



August 15th, 2012

Manifesto of the Pink Fishes

Introduction

Even as our society seems to fluctuate between Huxley's nightmare and Houellebecq's mass depression, we believe in the **citizens' ability to create the conditions of their happiness by arousing a connected society of meeting and solidarity.** Confident that we share with others this faith in mankind, we want to contribute to debates in the **Socialist Party** to put the person back at **the heart of political debates and action.**

As we are faced with the economic« crisis », we yearn for a new kind of happiness.

A deep pessimism is at work in our society. It thrives on anxiety-producing reports. Since the end of the 1980's, economical inequalities have skyrocketed and employment has become more and more insecure. The poverty rate has increased by 20% since 2002. Natural resources management, which still is led in an irresponsible way nowadays, has environmental and human consequences that call urgent answers. Above all, social ties are eroding, which leads to a growing feeling of isolation and to ethnic self-segregation. **In 2010, 45 % of the inhabitants of big cities asserted that they suffered from solitude.** Violent offenses, and



especially offenses with racist and xenophobic aspects, have increased since 2005 and have suddenly risen high in 2009.

We believe that today's crises – economical, ecological and social crisis – express in their diverse aspects the deep exhaustion of a society that does **not believe anymore in a collective conquest of happiness**. Our contemporaries have to face the facts: individualistic fantasy and unlimited consumerism are unable to generate personal self-fulfilment and social harmony. **The fundamental question is the following one:** What are today, and what will be tomorrow the deep driving forces of our society, its motives for mobilization, its purposes?

Each one of us has experienced the joy provided by mutual-aid relationships and especially by the time spent with the most vulnerable ones, whether the youngest or the eldest ones, handicapped people, the nearest and dearest ones having a hard time, or even people we do not know. **The founding intuition of our movement comes** from this experience: we become truly human only **in connection with other people**, by acknowledging that we are responsible for each other. As Martin Buber's expression goes, « At the beginning was relationship ».

An imperative political demand comes from this intuition: it is in a society that allows meeting, **connection**, and, when all is said and done, **the most tangible solidarity** that the possibility to become truly human will be open to each one. If we carry this intuition to extremes, we must assert that the side-lining or the abandonment of only one person weakens the whole social community.

The role of the State is thus transformed: the first of its missions must be to allow people to fulfill their deep yearning to be a member of society. From then on, the State is no longer the superstructure in charge of protecting people from each other, and of growingly isolating them from one another, as if it should defend their turf. On the contrary, it works to make people closer to each other, to create connections between the poorest and the well-off ones, to open the way for every one to their humanization in connection to others. **The role of politics is to keep pursuing the advent of this socially connected society, which is the foundation of trust and entrepreneurship.**

Our positioning is not new. It joins the sometimes underestimated history of the French left. We follow the reflection of great authors who, before us, considered that people get humanized by their connections to others. The personalistic branch, to which the French philosopher



Emmanuel Mounier deeply contributed in the middle of the 20th century, inspires us as it already has inspired numbers of left politicians.

From intuition to action: our will to contribute to debates within the Socialist Party.

This personalistic inspiration gives us a political interpretive lens: each and every decision taken by public authorities, whatever the level of decision, has to contribute to the respect of each person's equal dignity and, in an absolutely priority way, **to the protection of the most vulnerable ones.**

As we are firmly convinced of the emergency to act in this direction and as we put aside the illusion of changing things by conversing between fellow men at the doors of our schools or only in an associative or professional context, we decide to **make a commitment to act within the left.**

With the Socialist Party we share trust in democratic principles and in **the efficiency of politics** to meet true collective needs. We believe in the virtue of deliberation for the pursuit of common Good. We are convinced that there is no defined fate for people and that our future will be what we shall collectively make, that it will not be the result of a program decided somewhere else or dictated by financial markets.

With the Socialist Party, we believe in market economy, which is by definition standardized and regulated, to arouse trust between its players, which is the main foundation of an effective and virtuous system likely **to encourage entrepreneurship and association. Our opponent is liberal ideology.** As Emmanuel Mounier puts it, it makes each of us an "abstract person, deprived of ties, a sovereign god at the heart of a freedom without direction nor measure, firstly turning distrust, calculation or claiming to others", which reduces us to the state of "elementary particles" to quote Michel Houellebecq's prophetic expression. We refuse this system which establishes a systematic ascendancy of economic interests on human interests by making profitability and performance the essential criteria for any decision, which reduces the value of people to market value.



Finally, with the Socialist Party, we want to answer Jules Ferry's, Jean Jaurès', Léon Blum's or Pierre Mendès France's calls. We also agree with the way of acting and of listening of great forerunners such as Frédéric Ozanam, Robert Schuman or Abbé Pierre.

However, **we are not naive**, and we straightaway accept the fact that our desire of change will collide with the limits of political action. It is thus together, enthusiastically and with lucidity, that we decide to make a commitment within a party which constraints we shall accept, **to become a left movement that matters and that is heard**, and not to get elected or to reach positions with responsibility. In the Socialist Party, the relief team seems promising to us and we wish to make a commitment by their side to return to the foundations of an authentically free, socially responsible and confident left.

We are convinced that our commitment will allow a party in search of a new breath **to take up with the values of its origins**. With the victory of François Hollande and the last electoral successes, the way is opened to changes. The SP cannot indeed remain a "libertarist" party, a simple distributor of rights, or it will fail to remain a "socialist" party, i.e. a party building society and creating connections. Let us thus be careful with measures presented as social progresses, which can cause injustice to the most fragile of us.

Our vision for economy and society

No fate in economy!

The economic answers which our previous leaders suggested to bringing to crisis were presented to us as common sense, only possible answers. Their belief was "there is no alternative ". Nowadays though numerous economists's voices rise, which remind us that there is no fate in economy either. That political power, given by the People to those on whom they relied, is legitimate to impose itself to markets when their logics become opposite to the society we want. That guilty making and led without proper judgment austerity politics risk to durably depress our economies, and that answers to the real problem of national debts can be found in monetization or in the reform of central banks. **That creativity is not a crime as far as economics is concerned, but an advantage, especially if it aims for restoring entrepreneurship's tendencies in the greatest number.**



In favour of an attractive society...

In the ethical field, we protest against dogmatism of any branch, as it keeps consisting in considering that the answer to questions in this field falls under obviousness. **We believe that the questions which subject is man deserve a thorough reflection, beyond partisan splits**, instead of answers that are dictated by a vote-catching logic.

Therefore, for each "societal issue", it is time to wonder **wether it helps building a connected society and society of trust which we shall be proud to hand down to our children?**

We cannot want a system which leaves aside its elder ones, which does not welcome handicap and insidiously pursues a eugenic ideal, a society in which systematic explosion of families creates isolation and solitude, especially in big cities. **It is not individual choices we condemn, but the absence of freedom of conscience which affects those who take them as they take them.** While being aware of great difficulties related to the taking care of handicap and of the financial and psychological means it requires, the fact, for example, that 96 % of trisomic diagnosed babies are aborted in France today cannot leave us unmoved. **Are economic and social conditions for each woman to make her decision in full freedom of conscience in place?** From this point of view, i.e. the point of view of the future and of children' rights, it will be necessary to take a look at what is at stake with adoption by people of the same sex.

For each issue, we want to reintroduce a kind of democratic "conversation", which takes time for examination and deliberation, in which citizens are true "contributors".

Today in France, the debate is trapped by prejudices and judgements on supposed motives and does not try to make good use of disagreements.

Finally, it will be necessary to face the reality of our streets, of our prisons, of our hospitals, of our schools, of our "ghettos", of our detention centers or even of our prefectures, by considering that **isolation and exclusion are not natural processes, but that they are always the consequence of a loss of balance caused by ourselves.**



All in all, to be progressive as far as ethics is concerned, does not consist in granting always more "rights" but, in a field in which human dignity is at stake, it consists in making sure to be guided only by the quest of social justice and freedom, understood as the ability to act as a responsible person. "No trust without growth and no growth without trust" said François Hollande. We add that trust has to hold on its two legs: **economic refoundation and social ethics, without which it will be impossible to collectively conceive of the transition from growth model, which will in essence be a more cooperative model.** Finally, it would be to take literally "Wresinski's 1987 report"'s slogan : "**It is the dignity of a nation based on human rights to consider the progress of society in the light of the most deprived and of most excluded one's quality of life**".

