XI.- CONCLUSIONS

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The aim of Geoism is to turn territory into a value of ever increasing importance in worldwide politics, e.g. advocating that the territorial parameters of economic policy are taken into account by worldwide financial organisations. As such, amongst other objectives, Geoism not only aims to make agricultural liberalisation globally beneficial to developing nations but also combines it with measures designed to combat the consequent negative impacts on a worldwide scale. These impacts include those which would principally occur in developing nations, affecting millions of poverty-stricken agricultural workers who, as a result of modernising agricultural practices, would be forced to move to other regions. In addition, consequent impacts include those relating to deforestation, uncontrolled population growth in cities receiving those displaced agricultural workers, etc. Impacts on more developed nations include those relating to agricultural workers whose lands would no longer receive grants or subsidies, thus making them unprofitable, meaning that if a good alternative is not found, rural areas would become void of the already scarce population dedicated to agriculture.

Geoism aims to contribute to the design of a strategy for the future which would be inspiring and desirable to use, in which the territorial focus would become relevant in solving serious problems facing mankind. In the different chapters of this book an important selection of serious challenges are analysed covering a wide variety of issues, e.g. the problems relating to aging populations in many societies; the benefits of a new especially “green” agricultural revolution which in addition to increasing production would be respectful to the environment; the importance of not neglecting secondary

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forests without ignoring the conservation of primary forests; the urgent need for measures to control global warming; the injustice that 18% of the world population still doesn’t have access to treated water – 42% in Sub Saharan Africa (WORLD BANK, 2005, 116); the need to eliminate the most environmentally harmful fishing methods; and a very long etcetera.

Geoism could be institutionalised by means of creating a Worldwide Territorial Strategy Organisation which would have access to an economic fund to finance its proposals. This fund could be created from, amongst other sources, a Sustainable Development Tax which, amongst other functions would help developing nations grow economically, while respecting the environment financing them in exchange for environmental protection. This proposal implies heavily taxing those dispensable products responsible for significant pollution and providing economically viable alternatives, which would reduce the negative environmental impact of those indispensable products.

With these funds, development projects linked to conservation of natural spaces could be financed, without forgetting that developing nations should adapt a clear forward thinking position when formulating policy and in the design of their institutions (WORLD BANK, 2005, 179). In the short term, it doesn’t seem likely that this proposal would be accepted by developed nations. In spite of this, it is proposed in this study because there is a great interest in beginning the creation of a worldwide social conscience in favour of ideas which move in this direction. Even if the proposals were only applied on a small scale, they could still be relevant. For example, even though the great majority of developed nations are very far from dedicating 0.7% of GDP to aid for developing countries, the fact that the idea has even been openly considered is favourable and implies a certain movement towards greater fulfilment of this proposal in the future, in a more responsible way.

Apart from permanently analysing worldwide realities, Geoism draws up directives relating to each issue it deals with, which would help lead to positive solutions. This book, while not being exhaustive, has covered some of the key elements of a planetary, territorial strategy. As such, amongst others, the concept of globalization, demographic issues, the ability to provide sufficient food for the world’s population, the conservation of forests and green areas, the consequences of climatic change and the management of our oceans have been investigated. Each of these chapters highlights the complexity of the issues dealt with and the difficulty involved in the simple analysis of
the situation. But, this should not lead to inaction but to the complete opposite. It should lead to the prudent proposition of active directives which reflect the idea that the world and mankind should and can improve together, creating an integrating and superior entity.

Below, a selection of some of the numerous directives outlined in this book can be found. For a more favourable world order, amongst other measures, the following should be undertaken:

- Subsidise the protection of valuable natural areas in developing nations using funding from developed nations and increasing the existing measures. Amongst other possible ways, a Sustainable Development Tax could be created, which would specifically tax those more polluting and relatively more dispensable products
- The creation of a Worldwide Territorial Strategy Organisation would be valuable. It would depend on the United Nations, would have a general vision of territorial aspects related to globalization and would adopt measures, whenever possible after reaching consensus with the greater number of possible partners.
- Intensify aid to health organisations dealing with reproduction in those countries where the Fertility Rate is higher than the average for developing regions.
- Use migratory flows (resulting from existing inequalities) as factors of physical redistribution of the population and of wealth. Territorial planning strategies must always be focussed on the principal that good territorial organisation should eliminate the need for the population to be forced to migrate.
- Establish a non-subsidised price system for agricultural products, which would allow the developed nations’ market to open up to products from developing nations. Such prices should reflect total production costs.
- Organise territory in the areas of agricultural importance, making sure that more fertile land is assigned to food production in preference to other uses, such as construction or transport infrastructure. These areas should be provided with adequate support infrastructure such as transport or food transformation industry so as to promote the development of new plant varieties, adapted to local conditions and with important characteristics such as resistance to insects etc.
- Maintain and protect vegetation by means of protecting existing forests, by recuperating deforested areas, by the creation of networks of protected areas and
by increasing forested areas by means of plantation, always of course when this doesn’t prejudice areas of superior value.

- Waive partially or totally external debt in exchange for forest conservation.
- The Kioto Protocol should be ratified by developed nations and possibly extended in future editions to include not only developed nations but developing nations as well. Apart from ratification, the protocol objectives with regards to reduction of those gases responsible for the greenhouse effect should also be met, in order to help stabilise these concentrations.
- Continually finance research projects into capture, storage and re-use of CO₂ in developed as well as developing nations.
- Establish a price to be applied to water, whereby the resource is valued in an appropriate way, taking into consideration all its real costs and establishing aid mechanisms for populations lacking buying power. Furthermore, these mechanisms should be used to finance, in part, conservation of forests situated in areas where water is sourced.
- Avoid over exploitation of aquifers and implement worldwide control over this harmful process, in a way that the degree of importance can be rigorously and precisely measured. The possibility that a significant number of the world’s aquifers are simultaneously running out of water should be foreseen in good time as this situation could lead to a serious shortage of food, leading to global repercussions.
- Reduce fishing activity, avoiding over exploitation and over fishing and apply measures of organisation in order to assure that fish production capacities are proportional to their sustainable exploitation. Illegal, uncontrolled and non-regulated fishing in high seas must be dealt with.
- Use, as an organisation instrument, the establishment of protected marine areas, which would include and extend across oceans and marine ecosystems.
- Guarantee that the agreements reached by the General Assembly of the UN on basic principals of Space Rights are kept, especially those relating to its pacific use and benefit to mankind.
- Optimise the use of devices put into space, making them of collective use for all nations concerned. This, apart from reducing the amount of rubbish generated in space would help accelerate lines of research and would encourage optimal
usage. This is especially important for communications satellites, which at present suffer the results of orbital congestion.

Another aspect of Geoism, which should be highlighted, is that it proposes measurement of supra-municipal planning against worldwide objectives and indicators, of a more superior magnitude. These plans would have to include a clear prediction of the improvements they propose with respect to worldwide objectives. This prediction would be made, as far as possible, on the basis of indicators which would lead to reliable comparisons to similar planetary realities and whenever possible, with the Planet as a whole. In this way, there would be evidence of this forecast and in time, it would be possible to evaluate how far these planning initiatives have reached their objectives.

At first, one might consider the idea of a territorial planning strategy as utopian, although possibly very useful because as H. CAPEL y L. URTEAGA (1994, 95) say, the possibility of being able to imagine utopian projects for the future is where the guarantee of our survival lies. This statement may be debatable but we do not need to go into that because maybe the proposal of Geoism isn’t utopian, but idealistic, ambitious and certainly not easy. Keeping this in mind, one won’t be discouraged and perseverance can prevail.

It would be unthinkable to consider an implementation of a planetary government with total competence over territorial organisation but for the moment something as ambitious as that is not being proposed. However, this doesn’t remove the necessity to reinforce, restructure or create democratic global institutions to manage global political problems (ROMERO, J., 2004, 21). By the same accord it would be unthinkable to try and introduce formal, rigid and imposed territorial planning. However, an organisation linked to the United Nations is not so out of reach. This organisation could promote flexible directives, which would tend to be global but at the same time take into consideration the diversity of local situations. It should not be forgotten that it is good that in human action there is a certain amount of utopia and idealism in order to prevent us from falling into the misery of pure pragmatism, especially when it is exaggerated and inappropriate. To advance towards a territorial planning strategy is very complicated but it’s a challenge worth taking up, given the great social and ecological benefits that its success would generate for mankind. The world is becoming sufficiently small for us not to contemplate it in this way.
One should not ignore the fact that attainment of applied Geoism is very problematic, amongst other reasons because it tries to function by means of consensus in a world with approximately 200 nations. Obviously for these and other reasons already mentioned throughout this document the success of Geoism doesn’t seem very easy to attain but one can sight many diverse arguments which support the idea that it is not impossible and that in any case, simply considering Geoism would be useful, even if it wasn’t totally successful. Amongst other reasons, the following should be sighted:

- To a certain extent globalization forces consensus because it can mitigate the process of increasing loss of national sovereignty. Nations are becoming obliged to understand each other because if they don’t reach minimum common denominators they will probably end up with less control over their own destiny. Worldwide cooperation is ever more necessary. G. Durán (2005, 317) comments that the search for global solutions to environmental problems or the adoption of measures leading towards sustainable development imply that these policies are harmonising, which necessarily forces international cooperation, transparency and the use of precaution.

- The way that companies combine cooperation and competition has been described as a highly effective strategy and according to some writers, it could be considered the best. B. J. Nalebuff y A. M. Brandenbuerger (1997, 259) are pioneers in theories on the advantages that companies gain when they know how to combine on the one hand, the creation of added value in a cooperative way, increasing the benefits to be shared by means of mutual cooperation, with, on the other hand, individualised and competitive appropriation. If this is true for merchant companies, how much more it would be for nations.

- There are some national and supranational territorial plans, which serve as precedents and have some very interesting aspects, although they are of different dimensions to those of the Earth. A federal nation exists whose central government doesn’t have competence over territorial planning and yet has realised such planning for the whole of the nation based on agreements of a voluntary nature. This is the case of Austria. In addition, there are some cases of supranational territorial planning, the European Territorial Strategy being of particular note, in spite of the fact that the European Union doesn’t have competence over territorial organisation either.
• A planetary territorial planning strategy would be the culmination of a historic process which started with urban planning, later supramunicipal planning and subsequently some planning on a national level and currently supranational territorial organisation which covers a large part of the European continent and one hopes that in a not so distant future a planetary territorial strategy, which amongst other functions, coordinates the aspects relating to space of worldwide treaties and initiatives, could be possible. Logically the scope of planetary organisation increases as distances decrease (in terms of time) due to the technological revolution and as global issues become more and more important, influencing local issues to a greater degree. While this is happening, one mustn’t stop taking into consideration the fact that the world’s territories are very diverse and in spite of growing globalization, fortunately they are able to keep their own personality. The United Nations has launched some very relevant initiatives, which move towards a planetary territorial strategy, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Program 21, although with regards to issue of territory they are somewhat incomplete. Even though they are no more than partial advances, they are of great importance, as can be seen, for example in the fact that the MDGs have brought attention to the issues of development and the fight against poverty in a way that a decade ago would have been unimaginable (UNDP, 2005, 1).

• There are institutions with great worldwide influence which have practically always worked using consensus. This is the case of the World Trade Organisation which at present includes 148 nations dealing with nearly all of the world’s trade (WTO, 2003). This organisation could adopt majority decisions but has never done so\(^2\). Its decisions are made by consensus and are ratified by the parliament representing all the member states. They are then applied equally to both rich and poor nations. Logically this way of making decisions doesn’t mean that all the decisions are correct, especially when commercial interests have conflicted with those of the environment.

• Geoism could be partially applied just as numerous worldwide treaties have been applied, many of them referring to elements of great territorial incidence, such as environmental issues. New United Nations agreements, even more

\(^2\) Its predecessor the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, or GATT, took majority decisions, on very rare occasions.
integral than the existing ones, could be considered, for example, an agreement to link tropical rainforest conservation to aid for endogenous growth. Or an agreement to build networks of reasonably densely populated, multi-central cities with abundant green areas, built around public transport and with a design which would incorporate the latest economically viable advances in sustainable urbanisation and architecture. Of course, the idea of partial application of Geoism increases the possibility of it being a feasible, proximate and certain proposal.

- Even though it may take some time to reach some kind of consensus on a worldwide territorial strategy, the debate on the issue which will come about is of great utility. Maybe it will take a long time before it is formalised into a legal document or maybe this will never happen but the process of trying to attain this and the consequent reflections on the issue would, in themselves, be of great importance. Some territorial programming and planning documents have managed to become favourably influential, even though not legally formalised. The mere fact that Geoism causes debate about innovative ideas such as the creation of a Worldwide Territorial Strategy Organisation or the establishment of Sustainable Development Tax, represents a distinct advance. As D. MEADOWS et al. (2004, 421) state, only innovators, who understand the need for new information, new rules and objectives, who talk and write about them and experiment with these innovations can introduce the changes which will transform systems.

Geoism is complemented by Cosmoism, which contemplates the Earth both in its smallness within the enormity of Space and in its greatness with its extraordinary singularity and its importance to us, human beings. Cosmoism is a perspective which incites better use of the Cosmos, multiplying the benefits of Space exploration, solving the problems of Space junk, fairly dividing the use of the geostational orbit, developing new generations of satellites which are able to provide very useful global environmental information, trying to avoid military use of space, establishing the rules for rational exploitation of Space resources, creating control systems and safety systems to guard against the collision of large meteorites with the Earth, etc. This shows that the extensive ideas that Geoism proposes are not so unattainable as it can be seen that they are applied to a small planet: they are big ideas for a small world.
Both Geoism and Cosmoism are theoretical but pragmatic formulas, which are intended to reflect real and true interest. It must be emphasised, in order to avoid disappointment, that one must not expect that both strategies will suddenly be successful but whatever happens, it seems that we must keep on trying, because if some success is reached, even if only partial, this would be of great benefit to mankind.

The intention of this document is to provide generalised reflection and meditation, in the hope that new and interesting contributions to the issues developed will be offered. The sooner they arrive the better, by whatever means, wherever they come from, the better for human society, which should move into a new period of total integral renovation.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**


