



MAKING A GAME CHANGER HAPPEN:
THE “MACAU MANIFESTO” – SOLIDARITY IN ACTION:
ARE YOU READY TO SIGN?

造就游戏规则改变者：
《澳门宣言》——一致行动：你准备好签字了吗？

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The pandemic of COVID-19, as painful and disastrous as it has been, may offer a wake-up call for many to become finally aware that the gap between the rich and the poor keeps opening: while on the one hand some of the richer countries are able to vaccinate several times their population, on the other hand, some countries only know for sure that a countless number of people will die because they did not even get the basic protection or were victims of irresponsible political decisions.

Right in the midst of this ongoing world drama we need to value the courageous initiative of Pope Francis for not giving into the mood of depression but for challenging different key actors and institutions of societies to systematically work out solutions for a change from an economic paradigm focused exclusively on profit maximization and abuse of resources, and towards a focus on sustainable wealth creation and wellbeing in view of the benefits to the larger society.

After the completion of the Symposium of the Macau Ricci Institute at the University of Saint Joseph last year, different versions of the “Macau Manifesto” have been worked out in Chinese, English, Spanish, Italian and German. We have also solicited responses from a variety of experts in the field, economists, practitioners, and social scientists to hear their critical feedback.

With this issue we present the final version of the “Macau Manifesto” as a contribution to a new economic paradigm. By inviting people from across the world to sign the “Macau Manifesto”, we do not imply that this proposal would be completely new and unheard of. The different contributions make it very clear that this bold proposal is positioned in the ongoing efforts of the Catholic Church to reach out to “people of good will” to go beyond the ideological boundaries of “capitalism” and “Marxism” and collaborate on a paradigm of economy which is built upon the principles of solidarity, subsidiarity, fairness,

and an orientation towards the common good within sound institutional structures. While conversion of the heart is always at the core of this vision, the “Macau Manifesto” clearly aims also at institutional transformations shaped by a new paradigm.

THE HUMANISTIC TRACK

In midst of a most antagonistic overall global context, Dennis McCann refers to Pope Francis’ Encyclical Letter “*Fratelli tutti*” and his vision of a comprehensive social fraternity under the key term of “solidarity” (*Fratelli tutti*, 2020, pars 114-117). As Pope Francis explains it, solidarity is the result of an educational process, which starts from what is learned naturally in families. Solidarity is “a moral virtue and social attitude born of personal conversion that calls for commitment on the part of those responsible for education and formation. I think first of families, called to a primary and vital mission of education. Families are the first place where the values of love and fraternity, togetherness and sharing, concern and care for others are lived out and handed on” (par 114). A genuine commitment to solidarity, that is, “service” to people (par 115) especially the poor and needy, leads to social action: “It also means combatting the structural causes of poverty, inequality, the lack of work, land and housing, the denial of social and labour rights. It means confronting the destructive effects of the empire of money... Solidarity, understood in its most profound meaning, is a way of making history, and this is what popular movements are doing” (par 116).

A decisive question throughout this issue of the Macau Ricci Institute Journal (MRIJ) is how these principles may resonate in China. Confucian entrepreneurship, whilst not completely equivalent to the “Confucian merchant”, might be described as basing entrepreneurial

decision-making processes on an awareness and practice of Confucian values, particularly the interrelated five virtues: Benevolence (*Ren*, 仁), Righteousness (*Yi*, 义), Propriety (*Li*, 礼), Wisdom (*Zhi*, 智), and Honesty (*Xin*, 信). The social character of these virtues lies in the way those virtuous practices, however admirable, are not simply for self-cultivation in any narrow sense but are the means to a higher end, the creation of a state in which the people may flourish, by actively participating in the pursuit of the common good (Rothlin & McCann, 2016). Making entrepreneurship in alignment with a set of values is important for establishing consistency in operation and reliability in the marketplace.

The Confucian model for entrepreneurship aims to reconcile a diversity of business concerns with one, common set of interpretive values. It is as holistic as it is responsible, both in terms of building entrepreneurial strategies and developing business relationships. Christine Lai points out that the values of interconnectedness are epitomised in the Chinese concept of harmony: harmony within oneself in body, mind and spirit, harmony in social relationships, from family to nation, from humanity to nature. The Confucian and Daoist vision of harmony between heaven, earth and humanity can resonate with similar values in the Buddhist inclination of preserving a loving heart for and not harming all creatures under heaven.

A profound theological synthesis of Chinese and Western thinking has been developed over decades by Luis Gutheinz. Behind his ground-breaking research over the last decades on key theological and philosophical ideas with a focus on China looms the insight of deep encounter and dialogue between cultures which takes its deepest roots in the Trinitarian mystery of God's communication with His Son in the Holy Spirit. What this insight means in a context which is often referred to as "Hell's Kitchen," namely the world

of prostitution, drugs, betrayal, hooliganism and criminal behaviour is convincingly demonstrated in the four stories told by Ruth Zenkert who over many decades has been working in Eastern Europe along with Fr Georg Sporschill SJ for and with *Roma* children living at the margins of society. How may an economic paradigm be valuable for them? How can Wellbeing for All not just be dismissed as a dream for the privileged? Zenkert describes the seemingly hopeless situation of young children who cannot be integrated within the regular labour markets and how Project Elijah manages to involve them in producing furniture. Friedhelm Hangsbach reflects on these stories and refers to Pope Francis who provocatively calls such children "garbage" because they are forced to stay outside the established society, while the anger of some journalists is directed against a Pope who protests against the ideology of a competitive economy with its false promises of individualistic success. The ill-conceived "myth of achievement" does indeed divide societies. The true intention of the Pope seems often misunderstood as his option is clearly for the poor who remain voiceless without any paid lobby.

In *Fratelli tutti*, Pope Francis has given us an important message in his Apostolic exhortation, "The Joy of the Gospel, *Evangelii gaudium*" (2013), which argues for a Church which lives with the poor and which must become poor herself.

THE ECONOMIC TRACK

What is the economic core of the new paradigm? It seems to me that there is an intimate link between the "Macau Manifesto's" idea of the common good and the perfect joy of St Francis of Assisi in this aspect: gratuitousness. Luigino Bruni, the scientific director of the Economy of Francesco and Paolo Santori refer to the inspiring wisdom of the Bible. The Book of Wis-

dom is by no means restricted to believers in the Judeo-Christian creed. For everyone the Bible tells myriads of stories, describes the struggles of many generations with a key compelling message, as Bruni shows, that the happiness of our children is more important than our own happiness. Today, we express this concept when talking about sustainability and our duty to future generations. The aspect of gratuitousness is most comprehensively developed by Pope Benedict XVI in his letter “*Caritas in veritate*” (Benedict XVI, 2009) when he compels and leads us to promote the good of others, the good of society, and the good of the environment which is inexorably related to our own happiness and flourishing. Gratuitousness appears indeed as the key element desperately needed to transform the current economic system.

Throughout the “Macau Manifesto” a strong awareness of the importance of common good entrepreneurship is also emphasised in the “Economy of Goodness” with its focus on self-interest through altruism based on compassion. Rey Sheng Her argues that only when we see others’ interests and happiness as our own, can we practice true altruism. Only when we jointly benefit all humans can we create a harmonious world, given the fact that people are born self-interested and altruistic at once. By what means may people become more altruistic and less self-interested is vital to the motivation of goodness in the Economy of Goodness. We may start by reaching out to the needy to deepen our sense of altruism. Extending a helping hand to those who are suffering is crucial for transforming self-interest into altruism.

The tremendous economic impact of this approach is highlighted in the discussion with Mark O’Neill on one of the most influential globally operating charities namely Tzu Chi and its founder Cheng Yen, who started it thirty years ago in 1991. O’Neill’s story of the original

inspiration for the foundation hints at the entrepreneurial genius of the founder who turns her desire into action. Chen Yen who is a Buddhist nun happened to be in a city in central Taiwan to give a talk and was going through a night market in the morning when the streets were covered with litter. She was shocked by this but went on to give her talk. Everybody was happy with the talk but at the end she insisted on saying “Instead of applauding me, use your hands to recycle.” As a result of her initiative there are now over 4,500 recycling stations in Taiwan. Many of the recycled items are then sold to factories for reuse.

Stefano Zamagni has over many years argued for rewiring finance which requires that the financial accounting systems include social and environmental metrics and that impact investing become a norm of behaviour. Pursuit of profit is of course not a problem, per se. The “Macau Manifesto” hints at the real problem which is often ignored in business education, namely the incompleteness and bias of the profit calculation, namely what is left out. The omissions today have become unbearable. Liberalised finance plays a key role in contemporary capitalism, which in turn contributes to create rising inequalities. In particular, the risk externalities stemming from the size of economic entities must be considered. The lure for size embedded in economies of scale has important risk consequences (for example, too big to fail) that are not taken into consideration. Sizes that are too large to manage and losses too large to bear are today a real danger. The Covid-19 outbreak has not only revealed our false securities, but it has also exacerbated the deep fault lines in the global economy. We record the value of what we harvest from nature but make no matching entry for its degradation.

In highlighting the importance of the contribution of civil economics to the paradigm shift, Leonardo Becchetti develops the notion of generativity and richness of sense which is also

the key to opening the second platform of the “Macau Manifesto”, i.e. wellbeing for all, as well as the third platform of common good entrepreneurship. Every company needs a framework to navigate this difficult landscape, and that it must begin with a clear understanding of the company’s purpose in its business model and corporate strategy. Purpose is not a mere tagline or marketing campaign, it is a company’s fundamental reason for being: what it does every day to create value for its stakeholders. Purpose is not the sole pursuit of profits but the animating force for achieving them.

It seems also very important to grasp the criticisms voiced by Eric Meyer, Engelbert & Theresia Theurl, in referring to the normative perspective of the “Macau Manifesto”, when they point out that cooperatives are based on individual needs and preferences. Andrew So, co-founder of the ACCU, the Asian Confederation of Credit Unions, has extensively worked with individual needs and regional preferences in Africa and Asia as well as in his native Hong Kong. Credit unions and cooperatives are indeed deeply anchored in the real economy. Andrew So often refers in his speeches to Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen as one of the German founding fathers of credit cooperatives and how he started his idea of a cooperative as a concept of charity by handing loans to needy farmers in the underdeveloped Westerwald region in Germany. He swiftly learned that this approach would not be sustainable. Self-help and self-empowerment were developed as guiding principles for his credit cooperatives. In order to produce, farmers needed the credit cooperatives, which allowed them to get access to the necessary loans that markets could not provide due to market imperfections. Therefore, they were concerned that these institutions be sustained, because the cooperatives were the enablers for their businesses, and they understood that their credit cooperatives had to be successful and profitable.

Without these credit cooperatives they could lose access to the (local) capital market which would impede or stall their economic activity. So’s argument thus shows that the cooperatives were proved to be stable and sustainable, and that the key values advocated by Raiffeisen made perfect economic sense and generated “value” for all the members concerned.

The key punchline of the “Macau Manifesto” is indeed to demonstrate that the objectives of the cooperative’s members are in line with the common good and do comprehensively convey the concrete meaning of solidarity, fairness for all and subsidiarity. Moreover, it would indeed be misleading to portray cooperatives as a kind of perfect social utopia. The massive abuse by predatory lenders all over the world proves that specific legal, ethical, and social requirements are not only necessary in the direction of credit cooperatives but for a host of outside stakeholders who have been badly affected by the abuse of the model. These requirements may only slightly reduce the cooperative’s profitability in the short term and may prove crucial in preventing harm stemming from any predatory tendencies among the cooperative’s members.

That the key values enshrined in the “Macau Manifesto” make perfect business sense is evident from the broad business experience of Christoph Graf von Waldersee in China, who recognises a unique chance for a wake-up call in the present pandemic, as he asserts the need to reassess the terms on which we can continue to live, cultivating a proper relationship with nature. We must adapt life and what we deem our wellbeing to propel us into a new and healthier era, in tune with our planet, and our resources. To get there our economic attitude must be re-examined. We must find a sustainable lifestyle to avoid environmental cataclysm as soon as possible.

THE LEGAL TRACK

Wellbeing for all is the result of effective politics. However, in most countries, as Reiner Eichenberger and Patricia Schafer argue, the political environment is dominated by ethnic, religious, and economic cleavages, which drive politicians to cater to a fraction of the population rather than to society as a whole. Therefore, they make the case for a lesson learned from Switzerland which is built on political institutions which encourage politicians to achieve wellbeing for all. While it has a highly diverse society, Switzerland is politically stable and economically wealthy and was just recently ranked as the most competitive economy in the world. Traditionally, its success has been explained by federalism and direct democracy. The authors highlight the role of a third formal institution, the electoral system. Proportional and majority elections coexist at all levels of the Swiss state. In addition, the electoral system has specific features: majority elections usually take place in multi-seat districts, and they are often “at-large elections”, meaning that there is only one large district covering the whole jurisdiction. The country’s specific combination of proportional and majority elections plays a decisive role in securing efficient, stable, and inclusive political outcomes. Building on “FOCJ” the “Federal Overlapping Competing Jurisdictions” which has been extensively developed by Reiner Eichenberger and Bruno S. Frey over the last couple of years, the Swiss electoral system could be adopted by other countries as an alternative to extensive decentralization or direct democracy which only appear to work effectively in smaller countries.

With Paul Spooner we dig deep into a very complex life story of Philip Murray. We may wrongly dismiss the value of focusing on the microcosm of an individual human life as entirely insignificant and prone to failure. The saga of the

not so well-known Philip Murray, one of the key leaders of the American unionisation era of 1920-1950, illustrates the complexity of the American work force and the importance of secular political forces for unionization in the aftermath of the Great Depression. A superficial analysis of the life story of Philip Murray may quickly jump to the conclusion of how insignificant the impact of principles advocated by the Catholic Church especially solidarity and subsidiarity may have been on the process of unionisation. However, the convergence of different social actors who often find themselves at loggerheads with each other in view of improving labour conditions just confirms one of the main lessons told in the story of the Taiwan’s Tzu Chi Foundation, which is deliberately non-denominational and is able to reach out to a vast variety of groups in need instead of just Buddhist related circles.

In the case of the “Macau Manifesto” it is also hoped that, although it takes its origin from the appeal of Pope Francis, it may be accepted as an indication of an urgently needed new economic paradigm by a wide variety of groups, and that Asian countries may play an increasingly significant role in its implementation.



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