

Details can be Crucial: The Vatican Document on the International Financial Crisis

Forward Looking Imagination, and Learning from
the Future as it Emerges. An Interpretation in the
light of Otto Scharmer's Theory U.

Justice and Peace Council

- ▶ *“Towards reforming the international financial and monetary systems in the context of global political authority”* (October 24, 2011)

Forward looking imagination

- ▶ A forward looking imagination capable of “*discerning in the present the possibilities to lead people towards a fresh future*”

Paul VI, Octogesima adveniens 37: forward looking imagination

- ▶ (1) To perceive in the present the *disregarded* possibility hidden within it
- ▶ (2) To direct the present towards a fresh future

This scrutiny “*sustains social dynamism by the confidence that it gives to the inventive powers of the human mind and heart*”

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- ▶ It is “*the fruit of the spirit of Christ*”
- ▶ Which “*breaks down the horizons*” within which our understanding “*likes to find security*”
- ▶ It transgresses the limits to which our activity “*would willingly restrict itself*”
- ▶ The crucial task is “*to go beyond every system and every ideology*”

Three challenges

- ▶ (1) Taking into account the *relevance of the actual world*, that is: “*the life and death of the people involved*” (Sen)
- ▶ (2) Understanding the crisis–context as a field of human interaction in which we can *discern unobserved seeds of a potential new era*.
- ▶ (3) Develop new ‘vocabularies’ or ‘an *imaginative re–description of reality*’ (Rorty)

Comparison with Otto Scharmer, Theory U

- ▶ (1) Open mind: *stop downloading ideas and frameworks* which confirm an unjust status quo.
Valuing the ‘acts’ via which people interrupt the dominant ideological description of reality
 - ▶ (2) Open heart: *being touched by the vulnerability of the other.*
 - ▶ (3) Open will: letting go via *stillness* of the ‘downloaded self’ and profound connectedness with people
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Presencing

- ▶ Seeing together what emerges
 - ▶ Re-framing, re-designing, re-structuring
 - ▶ Co-sensing, co-presencing, co-creating
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Implications

- ▶ (1) The most urgent task is political: “human action” and realizing the common inter-esse. Victims of capitalism should be actively involved as subjects in the conversation about their future.

Implication 2

- ▶ (2) The limits of the civil society and the necessity of a counter-discipline.

Religions and Churches are an integral part of the social field in which the future emerges.

“Suggesting possibilities different from those assumed by contractual and acquisitive stories” (Rowan Williams).

Not only the economic logic of scarcity but also of the inter-subjective abundance and generosity (cf. Caritas in veritate)

Implication 3

- ▶ The role of stillness

Conclusion

- ▶ Letting-go opens up the possibility of taking responsibility for meaningful action, action that announces the presence of the fundamental giving on which the world rests and entails also taking responsibility for the other, for the suffering, for those experiencing meaninglessness. This can only (if at all) be set out adequately in *narratives of the lives that display what it involves*” (Rowan Williams)