

LETTER TO FOREIGNERS, IN VIEW OF THE LACK OF TRUSTWORTHY INFORMATION

Dear friends,

Since the traditional media are not reporting the recent events taking place in Spain and answering a request from our colleagues and friends members of others European universities, a varied committee formed by members of the Spanish University and youths taking part in these events have agreed, in keeping with general sense, we want to specify the following:

1. LACK OF INFORMATION:

Disinformation in itself is a problem and must be noted. When everybody assumes that freedom of speech is guaranteed by our democracies, the media are playing down the past events and in doing so hiding the true realities of the situation at present. We must reflect on this outrageous act.

The recent events are being thrown in the garbage of history with the lack of professional journalism. However, these incidents are part of a mass movement and its meaning has not precedents in the last decades and its significance sets a new precedent.

We say that the movement is about playing down as it's being related exclusively to internal issues linked to the economical and political crisis in our country even though the suggestions and claims go beyond the bounds of the Spanish situation and are now about the situation in Europe, the West and the entire world. On the other hand the media distorts the fact by picking the low hanging fruit leading to amateur journalism. This is all about taking advantage of isolated mistakes and making them look like regular occurrences.

2. A TRUE DEMOCRACY:

On March 15th, the events start with thousands of people attending the rallies in the whole of Spain. It's clear that the mass meetings take place before the local elections but their aim is not to avoid the elections but claiming them as a truly democratic right. The demonstrators didn't support or reject any party in particular, they are talking about democracy itself and querying the current model (restricted by parties that barely respect the constitutional mandate of serving as a channel for people's representation) and its scope (as a democracy is not such a thing if it is not able to make their own economical decisions).

Along with those rallies, people were and are still claiming the following: an urgent reform in the electoral system (our current one helps nothing but a two-party model that refuses other existing options or to-be yet), a highly participatory democracy (changing the actual models by reinforcing the participation mechanisms and also by avoiding any interference from economical reasons in the legislative process). We do not want our politicians to be part of the economical power, the poor transparency is also a general concern as it leads to

corruption and discrepancies. What we specially demand is a political class with genuine ideas looking forward to the future and not just trying to solve current issues.

The movement we are talking about claims the traditional idea of a moral republic in which the citizen must be essential part of the project and where the political charges shall not be a life-long and permanent activity. We are still demanding from the political class a reflection about the situation we are sunk not only in Spain, but in Europe since this crisis is something more than an economical issue: it is also a crisis of values, our new values need to go beyond the markets and the personal comfort.

Within this context, it's necessary to remark that the meaning of the rallies is being disclosed: it is all about the economical situation. It is gearing towards the European citizens (as we reckon the politicians must put this right, not the people regardless of the country you are from) and the entire planet as we live in a globalised world (since we also claim a reflection about the differences between the First, the Second and the Third World).

3. "YES, WE CAMP"

The rallies on the 15M were followed by camp sites. These camp sites are taking place in squares, nearly in every Spanish city. Thousands of people are coming to these reflection spaces, youths at the beginning and now people of all ages. They hold meetings in the squares, bringing back the classical idea of happiness as something that is meant to be shared and making us forget the pursuit of individual glory; in conclusion, they remind us of the Greek concept of democracy. We are talking about a kind-hearted political change and as such, we are trying to take back old democratic events that the mainstream academics had left for dead. This discussion revises in a brilliant theoretical way, the democratic values of the Greeks, the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, the anarchist attempts and the Swedish system. The participants in the debates are university teachers, truck drivers, government employees or house-wives who have prepared these interventions conscientiously. Not to be astonished by this movement is something typical of not very liberal people (we understand it according to its original meaning), as it rose during the Spanish Revolution in 1812: selfish people or as Conde de Toreno said: "vain and resentful men, blind with envy; all the selfish people, all the bad citizens who are upset with all the governments and whose only homelands are themselves".

The demonstrators agree about essential minimum standards: thoughtful attitude (not attached to any political wing), totally pacific behaviour, contempt for any power, the power is exerted by the people in order to negotiate. The concerns and interests discussed are taking shape. If we talk and think a lot about what is happening is because we are willing to learn how to get a truly political life and since this movement is enriching people's minds and personal experiences.

This movement has prompted not just the affection of the Spanish people but also their enthusiasm as it has broken with the past, those years of selfishness and apathy, showing us

that we are able to express respect to each others, to find self-management solutions and that all these attitudes have not been taking part in our lives in the last decades.

The demonstrators are concerned about two matters. Firstly, the people attending to the rallies were worried about some ideas and, from a political point of view, they are still willing to carry on with the debate, those ideas are about the urgent need to a real democracy. In this context, the need to create a civil and genuine society seems to be essential. Our current society is a circle where the citizens are not the centre. The ideas are built up by the power, not by the people as we think it should be. Another point we want to clarify is that the society should not be understood as a mass because they are not blind, submissive, apathetic... They belong to a massive moment looking forward to keeping up their perceptiveness, creating new ideas and breaking the old habits.

Secondly, we also demand a change in our cultures and in the sort of societies we are living in now. We want to get rid of the neoliberalism, not just of the sort of work and economy that it involve, but also of its way of living and understanding the world. The banners held in the squares say: "We are not goods on politicians and bankers' hands". Yes, it means that we need to protect ourselves against the economical power, but that's not it. What we mean is that, as the human beings we are, we cannot be treated as if we were others' things; we cannot lose our independence, our good judgement, our creativity; we do not want to become consumers, we do not want to adopt a life where the only important thing is buying and selling. We also need to further our concept of "progress", it we think of progress only as making money and increasing our technology; we are totally forgetting the human part. This is why we shall not think that this people are angry only because they used to have it all and now they miss their old comfort. This "outrage" demands from Spain, Europe and the entire world, a reflection upon what is best for human dignity.

At the present stage, this movement that demands cultural and political changes is attracting attention from the Spanish University because it goes beyond the bounds of an isolated movement. For the moment being, the universities in our country are trying to unify efforts in order to present the philosophical character of this movement: the need to think over the destiny of Europe and the lack of sense and meaning of our actual systems and also the future of humanity as a whole.

9th of June, somewhere in Spain.

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And

To/from/for the people living the same experiences.

Translation: María Portero Vela

