

It's time to act to change the world!

Economy of Francesco – day 2

This second day of Economy of Francesco started from the same point where we left yesterday: an help request for sustaining work from a prison in Milan and the experience from a female detention centre in US witnessed how the recognition and support of people's dignity, including who made mistakes during their life, are essential to pursue a world more just from a social point of view.

Prof. Mauro Magatti, prof. Consuelo Corradi and prof. Leonardo Becchetti, first and second ones sociologist, last one an economist, guided us in the pattern "Generativity, Relational Goods and Civil Economy". The circuit production-consumption, current paradigm of our economy, which results in environmental devastation and increase of inequality, is although overcome by acting in a generative way, represented by giving birth, taking care, letting it go, like parents do with their children. The chart of a society based on generativity is on a growing line, but a spiral, meaning the transition between generations that can be realized in organizational transition, communitarian transition and environmental transition. The word generativity is directly related to women's role, often excluded or less considered by the society. Women need more inclusivity, even where they already obtained rights equality but often their time to take up relevant roles in society hasn't arrived yet, not only because they represent ca 50% of population, but for some characteristics of women. It could sound strange, but in bio-technologies market women's characteristics are worthier than men's ones. Last topic in this conference was civil economy, based on a new paradigm: going beyond homo oeconomicus; inclusion of the role of gift and relational values within economics, meaning of value beyond GDP; economic policy with four hands, market, institution, active citizenship and generativity. This economic thinking begins from individuals as self-interested being, but conscious that the achievement of his happiness can't be separated from the achievement of other people's happiness. Civil economy translates these concepts in indicators to measure well-ness of people and in a network of firms, unions, consumers association aiming to social and environmental responsibility. Choosing these business means voting with wallet, a concept that has also become part of today's mainstream economy.

Heart of this day of works was the meeting "Finance and Humanity: a road towards an integral ecology" with prof. Muhammad Yunus, Nobel Prize for Peace graduate. An impressive aspect was his neutral approach to words. Finance, microcredit, sustainable finance, are neutral expressions, they are tools that can be used to do good or to do evil. Un example is microcredit: isn't, perhaps, microcredit operated also by loan sharks who lend money to people without access to banks? Of course, that is also microcredit but it doesn't have a good scope, whereas social microcredit does. Nowadays, finance has become the instrument for wealth concentration of the richest people, that richer 1% of world population who own 99% of global wealth. Finance forgot collective interest, not only personal interest characterizes individuals. We need to reverse this finance! Today we are discussing to go back to pre-pandemic world, to that prosperity of 1% richer exploiting the rest of world population, but we should ask ourselves if we actually want to go back to that world that leads only to death. Muhammad Yunus' vision is a world with 0 net carbon emission, 0 wealth concentration and 0 unemployment. If we actually want that world, finance can help to pursue those objects, finance can help in whatever we want, we need only to decide the destination, because when mankind make up their mind to do something, they obtain it. Seeing is not enough, judging is not enough, it's time to act to change the world.

Finance considered as an instrument for social promotion, as prof. Muhammad Yunus proposed, is part of St. Francis' values, if you imagine that already in 15th century friars founded credit institutions to help people excluded by banks. A deep reflection on finance's role and its use is necessary because we can't change the world without finance's help.

Last seminar of the day “An economy of abundance: how to foster bottom-up development?” with Vandana Shiva and Pauline Effa recalled the importance of Earth and the abundance of resources it offers us. Nowadays agricultural products could feed a world population equivalent to almost double of the current one, however men are destroying resources with intensive exploitation. Indeed, Earth provides our sustenance and it requests only care and spirit of gratitude. This system that we are calling economy is only a money-making machine, economy is actually care of the οἶκος, our common home. We can't obtain abundance from broken social system, where human beings themselves are raw material for data miners, but we need to discover again the food, the bread, in its sacramental value present in many religions and to understand that true freedom is to live with what we produce.

The development, to be actually perceived by people, cannot occur only at national or international level, but it needs to really involve local community, otherwise they would feel excluded. Individuals should be actors and not object of economic policies, through an economy made by people for people. This happens generating bottom-up processes, including and involving local communities, networking them and result will be an increment in productivity, otherwise development will work against local communities. Humility is key in development, because each one's experience enriches the others and it is enriched by the others.

At closing of works there is a personal reflection on St Claire, sister in her humanity, and on how much wealth we lost in last centuries relegating women only to certain social roles.

But the day of Economy of Francesco was not over! A long marathon continued on YouTube with live streams events from all around the world.

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