



Encouraging The Reflective Citizen

Part 1. THE SHARING OF PREOCCUPATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

At this part participants had the opportunity of putting in words what oneself has thought and felt during this 2012, talking about their experiences and what oneself have lived.

The way we worked through this sharing of experiences permitted that every participant could tell experiences and feelings, lived from the different roles that everybody have and behave within the society.

Part 2. IDENTIFICATION OF MAJOR THEMES

In Part 2 the aim was for us to collectively identify the major themes emerging from Part 1. The following represents some of these themes.

In this second part the group tries to identify the issues that has been arose in the first part, looking for common points that could make possible to structure this issues in just one epigraph.

1. *We are like a society of sheep, conformists and paralyzed by fear*
2. *It does exist a paranoid functioning of society where the whole responsibility of everything bad that happens is outside*
3. *You can only make decisions from the freedom of whom has no fear*
4. *It does exist a sort of bipolar mental state where it coexist alternatively a huge lack of hope and just a trace of illusion and hope*

1. We are like a society of sheep, conformists and paralyzed by fear

The question that seems to be in the mind of us in society is, how it can be possible that with almost six millions of unemployed people why we are not in revolt? There is a great feeling of anger and rage but it is very difficult to see it.

The family as a social structure is containing the most critical situations. Without the support of the family many people could be out in the streets ready for violence with nothing to lose.

It seems as if there were still a sort of hope in quite a big part of society and that the system itself and their institutions would have to rescue to those members of society that are left aside.

Many cases of corruption with the collusion of politicians and businessmen are now at the mass media, but when is time to vote at the elections, results indicate that people don't mind.

The general impression is that there is no way to manage the angry feelings within the society, as if it could be that we can't permit to ourselves or that is something extremely dangerous.

2. It does exist a paranoid functioning of society where the whole responsibility of everything bad that happens is outside

There is a great confusion when we interpret our experiences confronting how we have lived them. We have been taught to live everything from a rational perspective trying to avoid what is emotional. This becomes in a very manipulable society from an emotional perspective, so “we have become a sort of usefull stupids.”

We are living a huge social drama. For example “many of those delays that we are having at the tube are mainly people that committed suicide but doesn´t transcend to the mass media”.

The feeling is that it does interest to have people with fear but not in panic.

We are controlled by international lobbies that are holding a system that is corrupted and perverted. Some time ago it didn´t matter because all of us we thought we were living in an economy with a barrel shape but now everyone is compelled to think that the economy we are living in is a sort of hourglass shape.

We are manipulated when we are forced to fear to lose our condition of being a sand grain in the top side of the hourglass and we can even imagine what could be of our life if we fall down to the bottom side where the excluded people of society are.

So there are some scenarios that we are not able to think, too much anxiety, but we can live with a big amount of fear that guides our behavior through what is expected for us.

Inductive thinking has been deleted in our society and it has been substituted by a deductive thinking that is much likely to be manipulated.

3. You can only make decisions from the freedom of whom has no fear

The human being doesn´t change because has fear to loose what he has, even when this could be so little. Just when you have no fear, and you feel free you allow yourself to make your own decisions.

We live in a society that tries always to make explicit conflicts that are no so vital and important for the citizens. There is the assumption that this is in order to get ourselves distracted from what is really important to face.

As citizens we are forced to look at the society from polarized perspectives that are confronted in such way that we have to be always anxious.

Right wing vs. left wing, when deep in the end there are no such differences and the governments are controlled by lobbies and pressure groups.

The system seems to be interested in promoting the confrontation of nationalisms showing differences that are not so important to people.

All this polarized thinking keeps us distracted, and worried about what is not essential for the survival of the system in the way it is already established.

4. It does exist a sort of bipolar mental state where it coexist alternatively a huge lack of hope and just a trace of illusion and hope

As a response to the mistrust towards the administration and public institutions people tries to recover their confidence beginning from the personal relationships they can keep in control.

There is a comeback to relationships where the base is the barter and mutual support. The association is increasing as a hope to do things in a different way. There is an attempt of rebellion against the system as a demonstration that there is life outside it.

Part 3. ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESIS FORMATION

In this part of the Listening Post the members were working with the information resulting from Parts One and Two, with a view to collectively identifying the underlying dynamics both conscious and unconscious that may be predominant at the time; and developing hypotheses as to why they might be occurring at that moment. Here the members were working more with what might be called their 'psycho' or 'internal' world. Their collective ideas and ways of thinking that both determine how they perceive the external realities and shape their actions towards them.

Analysis and Hypothesis 1

Analysis: The analysis begins reflecting on the fear we have as citizens. It is analyzed that this fear has to do with the possibility of becoming unemployed or just to be one of those that doesn't participate economically in the system. There is also a fear of how unfair is justice and how we are manipulated by the politicians and their institutions.

There is an exploration of the responses of rage and violence that are beginning to appear, and how the different institutions of the system they may be in panic because of the perception that their survival is at risk. So this fear is protected on the citizens.

The system is showing that there are symptoms that it doesn't work and that it can collapse.

Hypothesis: The financial system crisis, the justice and this politic system of representation is showing signals that is coming to an end so the anguish of this systems is being projected to the citizens, that results in paranoid functioning and isolation towards them.

The final result is that in society there is a greater sensation of vulnerability, distance, and manipulation of the citizenship that now have to manage, in one side their own desires of destructions and independence towards the system and in the other side the fear of chaos and the violence that this could generate.

Analysis and Hypothesis 2

Analysis: Something is changing in the way that citizens they don't trust the institutions and doesn't expect that they are going to be protected all the time.

The change is very well illustrated when few time ago almost everyone's wish was to be public servant, to be part of the structures of the system and to get advantage of this security and lack of uncertainty. But now the fear to the collapse of the system and the resentment against it facilitates the thinking that may be in the future it will be better to be self-entrepreneur and don't to expect too much from the welfare society.

The system counterattacks promoting conflicts, polemics and splitting in such way that the citizen is become a sort of stupid unable to think.

Citizens reaction is to try to create their own spaces and media to communicate and to think, avoiding useless conflicts and polarizations and building trust relationships directed towards an specific action.

A revolutionary thinking is to let people engage in processes of self-discovery that could enable to open new spaces to think on ourselves and society in a more honest and critical way.

Hypothesis: Citizens doesn't feel they can trust in the knowledge of the reality offered by the mass media and the institutions of the system, this is the reason because citizens try to comprehend the reality relying on themselves, closer groups, and realities that could give the greater feeling of trust and control.

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