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PRESENTATION

NIHILISM AND ITS PARADOX

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The multiple faces of nihilism make its definition arduous, perhaps not its qualification, since it has been elevated to the category of disease of Western culture; Thus, although the absolute values are typical of the most diverse and dissimilar communities and their worldviews, the West has been particularly sensitive to “the devaluation of all supreme values” (Maldonado, 2002, p. 123). It must be recognized the vagueness of the expression “West”, but perhaps the reader will recognize that it is spoken here, in part, of Western philosophy, and perhaps thinks of a particular philosophy, that of Friedrich Nietzsche. However, it is known that the term, before Nietzsche, had ground in German idealism, in as much as Jacobi made it a way to disqualify Fichte’s philosophy (Volpi, 2011; Duque, 2006).

Now, the question that I will outline will be the connotation of nihilism as a social phenomenon, condensed by Nietzsche in the well-known sentence of La Gaya science “God has died” - which has been misunderstood as an affirmation of the complete loss of values, and whose misunderstanding has marked much confusion about the same phenomenon - and, particularly, embraced, sometimes unknowingly, by those who affirm the need to assert their status as individuals occupied in forging their own destiny, in following their own creed, in living in such a way that they are the managers (or businessmen) of themselves, in this new form of economic man-in-law that is up-to-date (Aguilar Torres, 2014).

The announcement of the advent of nihilism will mark an understanding of the supreme values as incapable of giving meaning to the human collective, in such a way that the lack of values is not announced but the lack of measurement (Maldonado, 2002): all the values are equivalent, and in this way, the individual or does not know what values to choose, or is it indifferent to choose between one and another. Without propitiating a genealogy of this condition here, it is surprising how close, then, is the nihilism of the unambiguous search for one’s own sense of life. The phrase “God has died” comes to mean for many only the verification of the expiration of a religious creed, which then could be replaced by another or even sustained as a necessary fable.

Thus, faced with the impossibility of identifying supreme values, the alternative is presented that each reaffirms its own ethics, finds its own purpose, recognizes its own place in the world and, in this way, the invocation for personal searches - and its success- becomes, then, the leitmotiv that

morally elevates those who encourage it. Such a display of self-affirmation and personal freedom comes to remember, precisely, the nihilistic dimension of Western culture, for as Félix Duque (2015) explains, the love for values that only each individual determines, brilliantly defines our difficulty to live collectively and at the same time the nihilism that operates on the firm belief that it is necessary to know our purpose and our truth in order to give meaning to life.

Faced with the advance of nihilism, then, what Duque (2006) calls egocentric nihilism - not the ego of idealism but the individual who exalts that the human issue belongs to each one, that each one has to find his own way- so paradoxical is the current situation: without waiting for it - maybe? – Now, it is about calculating the function of each one, of computing the objective of each individual while I am also calculated and computed by the others. The paradox is exacerbated because who seeks the meaning of his own life on his own, says, then, that this is unique and the last time, but it is something so unique that you can not share, and if you dare to do so you will find yourself in the middle of a number of also singular and last senses. What to do? To look for all those senses to fit together with each other fulfilling the most convenient function?


It seems that the option of our current socio-economic system is well described by Lorenz (1988) when he expresses “all [peoples] have the same technology, based on the same knowledge, fight with the same weapons, deceive each other with the same means of communication and swindling in the same stock exchanges “(p. 332), and so we have gone from the loss of absolute values to the homogenization of all values, homogenization that we believe to break when we have answered the question What is my role in the world?

But if that social requirement is left in suspense that condenses the question - and whose answer is often confused with an individual choice - and we think about the meanings that can be created and communicated (Pozo quitando a Duque, 2015) and we have just that to share them and also we are willing to want to understand what others communicate with their actions, words, aspirations, a fissure is made to that paradox detailed above. Likewise, when we venture to write and test what is reflected in this clear-dark world of social science research, others are invited to be part of what causes us admiration, we involve them in our way of facing the diverse situations that concern psychology, history, education, sociology, communication -disciplines that this volume 9, number 2- brings together, not with the intention of reaffirming our own conceptions, but with the tenacity of exposing ourselves and propitiating way with the others, not an absolute but the space where it could be talked.

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