

Zygmunt Bauman's Liquid Times – A Summary - Enviado em 27/10/21

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- 1- Zygmunt Bauman is one of the world's leading sociologists. He is particularly interested in how the west's increasing obsession with 'individualism' actually prevents the individual from being free in any meaningful sense of the word.
- 2- In 'Liquid Times (2007), Bauman argues that there are a number of negative consequences of globalization such as the generation of surplus people who have nowhere to go in a world that is full; of increasingly visible inequalities as the rich and the poor come to live closer together; and of a world in which it is increasingly difficult for communities and nations to provide collective security.
- 3- According to Bauman, the ultimate cause of negative globalization is due to the fact that the owners of Capital are invisible and shifting, having the power to invest locally without making commitments, and even to ignore international law if they deem it in their interests. The global elite are globally mobile, they are not stuck in one place, and they are free to move on if there are better investment opportunities elsewhere. The elite are seen as creating an unstable world as they move from place to place, seeking to maximize their profits. Meanwhile, the experience of 'negative globalization' for the rest of us who are 'doomed to be local' is one of increasing anxiety, fear, and suspicion, which derive from living in an unstable and unpredictable world over which we have no control, and we are compelled to develop strategies to counter the unstable, unjust, unequal and 'risky' and 'dangerous' world that the forever shifting elite leave in their wake.
- 4- The strategies adopted depend on the specific experience of negative globalization, but they nearly always involve putting up barriers to protect us from 'dangerous others' or they involve escaping from a world that is perceived as no longer worth living in.
- 5- Those that 'run away' include everyone from refugees fleeing a war torn country to the millions of people in the West who continually reinvent themselves through seeking out new life experiences rather than rooting their identities in involvement in local and national institutions.
- 6- 'Barrier strategies' include the emergence of fortress Europe to keep refugees out; the development of gated communities and the move towards zero tolerance policing policies in many cities.
- 7- For Bauman, these strategies are always ineffective, because they do not address the root cause of our anxiety, which is the fact that our national and local institutions can no longer provide us with security in the wake of instabilities brought on by advanced global capitalism. Instead, these strategies end up increasing the amount of anxiety and fear and segregation and eventually serve to justify our paranoia.

- 8- The remainder of this article looks at three elements of ‘negative globalization’: 1- The generation of surplus people; 2- Increasingly visible inequalities; and 3- the undermining of national and local institutions, and of identity.

1) Surplus people

- 9- Bauman argues that ‘When the elite pursue their goals, the poor pay the price’, seeing the instabilities and inequalities caused by global capitalism as creating the conditions that can lead to ethnic nationalisms, religious fanaticisms, increased civil wars, violence, organized crime and terrorism, all of which do not respect national boundaries. As a result, there is a new ‘global frontier land’ occupied by refugees, guerrilla armies, bandit gangs and drug traffickers.

2) The experience of Global Inequality

- 10- The radical inequality between citizens in the United Kingdom and refugees living in the nowhere land of non-humanity is stark, but, for most of us, easily ignored. Much more visible are the inequalities that exist within International cities such as London, New York, and, even more obviously Mexico City and Rio de Janeiro.

3) Insecurity, anxiety, and the inadequacy of identity...

- 11- While Globalization creates instabilities which creates surplus people and stark inequalities, Bauman also argues that Globalization erodes the ability of the state and local communities to provide genuine stability and security for individuals. Social institutions such as the family, education and work dissipate faster than the span of one’s life, and it becomes difficult for individuals to construct a coherent life-project.

Leia o texto com atenção e responda às perguntas abaixo:

No primeiro parágrafo, o autor do texto afirma que, na verdade, o individualismo

R: impede que alcancemos liberdade verdadeira.

No segundo parágrafo, quantas consequências negativas são apontadas por Baumann?

R: Três.

O terceiro parágrafo nos leva a inferir que a elite global

R: sempre busca maximizar seus lucros.

No terceiro parágrafo, a palavra *deem* em “if they deem it in their interests” pode ser traduzida como:

(Questão anulada) (*)

No sexto parágrafo, quando o autor se refere a *gated community* em **the development of gated communities**, ele quer se referir às comunidades que

R: fugiram de seus países e foram confinadas em comunidades “reprimidas”.

No quinto parágrafo, *fleeing a war torn country* em **Those that ‘run away’ include everyone from refugees fleeing a war torn country to the millions...** significa

R: escapando de uma nação destruída pela guerra.

O nono parágrafo nos leva a inferir que todos os problemas atuais do capitalismo global

R: resultaram em uma nova terra de fronteira global.

O décimo parágrafo nos diz que a desigualdade

R: é ignorada pela grande maioria.

In the eleventh paragraph, the author points out that

R: traditional institutions have been disappearing quickly.

No quarto parágrafo, a palavra *they* em **they involve escaping from a world that is perceived as no longer worth living in** refere-se a

R: strategies.

(*) Questão anulada. O ponto será atribuído a todos os candidatos.