



Science for Man and Man for Science



Working Group 12-13 November 1999 – This meeting will address two topics which the Academy has been subjecting to debate for some time. On the one hand there is the original relationship that the human being has with science which, as the work of man, should always be at the service of human development. On the other there is science, which, even when it deals with topics which are not specifically human has and expresses an idea of man, and this is something which we want to be aware of - that is to say: what does contemporary science say about the human being. One may think here, for example, of the important “mind and body problem” on which the Academy has produced more than one publication.

The first topic “science for man” was discussed in detail by the recent World Conference on Science. In its final “declaration on science and the use of scientific knowledge” this topic was expressed by the conference with the formula “science for knowledge; knowledge for progress” which included “science for peace”, “science for development” and “science in society and science for society”. We must explore the ways in which science can help in developing and promoting the specifically human dimension of man, society, and the environment. At the same time we should also discuss the ways in which, in contrary fashion, in certain situations, science can be responsible for a decline in quality of life, as happens in particular in the case of damage done to the environment, the consequences of the invention and use of sophisticated weapons, etc.

The second topic “man for science” involves identifying the impact of recent scientific discoveries and advances on our vision of man, both directly and indirectly.

The meeting will be a preparatory meeting for the next Plenary Session of the year 2000.

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