Mihajlo D. Mesarović: a Pioneer in Systems Research, the Environment, and Quality of Life

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Mihajlo D. Mesarović was born on 2 July 1928, in Zrenjanin, Yugoslavia. He was awarded the B.S. from the University of Belgrade Faculty of Electrical Engineering in 1951. In 1955 he received a Ph.D. in Technical sciences from the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. From 1951 to 1955, Mesarović was a research assistant at the Nikola Tesla Institute in Belgrade. From 1955 to 1958 he was head of the inspection department of the Institute. At the same time, Mesarović held academic positions at University of Belgrade, Yugoslavia from 1954 to 1958. In 1958 he became Prof. at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology / USA (MIT), where he served until 1959 Meadows et al. (1972). He became associate Prof. of Systems Engineering at Case Western Reserve University from 1959 to 1964 and Prof. from 1964 to 1978. In that time, he was head of the Systems Engineering Group 1965–68, head of the Systems Engineering Department 1968–72 and director of the Systems Research Center 1968–78. Starting 1978, Prof. Mesarović has been the Cady Staley Prof. of Systems Engineering and Mathematics.

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Prof. Mesarović' research interests include the areas and topics like *complexity, complex systems theory, global change and sustainable human development, hierarchical systems, large-scale systems theory, mathematical theory of general systems, multi-level systems, systems biology, and world and regional modeling*. In the field of mathematics he is considered to be founder of: mathematical theory of coordination; multi-level hierarchical systems developer; and negotiation support software system. These interests have contributed to his impact on quality of life and well-being research.

Prof. Mesarović has lectured in more than 60 countries, advised government officials on a variety of issues, consulted for international organizations, and published widely. He was also the founder of the 'Mathematical Theory of General Systems' Journal (Springer Verlag). In 1999, he was appointed a Scientific Advisor on Global Change by Federico Mayor, Director-General of the UNESCO. In that role, Mesarović traveled to UNESCO's headquarters in Paris and advised the director general's office on issues such as climate change, economics, population, technology transfer, and the education of women in developing countries.

In 2005 he was awarded the Hovorka Prize from Case Western Reserve University for exceptional achievements. In 2005 he was awarded the USA Club of Rome Lifetime Achievement Award at the United Nations. Prof. Mesarović is now Prof. Emeritus of systems engineering in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. Prof. Mesarović was a pioneer in the application of the principles of the field of systems theory to quality of life and well-being research (Mesarović and Takaraha 1975). He also is a UNESCO Scientific Advisor on Global change and a member of the Club of Rome with a particular focus on the impact of environmental pressures on the changing quality of life and well-being research on people everywhere in the world.

One of Prof. Mestrovic's most significant contributions to the fields of social indicators, quality of life and well-being research was the 1974 publication with Eduard Pestel of the Club of Rome report *Mankind at the Turning Point*. This report followed on the heels of the Club's 1972 publication of *The Limits to Growth*.

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