experiences at winning" and break away from the belief that they were born to loose and nothing can be changed in their lifetime.

This is what AREDS has realized during its 30 years of experience. Its greatest successes were due to the creation of networks and alliances, collective lobbying, campaigns around specific themes in order to pressure the government to change its policies and withdraw certain programmes. The vitality of the Lebet network, is, from this point of view, our best collective asset."

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Promoting democracy from bottom to top

by Paul Houée*

The relevance of Lebret's thought

Five fundamentals proposed by L.-J. Lebret (1897-1966), French economist, whose theory and methods continue to inspire many development actors within the network animated by the Lebret -Irfed Centre: reinstate the human being at the source and heart of all development, reconstitute the social fabric, renew democratic participation, link together the local and the global, open oneself to the dialogue of civilisations.

The humanist current initiated by L.-J. Lebret is not an ideology but, first of all, a global and ascendant approach, with commitment and observation as starting points. L.-J. Lebret has ceaselessly moved from concrete action to reflection, and from reflection to commitment.

His own personal life witnesses to this fact. His approach took form in the surveys and organisations of Breton fishermen (1932 to 1940); it developed (1940 to 1952) with the studies of human economy and the efforts in territorial planning in France at the time of reconstruction; it broadened afterwards with the study missions for Southern countries and for international organisations, later calling strongly for a dialogue between civilisations to achieve an overall and balanced development.

The intuitions of L.-J. Lebret are of striking relevance in a world which, now more than ever, is conscious of the obstacles it is confronting and of the necessity for a "development of the whole man and of all men".

Five fundamentals, in constant interaction, are the bases of this pragmatic and active thought.

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

"It does not mean applying a social remedy, a palliative, on an economy which itself engenders harm to man. It means advocating and attempting to establish an economic system which is wholly social and wholly personalist, at the same time quite diversified, which respond to the two principles that are part of the known human heritage: the active respect of the person, the efficient establishment of the common good". The essential aims of this human economy

are "to feed men, to cure the sick, to educate men, to liberate men".

Consequently, it means giving a systematic response to human needs that we find again in the UNDP's definition of human development which includes "the creation of wealth, the equity of its distribution, the participation in the mastery of a collective destiny, a space of freedom enabling group expression and the expression of interests, a culture giving coherence and identity, the adhesion to transcendent values that offer meaning, mobilisation and surpassing of oneself to this collective construction". (UNDP Report, 1992)

2. Reconstitute the social fabric

Enable the population concerned to master space and time, with permanent relations between social organisations and community relations. The horizontal dimension takes precedence over sectoral divisions. Reconciling the territories one belongs to with the networks of relations, social organisations and community relations, constitutes one of the stakes of local development.

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

Offer a fulfilling living environment, respecting the family environment and the human rhythm.

Create territorial communities "within man's reach".

Affirm the predominance of territorial communities responsible for essential goods, over economic organisations.

Assure an ascendant and decentralized democratic construction.

3. Renew democratic participation

L.-J. Lebret wanted to promote "an organic democracy which is at the same time social, economic and political... constituted from bottom to top".

For him, the State, the decentralized local authorities, enterprises and "active forces" must collaborate together to promote local development, affirming the primacy of the political and the ethical over what is purely economic or purely local and inward-looking. One can see, in his statements, the beginning of the determinant role of what was not yet called civil society; for him, the

relationship between civil society and political authority is essential to real democracy. This democracy must also function on the level of enterprises and organisations.

4. Link together the local and the global

His works — "Suicide or Survival of the West?" (Oct. 1958), and "Concrete Dynamics of Development", (Oct. 1967) — present a gripping synthesis (and very relevant today) of the state of the world, of "a humanity staggering on a disorderly path, meeting obstacle after obstacle, incapable of solving the problems which it refuses to pose in rigorous terms so as not to question its illusory values...The worst evil is not the poverty of the deprived, but rather the indifference of the rich ...The West is committing suicide by its short-sightedness."

"It is not a question of standardizing the world but of transforming, in each peopled zone, potentialities into possibilities, then into realities, in the rhythm that is possible, by an uninterrupted series of small steps forward, with the maximum participation of the population, women and youth in particular, assisted by multi-function teams and trained leaders".

5. Open oneself to the dialogue of civilisations

As L.-J. Lebret discovered other continents, the misery of people and their capacities of resistance, he denounced the limitation and damaging effects of the Western model, while admitting the richness and possible contributions of the other civilisations to human development. He gave more and more importance to the recognition and the meeting up of different civilisations, with the West playing the role of establishing relations and not that of monopoly. This demands that "developed and less-developed countries should have the courage to reconsider together how far there can be agreement concerning the common values to promote, the specific values to respect and the solidarity-based civilisation to establish, and which profound changes need to be considered in supranational relationships, so that the problem of global development can be resolved."

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* Priest, sociologist, he wrote the following books (in French): *L.-J. Lebret, un éveilleur d'humanité*, Atelier, 1997 and *Repères pour un développement humain et solidaire*, Atelier, 2009. He has been active in the Lebret network since 1979, he is a member of BRES and was vice-president of the Lebret Centre and of the association "Les Amis du père Lebret".

Growth or harmonized integral development in respect of civilisations ?

by Louis-Joseph Lebret

Extracts from the editorial of "Development and Civilisations", no. 25, IRFED, March 1966

People sometimes ask me: "What then do you want to say when you speak about integral development and harmonized development instead of speaking, like everybody else, of economic development and of social development? And why give so much importance to the word "civilisations", in the plural, as if the development process did not have a universal character?"

Reintroduce man and durability in the economic perspective

The notion of development opens an otherwise large perspective: it is essentially finalized by human elevation, by the elevation of "the whole person in every person", that is to say, of each person in all his dimensions. Even if it is conditioned by "having more", it responds, to be fully authentic, to an aspiration of "living enough", of "being more".

Development is the elevation and the extension in total harmony of parts: the roots, trunk, branches, leaves, where a tree is concerned; limbs, functions where a superior animal is concerned. In the case of man, being endowed with liberty, development involves furthermore the fulfilment of faculties that are strictly human, deliberate, spiritual.

From this comes the fact that the economy of development, because it finalizes in human fulfilment, cannot be a mere economy of growth, nor a mere economy which is automatically harmonious. Due to the fact that each man is free, likewise due to the historical weight of institutions, of cultures, of particular civilisations, likewise due to the impact of other institutions, of other cultures and other civilisations, harmony does not come by itself, is not spontaneously realized. Development is never harmonious from the start; it must be harmonized by extending the concept of economy to that of politics.

The economics of development is never done, neither as a discipline of knowledge, nor as a regime that is definitely established. Scientifically speaking, it is a discipline of research into all kinds of resources, in particular financial, technical, pedagogical, and even political and administrative, which would be most efficient in assuring the human elevation from concrete historical situations which are in constant evolution.

These situations differ from nation to nation, from one zone to another. There is not a single recipe, but rather a method of generally applicable analysis, to elaborate the needs and the possibilities to answer them, and a method of putting together available resources, according to such and such hypothesis of national structuring and international cooperation.

The goal of development being the human elevation of humanity as a whole necessarily brings us to reconsider world solidarity and the requirements this implies. We are therefore called to review the different existing economic

regimes and the actual systems of relationships between different countries, and to come up with a critique in the light of universal development.

This way, the economics of development, as a research discipline, takes on a dimension that no economic theory had ever dared to envision. An ethics of development, of which the Universal declaration of human rights is only an outline, would then need to be formulated and made acceptable. It will provide the base for a new system of relationships, of cooperation and aid, guaranteed by a new international law.

The harmonisation of development supposes the greatest in-depth revolution that humanity will ever imagine.

Not to separate the economic from the human, research from action, observation from induction, the particular from the universal

In conclusion, authentic development, as we understand it, can only be integral, as much in the perspective of each person in surpassing himself, independently of his country or culture, as in a universal perspective.

Finalized by the elevation of every person, development, to be harmonized, demands that we include coherence without breaking values which are part of each civilisation, and that the junction summit-base and base-summit be realized, thanks to regional institutions. This way, development is indivisible, because it includes all forms of progress: it is dynamic because it does not only count on the impetus of political summits, but as much on the aspirations and initiatives from the grassroots, meeting the summit on each intermediary territorial echelon; it is also auto-propelling and auto-correcting for as long as it creates a true democracy, that of shared responsibilities.

It is revolutionary, for it puts to question the regimes whose experience proves that they are incapable of realizing it; it is realistic, for to doubtful projections it substitutes the establishment of causes; it is educational because it asks for the conversion of the satisfied as much as it asks for an intelligent effort from those who are less well-off; it maintains an aspiration towards universality, for just as it pushes towards a solidarity-based civilisation, it respects and purifies values of all civilisations.

Louis-Joseph Lebret

The Lebret-Irfed Centre wishes to thank all those who participated in the Lebret Meeting in Mazille, from September 24th to 26th 2010. We are now continuing to work especially on the project of "the call of Mazille", coordinated by Michel Tissier. We will inform you more in the next issues.

Boutros Labaki (Lebanon): Replace the word “man” by “person”

Professor of development economics at St Joseph University in Beirut and secretary-general of the Lebanese Institute of social and economic development (ILDES). He is also Lebret-Irfed Centre’s Vice-president for the Middle – East and the Arabic world.

“Development of the whole man and of all men.” This well-known phrase remains relevant on the condition that the word “man” is replaced by the word “person”.

Why ? Because the development of the “whole man” aims at human development in all its dimensions: economic (growth and structural change), social (social change in an egalitarian, modernizing sense), political rights (participative democracy on the local, national and global levels), in terms of beliefs and philosophies (freedom to believe and not to believe), juridical (promoting the rule of law and human rights), cultural (promoting local and national cultures, opening to other cultures).

The development of all persons is synonymous to the struggle against economic, social, political, cultural, religious exclusion and to the

participation for all in the development process on the local, sectorial, national, regional and international levels. This is relevant for action, for it has steered my professional career and my social, political involvements in the struggle for social justice, equality for citizens, well-balanced development and civil peace.

I do not pretend to define myself as one of Lebret’s heirs. But I started my professional career at the Ministry of Planning in Lebanon which Louis-Jospeh Lebret radically renewed and developed. The studies of Irfed on Lebanon, supervised by L.-J. Lebret (in the early 60s) have greatly influenced my commitments.

At the professional level, my actions within the Development and Reconstruction Council of Lebanon between 1990 and 2000, contributed to the reconstruction of Lebanese infra-structures after fifteen years of war (1975 – 1990). At the level

of the NGO ILDES, our action has helped in the return of war refugees back home, improved housing conditions, stimulated economic activities in Lebanon’s rural and underdeveloped areas, promoted employment, curbed emigration and favoured inter-community dialogue for development.”

The partners of the network are important because we share the same values, and we make our experiences known through the publications of the network, and its meetings and debates. I would like us to intensify our gatherings and meetings in both Southern and Northern countries as they are a source of enrichment. Who was Louis-Joseph Lebret in fact? A militant, a Christian, a humanist and a man of science and action who understood the challenges of our times before others.” »

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Enocque François (Haiti): Move from words to actions

Works on educational inequalities and on the issues concerning democratic practice in Haiti . He participated in the international workshop “Civil society-public authority relationships” (Haiti, 2006) and the Lebret network meeting in 2010.

“To give Man the central position in the debate is not enough. One must act. For me, it matters to be a man of action. We must talk, discuss, but also move from words to actions. Take for instance the Haitian educational system: a big part of Haitian pupils are too old and nobody speaks about it. I’m also concerned with the problem of children and youngsters hanging about in the streets as related to the Haitian school system, which nobody speaks of either. In general, they are the oppressed. What solutions can be

taken? Through training, evidently. Special trainings to make people aware, to place Man at the heart of reality, in order to take into account his real needs, the needs expressed by the person himself. But also to establish a link between the citizens and the decision-makers.

This is where the network must play its role, for strength and courage tend to decline when we do not come together. Each one can contribute through his or her experiences and actions on the field.

Mutual exchange - I give, I take, I give to the other, the other receives.

How can the Haitians participate in the reconstruction of their country? How can their reality and their real needs be taken into account, and how can the people express their expectations? What can be done to have their requests responded to by the authorities?

These are the questions we need to answer.”

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