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Después de la crisis. Por un futuro sin marginación [After the crisis. For a future without marginalization]

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Review

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The current economic crisis has been described as one of the most severe financial crises ever. It has, thus, been the object of analysis for many social scientists, mainly from the field of economics but also from other fields as the present work of Alain Touraine. Due to the negative effects of the financial crisis in all domains of society, it is crucial to go beyond the analysis of the economic factors and study the possibilities of our societies to overcome this situation preventing further damage. This is the basis for Touraine's analysis of the current situation of the European and North-American societies. Although the future is uncertain, Touraine dares to envision two possibilities for our societies: the catastrophe or the reconstruction of a new society with the help of the *human subject*, in line with his previous research of the subject as a social actor.

Touraine highlights the rupture between the economic and the social system which means that the interests defended by the financial system no longer correspond to the interest of the larger population but are in contradiction to the social welfare. He defines the current situation as *postsocial*, or in terms of Weber (1977) as experiencing disenchantment where ethics, truth and desire are disconnected. According to Touraine, to overcome this rupture we need to focus above all social values on the basic principle of society – the human rights. The recreation of meaning and the reconstruction of society are only possible if grounded in the common interests and benefits for society in general and not for specific

groups or individuals. In the countries that have been most affected by this crisis, the defence of human rights is no longer a benchmark. Some countries, such as the northern European countries have accomplished an egalitarian society where every citizen is guaranteed the human rights. However, other countries have not yet achieved this common goal and, in the current situation, society has turned its back on those who most suffer social exclusion and who are most hit by the crisis, such as young people, ethnic minorities and migrants, people with low levels of education and qualification, and women. These vulnerable groups are increasingly growing during the crisis and must be taken into account in the process of reconstruction of society and must be guaranteed the human rights.

In order to achieve this turn in society, Touraine focuses on the upcoming of the *human subject*, which is, on the contrary to the social subject, no longer a social actor but a moral subject that takes conscience of itself as an individual or group that holds human rights. The conception of a human subject is what facilitates change, since action, the defence of human rights in this case, is taken by the human subject and gives direction to the reconstruction of our society.

This might sound utopian, but as Erik-Olin Wright (2010) outlines *Real Utopias* exist and they empower social systems all around the world and reduce the economy's influence on society. Douthett (1972) highlights that especially in difficult times, such as a crisis or catastrophe, solidarity in the community is reinforced and social innovation, social processes initiated by the population and for the population, flourishes. The European Commission funded the initiative *Social Innovation Europe*, to map and research all the existing social innovations that combat social inequalities and exclusion.

With the present work Touraine contributes to the debate on how to overcome the current crisis in western societies by focusing on the human subject which should be the centre of attention in this moment. The author recommends to research social innovation, in order to encourage the human subject and start the reconstruction of a society profoundly rooted in the defence of human rights. Solidarity is essential in this process and will help us overcome the years of recuperation of this crisis.

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