



## Fundamental ideas of new humanism

- Placing the human being as the central value and concern
- Affirming the equality of all human beings
- Acknowledging both personal and cultural diversity
- Developing knowledge beyond that accepted as absolute truth
- Upholding freedom of thought and belief
- Opposing all forms of violence and discrimination

# New HUMANISM

Thousands of men and women are becoming the active players in an unprecedented historical change.

## POINT OF VIEW ABOUT THE PRESENT SITUATION

In our time, important social, cultural, and scientific transformations accelerate and upset both personal and collective lives. While we could have high hopes, especially thanks to technological progress, we mostly encounter an immoral unbalance between the life of a well-off minority and the life the major part of the planet's inhabitants have to endure.

Neo-liberal orientation, given by the decision makers, is used to concentrate their economic and political power. They are responsible for the growing inequalities, injustice, violence, and sufferings of humanity. Every form of expression which is out of their established order, especially if it is organised, will be controlled, repressed, discredited, or eliminated.

The social fabric is in shreds. Individualism and the fight for one's own survival, based on the worship of money, generate an alarming lack of solidarity, and a loss of confidence between people, even in their own family.

The way is thus left free to the fascist or fundamentalist groups which impose their ideas and begin to implement them.

Nevertheless, a new sensitivity has emerged on the planet, which announces a new civilisation : the universal human nation.

When the organised union will appear as a necessity for each one, this sensitivity will be irrepressible, and we will be very near a deep change on the whole planet.

New humanism represents a coherent alternative to permit a positive swing in the opposite direction.



*On May 4th 1969, at the foot of mount Aconcagua, near Mendoza in Argentina, Silo, founder of the Movement, gave his first public speech, denouncing, on the one hand, the growing violence, and on the other inviting human beings to find faith in themselves, in others, and in life in general. In Argentina and Chile, dictatorships systematically persecuted the most active members, leading them into exile in European countries. In the eighties, the Humanist Movement created institutions in order to materialise its ideas and to continue its expansion. Today, it is present in 76 countries and includes almost 500 000 members.*

# THE FIELDS OF ACTION

## SOCIAL ACTIONS

**People organise themselves to resolve social conflicts and develop locally based actions.**

### IN THE NEIGHBOURHOODS :

Teaching to read and write, creation of medical centres, homework help for children, reforestation and cleaning campaigns, developing sporting activities, preparation of meals, neighbourhood parties, creation of self-financed newspapers, action to retain medical and educational structures when they exist, support to families thrown out of their home, support of the migrants without residence and work permits...

**OBJECTIVE :** Recompose the social fabric and create a social force at grassroots level.

## CENTRES OF CULTURES

These centres are created in big cosmopolitan cities, in order to denounce different forms of discrimination against different communities and to create bonds with the countries these people come from.

**OBJECTIVE :** to launch a bridge between the different cultures.

## THE COMMUNITY

Social and cultural institutions which:

1) organise lectures, classes, workshops, radio and television broadcasts, about education, health, psychology, economics, art, sciences; 2) promotes social activities of co-operation in the most discriminated sectors of society.

**OBJECTIVE :** contribute towards social and human development.

## HUMANIST PARTY

In every country, city, neighbourhood, humanists get organised to present candidates from the grass roots at every kind of election. There are already several humanists elected in the Czech Republic, in Italy, in Chile, in Russia, in Costa-Rica,...

**OBJECTIVE :** Put meaning back into politics: to be at the service of the population.

## HUMANIST INTERNATIONAL

International co-ordination structure which brings together different parties, unions, student associations, etc. and implements international campaigns.

**OBJECTIVE :** To develop the international solidarity between people who fight for their political, economical, and social freedom.

## INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF HUMAN SUPPORT

International body which federates associations developing projects in the fields of education, health and a better quality of life. It is neither an NGO nor a humanitarian organisation. It functions on the principle of reciprocity.

**OBJECTIVE :** Create an international network of help to the most deprived populations.

### IN HIGH-SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES :

support for exams, help to get settled in university, union to tackle one-off conflicts, creation of high-school or university newspapers.

### AT WORK :

Organisation of the workers in case of conflicts, humanisation of the unions in order to fight more efficiently in the labour world.

**HUMANIST  
MOVEMENT  
in 76  
COUNTRIES**

ALGERIA  
ARGENTINA  
AUSTRALIA  
AUSTRIA  
BANGLADESH  
BELGIUM  
BENIN  
BOLIVIA  
BRAZIL  
BURKINA FASO  
CAMEROON  
CANADA  
CAPE VERDE  
CHILE  
COLOMBIA  
COMORIAN ILES  
CONAKRY GUINEA  
CONGO  
COSTA RICA  
CUBA  
DENMARK  
DOMINICAN REP.  
ECUADOR  
EGYPT  
EQUATORIAL GUINEA  
FINLAND  
FRANCE  
GABON  
GERMANY  
GHANA  
GREECE  
HAITI  
HONDURAS  
HONG KONG  
HUNGARY  
ICELAND  
INDIA  
ISRAEL  
ITALY  
IVORY COAST  
JAMAICA  
LIBERIA  
LUXEMBOURG  
MALI  
MAURITANIA  
MEXICO  
MOROCCO  
NETHERLANDS  
NICARAGUA  
NIGER  
NIGERIA  
NORWAY  
PANAMA  
PARAGUAY  
PERU  
PHILIPPINES  
PORTUGAL  
RUSSIA  
SALVADOR  
SENEGAL  
SOUTH AFRICA  
SPAIN  
SRI LANKA  
SWEDEN  
SWITZERLAND  
TAIWAN  
TCHEKOSLOVAQUIA  
TOGO  
TUNISIA  
TURKEY  
UNITED KINGDOM  
URUGUAY  
USA  
VENEZUELA  
ZAIRE  
ZAMBIA





# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The humanist movement is much more than a social, political or cultural trend. Its action finds applications in all these issues, but it also answers the existential preoccupations of the human being. Traditional movements which fight to transform society have ignored all that happens to individuals. Personal development goes hand in hand with social change. To be effective when he acts, each individual needs force and confidence in himself. If we denounce this violent and discriminatory society, it is necessary to orient our personal life in a non-violent and in a non-discriminatory way. When we talk about solidarity,

equality, freedom, it is necessary to apply these values in our personal life. If we criticise submissiveness, conditioning and loss of ideals, it is necessary to find and reinforce in ourselves the strength to fight and produce significant changes in our surrounding environment.

The Humanist Movement proposes tools that help towards personal development and to gain coherence, force and freedom in order to produce positive and constructive actions which have a meaning for oneself and which truly help others.

## THE MEANING OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

### TWO EXAMPLES OF THEMES FOR THE WEEKLY MEETINGS

#### 1 – The good qualities

Today there is a dominant tendency towards indifference and criticism. The lack of self-confidence is obvious in society as well as in yourself. This generates pessimism and the slightest difficulty can't be overcome and prevents action. It is important to stress your own good qualities, to discover them, to express them and to use them. To progress, it is necessary not to focalise one what fails us but on our positive side. It is just as necessary to see what is best in people around us.

#### *Proposal :*

- discuss the two following questions with your friends.
- What are my best qualities and how can I reinforce them through my actions ?
- What are the best qualities of the persons with whom I act ?
- What are the best qualities of the inhabitants of the country in which I live ?

#### 2 – PRINCIPLES OF VALID ACTION

From the book *Humanise the Earth*.

**These principles are orientations towards coherence and non-violence.**

1. To go against the evolution of things is to go against oneself.
2. When you force something towards an end, you produce the contrary.
3. Do not oppose a great force. Retreat until it weakens, then advance with resolution.
4. Things are well when they move together, not in isolation.
5. If day and night, summer and winter are fine with you, you have surpassed the contradictions.
6. If you pursue pleasure, you enchain yourself to suffering. But as long as you do not harm your health, enjoy without inhibition when the opportunity presents itself.
7. If you pursue an end, you enchain yourself. If everything you do is realised as though it were an end in itself, you liberate yourself.

8. You will make your conflicts disappear when you understand them in their ultimate root, not when you want to resolve them.

9. When you harm others, you remain enchained. But if you do not harm anyone you can freely do whatever you want.

10. When you treat others as you would have them treat you, you liberate yourself.

11. It does not matter in which faction events have placed you. What matters is for you to comprehend that you have not chosen any faction.

12. Contradictory or unifying acts accumulate within you. If you repeat your acts of internal unity, then nothing will be able to stop you.

#### *Proposal :*

- Think about a situation that is currently bothering you (personally or in your action) and find out if one or more of these principles allows you to find an answer.

## Bibliography

You can find documents and books on the internet :  
<http://www.humanism.org>  
<http://mhbd.free.fr>

### Books from Silo

Letters to my friends : on the social and personal crisis in the present times.

Silo Speaks

Guided Expériences

Humanize the earth

Contribution to Thought

The Day of the Winged Lion

Universal Roots Myths

### Books from WCHS

Wold Center for Humanists Studies

Dictionary of New Humanism

Humanism in different cultures

Apports à la culture humaniste

Introduction to New Humanism

Economy

Quarterly Electronical Revue (21 n<sup>os</sup>)

### Books from Salvatore Puleda

Historical Interpretation of Humanisme

Tokarev Report

### Books from Luis Ammann

Autoliberation

# A TREND OF THOUGHT WHICH GETS ORGANISED

**To be efficient, every organisation, association or work place has its organisation.**

However, the existing models of organisation do not answer the necessities of the people who want to get involved in a social field. One only needs to observe the disinterest of people towards institutions, unions or political groups. The Humanist Movement brings a new answer to organisation question.

## SOCIAL FORCE ON THE MOVE

**The Humanist Movement brings together people from every culture, age, social context and beliefs.**

The motor of this social force is organised in a structure which represents about 10% of the members. All, without exception, are unpaid help. The members of the structure only pledge two things: organisation of weekly reunions, which ensure a continuity in the development of the actions, and the participation of the semestrial self-financing campaign of the Humanist Movement.

The adherents or collaborators participate in the actions according to their availability, once or regularly, without a fixed commitment. The structure is organised in Councils that have in common values, a project, an organisational mode and a strategy to act in the world. Each Council develops its own activities according to its human and organisational capacities, without geographical limits. When several councils act in the same country, they co-ordinate their national actions. Actions and campaigns vary from one country, one city, one neighbourhood to another, related to the necessities detected by the members in each place.

First, every member is a group delegate. As soon as one initiates one's own group, one orients and co-ordinates the

activities. When a team of ten members (minimum) is configured, the group delegate becomes a team delegate. In each team a group delegate assumes the administrative function, i.e.:

- a. circulates information
- b. distributes the materials necessary for the development of the team (books, petitions, membership form...)

Another group delegate assumes the support function in order to:

- a. transmit the themes of personal development
- b. explain to the members the purpose of the weekly meeting.

**To synthesise : the orientor gives force to the project, the administrative the method, the support the meaning; the members of the structure develop the action, and the adherents amplify it.**

When a general delegate creates a council of 10 general delegates, he becomes co-ordinator. A semestrial world meeting allows the co-ordinators to evaluate the significant experiences and to co-ordinate the collective actions. When a co-ordinator creates a council of 10 co-ordinators he becomes general co-ordinator. All the general co-ordinators meet regularly. One of them, elected for 2 years, and non re-eligible, co-ordinate this meeting during which decisions are taken about the general orientations of the Humanist Movement.

Apart from these weekly meeting, members choose their field of action (see page 2)

When in a structure ten members become team delegates, the initial team delegate becomes general delegate. A bi-annual international meeting allows general delegates to evaluate the significant experiences and to co-ordinate the global actions.

## WEEKLY MEETING

Timing : 1 ½ hours

Members (structure, adherents, collaborators) meet once a week in order to evaluate, co-ordinate, and plan their actions. A major part is devoted to themes of personal development, related to the project.



## SEMESTRIAL SELF FINANCING CAMPAIGN

Every member of the structure contributes to this campaign according to a quota which varies from country to country (US \$1 in Bangladesh, \$100 in France and the USA).

This self-financing guarantees the total independence of the humanist movement which neither receives nor accepts any financial contribution from political or economic powers (only personal involvement). Thus, it is free from any ties to make decisions and go about its actions.

The Humanist Party, the Centre of Cultures, the Community and the neighbourhood associations have their own financing, independent from the Humanist Movement.

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