

Man's change in the face of Nothingness: from anguish to liberation

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ABSTRACT

The article contains a set of reflections regarding the change that corresponds to man when he is able to recognize himself before the abyss of nothingness. Obviously, this encounter with nothingness generates anguish, which can be an obstacle for liberation. In such a manner, the intention of this text is to present anguish as a consequence of uncertainty, which is propitiated by the human need to have everything under control; in that sense, overcoming the anguish before nothingness will allow man to recognize it as a guideline and possibility of liberating himself from the structures that suffocate and condition the individual. Under that optic, the article ends referring to the ineludible characteristic of change and the importance of recognizing, as human beings of the contemporary world, the nothingness implicit in the being.

Key Words: Change, Nothingness, Anguish, Liberation, Uncertainty

INTRODUCTION

To embark on the journey towards the comprehension of Nothingness, provides a potential trans-disciplinary attitude; a holistic attitude that allows it to be understood from any perspective, that it be recognized as open and honest on the road of discovery and revelation. To speak of Nothingness is, truly, to penetrate into everything, which from my perspective is already justified in itself. Nothingness is not only present in the most crucial current topics, but rather its importance begins within the consideration of the origins of the Universe, life, humankind, and all real change, either tangible or abstract.

All of this can be understood from the perspective sustained throughout each and every one of the following pages: that Nothingness is; and that due to the fact that it *is*, it is then to be taken into account; not only for intellectual appreciation but for the praxis of whom has dared to delve into Nothingness, under the risk of ceasing to be as he is. Hence, it is clear that the issue of Nothingness is implied in the life of the person who understands it, and this directly affects his or her anthropological perception. Therefore, to conceive man based on Nothingness will ineludibly propitiate the reconsideration of the conception that he has about what is better for the human itself.

I will firstly tend to the manner in which anguish can be confused with the experience of Nothingness and I will attempt to demonstrate that such anguish is, rather, propitiated by the uncertainty that Nothingness provokes. Subsequently, I will center in on an alternate proposal of liberation centered on Nothingness. In the last portion of this section, I will refer to the ineludibility of change in the Being and the relationship of such changes with the presence of Nothingness in our life.

ANGUISH AS EVIDENCE OF UNCERTAINTY

In reality, it isn't that the Being is above Nothingness – as if a position between both things were possible – but that the Being is the consequence of Nothingness, in an ample sense. When

the Being emerges from Nothingness, it is not by the Being itself or by Nothingness – in as much as they undergo a function in order for that to occur – but that the human has a Being which has become conscious of being. Hence, it is not about seeing the Being more than Nothingness but, rather, that it is the only thing that can be seen. Nothingness remains non-visible, hidden behind the curtain while the Being has come out to put on the show. We are the consciousness of what occurs in the phenomenal world that is within reach. We are not utter conscience of Nothingness because, if it were so, we would be Nothingness. We are beings in a constant relationship with their not-being but not Absolute Nothingness; only nothing. Upon not being conscious of Nothingness, the only remaining option is to know it intuitively through what it is.

It has been believed that one of these experiences centered on the Being that allow us to know Nothingness intuitively is when anguish is experienced. For Sartre, this anguish is “the nothing that is shown as a phenomenon”.¹ On the contrary, I believe that anguish does not show Nothingness in it. Rather, that Nothingness sustains anguish because we have not grasped Nothingness but we infer it; we understand it behind that which comes through experience. We fear Nothingness and that anguishes us. It cannot be sustained that anguish is the privileged experience in which Nothingness becomes phenomenon but that, in any case, anguish is more related to uncertainty; this is to say, the lack of clarity of some events which we confront. Uncertainty is generated as the consciousness of not having a clear answer. We are speaking of a consciousness of not-knowing, which would break with the ignorance of ignorance in order to constitute itself as knowledge of ignorance.

Now, to recognize myself as being wise would only anguish me if I suppose that I must be wise. To recognize myself as ignorant would only be able to worry me in the case of believing that I must not be it, or that my duty is to avoid it at all costs. There wouldn't necessarily have to be anguish in uncertainty, unless we suppose that this is a world of certainties and that, due to it, we would have the expectation of the non-uncertainty. This is to say, anguish will only be possible in this case: if I have had the intimate desire of knowing it all and always having clarity. There is no possible anguish without the obliged previous connotation that something must be in a specific way. In other words, anguish is the product of the eagerness of univocities –on of them being moralization– not necessarily of Nothingness.

In such a way, there is no possible anguish that is not preceded by expectation. Hence, the recognition of Nothingness in me would be a counterpart of the anguish that is felt by expecting certainties. Being so, anguish is not the phenomenon by which Nothingness is demonstrated but, rather, the phenomenon that demonstrates our fear and resistance towards Nothingness. I will only feel anguished upon not finding answers if the expectation of finding answers antecedes me; and, therefore, the moralization that not doing so would suppose a fault or failure on my behalf. How do we obtain expectations? This is a question that without a doubt should have a systemic and holistic response, in the understanding that the expectation is not the essence of man but that the expectation comes to man; he assumes or interjects it from a specific context.

From there, it follows that the specific manner of becoming anguished by an individual is in a frank relationship with his manner of denying Nothingness in himself and, therefore, in absolute proportion to what he learnt it had to be. It is inferred that among the clearest obstacles to achieve the encounter with Nothingness is, precisely, moralization. I understand

¹ Sartre, *El ser y la Nada*, p. 59.

such a concept as the categorization of human conduct according to a determined structure of evil or goodness, which is always in relation to a specific ideological system to which man adheres. This system outlines human life to the degree that the structure doesn't allow the person to become aware of Nothingness. Behind the structures, breaking them is the acceptance of Nothingness; not in the structures themselves.

The differences between perceive the Being or Nothingness can be precisely the ways in which we enslave ourselves to structures, beginning by the structures of knowledge that allow us the encounter with the Being, or un-encounter with Nothingness in its absence. The linguistic structure from which we explain the world to ourselves has very much to do with this. In such a structure, for example, we find ourselves with distinct nuances of the word liberty. At this very moment, it is convenient to dedicate a space to the possibility of liberation by means of Nothingness; for which it is of fundamental importance to let go of the supposed need to be free.

NOTHINGNESS AS A GUIDELINE AND POSSIBILITY OF LIBERATION

Behind the structure of the self is pure Nothingness. Then, also behind the structure of the self, is liberty. The first structure of them all is life, just like the system of life to which the *self* must adapt. The null structuring once again implies, therefore, death; in such a manner that liberty, as a lived experience, is only possible due to the structure. There is no liberty as a desire or possession without the existence of the structuring prison. In other words, I need to be a prisoner in order to be free, for it is precisely that structure which facilitates liberty; without structure, there is no liberty. Following this, the Sartrean error of thinking of liberty as an ontological fact, is understandable. I explain this with five arguments: 1) the ontological Being doesn't have in himself a perceptible structure; 2) due to the aforesaid, the structuring of human life doesn't respond to its ontological being but precisely to its being-in-relation, to its being in the world, if you will; 3) liberty is an emergent part of the structure, there is no liberty without it; 4) if the structure isn't ontological, neither will liberty be; and 5) before a non-ontological liberty, there is only liberty in the structure; and if we assume liberty as a total search for de-structuring, we would not achieve more than to prevent it.

Therefore, if the supposed liberty is possible as a function of the structure and the structure oppresses me, there are only two options: either both liberty and prison are the same, or liberty is yet another structure that imprisons. In other words, I am imprisoned by my liberty, which is distinct from the sense that Sartre gives the term *condemned to freedom*. Sartre understood that the condemnation to freedom supposes the obligation to decide. But, from my perspective, liberty is not related to the need to decide but rather only to the need to be. Man conceives himself as free in as much as he is imprisoned in the structured reality that envelops him; so oppressed that his essential nothing is not perceived. The decisions that man takes are a product of his own structure. It is not conceived that deciding sets us free but, rather, the contrary: to decide is to play with structure and attempt to be within what one is not in reality.

To decide is to suppose that a correct option exists and this implies the expectation of it being so. But since there is no certainty of it, anguish arrives; and for Sartre, this anguish is the proof of liberty. The scheme I now propose differs in this: liberty is – only and precisely – an idea; the yearning forged from the imprisoning ineludible structures from which we are; and, in this sense, it is the part of Nothingness that we possess, our nothing. To liberate myself from liberty supposes that I deeply understand that I cannot speak of liberty without the structuring from which that same liberty is understood. Since I cannot detach myself from the structure (I make use of it right now to speak of this) then I assume that the consequence of being alive is the absence of liberty in the absolute sense; but it is the utter possibility of liberation from

Nothingness precisely due to the impossibility of existence without the structure. In summary, the structure causes the Being; what we grasp is the Being, not Nothingness, but Nothingness is inferred by that which we see of the Being. The potency of the Being is Nothingness and Nothingness is in act always, but in themselves they are a dialectic unit. We yearn for liberty since it always remains in potency and its only manner of being is not being; which is why the liberation of liberty is to assume its impossibility as a fulfillment, becoming unhopeful of it in order to not succumb to the slavery of its desire.

Liberty, supposedly, is observed in all phenomenon that imply free acts within the structure, but it is not possible to act without the structure itself; hence liberty is imprisoned in the structure that forges it. My *self* is imprisoned upon desiring liberty and upon supposing that it is obtained for it simply remains in the structuring game. Human liberty is linked to the structures that partly limit it. The self, upon being a structure, is necessary for the naïve elaboration of liberty. But only in Nothingness, which is the de-structuring structure, is it that absolute liberty is possible. Upon there not being any structures that allow the minimal human liberty, the liberation of liberty is assumed.

Such liberation of liberty consists in assuming Nothingness; the de-structuring Nothingness that isn't, therefore, graspable. So: I am not free upon being, even less upon acting; such liberties imprison me, unless my being should die. To die upon being is to recognize Nothingness, to assume the Nothingness that possesses me, not deny it; or to make myself Nothingness, once and for all. Since I have no plans for the time being, in the short term, for my own annihilation, I prefer to assume Nothingness, though I recognize that it is not to completely possess me, for now. The nullifying of limits would take away my uniqueness for I would be Everything. My Being is in need of the Nothingness that makes it be. Limits are liberty; it isn't that there is a liberty taking away limits, but that liberty – its conceptualization and our rigidity before it – *is* the limit. Even without having decided, liberty is contingent to the limits, not to the option, not to the decision. Liberty does not consist in constructing, nor in becoming (we are already), but only in being; understanding that this being is deposited in Nothingness and not in what we believe we are. I refer, then, to an ontological Nothingness, not a stunning nothing.

Nothingness, once again, is presented as the only thing that cannot be thought as an absolute code of not-being, for due to it being, it's not-being is. Upon being it is a constituted not-being. Sartre's opinion is contrary when he says: "Not even can it be said that nothing is excluding of the being: it lacks all relation to it";² but this is improbable for the French philosopher assumes that "nothing is not"³ and the posture we have argued is, precisely, that Nothingness is. Further along in his book *El ser y la Nada* [The being and Nothingness], it seems that Sartre changes his opinion upon affirming something that I have defended here from the start: "We are still to find out in which delicate and exquisite region of the Being we will find this Being that is its own Nothingness".⁴ My response, under the risk of it being immediate, is that such a region is humanly uncognoscible, which is why it is inferred in a contrary manner to how we usually assume to know. The part of the present in which it ceases to be it is the part of Nothingness.

Being so, man is only conscious of Nothingness in an intuitive manner but he neither forges nor creates it; for, if he were to, Nothingness would depend on human exercise and would therefore not be prior to man himself.

² Cfr. Sartre, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

³ *Idem.*

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 66.

To this set of relationships that configure, in some way, the specific manner of our being in the world, I call structure. We are not only in relationship to others, but also with language, culture, customs, manners, rites, beliefs, ideas, fantasies, artistic demonstrations, criteria, understandings, fashions, and stereotypes that imply a social life and that, therefore, suppose life in a relationship with others. Such relationships are also structured from “specific fields”⁵ to which the person connects in order to find a sense; which, finally, is given by the same structure. I am to distinguish that the free manner of being, as I have said, is specified according to the structural field in which a person performs. And since the external structure to which man adjusts himself is not his own entity – it isn't his Being -, we can distinguish man from the structure in the sense of his inequality with it, but not as a function of the independence of such, for –effectively– there is no man without structure. Hence man's social life makes the structure inevitable. For Sartre, the issue is solved in another manner: “Human liberty precedes the essence of man and makes it possible; the essence of the human being is in suspense within his liberty”;⁶ in such a way that he doesn't distinguish liberty from the human entity. And further along, he leaves no doubts with regard to his posture upon affirming that “there is no difference between the man's being and his free being”.⁷ I don't consider liberty to be a personal issue, indistinguishable from the Being. In the Sartrean approach, we do not observe the contingency of liberty with the structure itself; an issue which, as I have demonstrated, is inevitable.

Man is not social structure; rather, he structures himself in it. If liberty depends on structure but this is not man's essence, therefore it is inadmissible for liberty to be human essence. Human essence is in direct relation to Nothingness; it is undefined; it is a Nothingness that enables the structure of what is human, allowing it to show itself in distinct manners. From this absence of structure it is that we structure ourselves, and culture is the structuring scheme by excellence. We speak, then, of an adaptable nature; and this, adaptability – and not liberty – would be the essential character of human condition. Adaptation requires that to which we must adapt ourselves – in this case the modeling and molding structure that society generates; in other words, culture. Neither is society something inherent to man. It is more of something that confers his manner of being to him, but not something that confers his Being to him. That man requires a structure to enable his Being in as much as a manner of being, does not suppose that man is that structure. Furthermore, if liberty is a contingent part of structure, then, in fact, liberty is not a human essence.

Liberty cannot be precedent. What precedes the essence, understanding the essence as a structuring, is the Nothingness that permits the beginning of the structure itself. Now, since Nothingness is not man but Nothingness possesses him, then Nothingness cannot be the constructed essence, rather the implicit essence; this is to say, that which supposes the fact of being undefined is what Nothingness confers to man.

The same life story that shows us that the process of evolution has been a process of adaptation though not exactly one of liberty, has always been subject to a contingent reality, to the conditions of nature. From there it is concluded that the beings that are kept alive are those that adapt better and not those which are freer. Adaptation is a process of a manner of being, of typifying in a determined space. It doesn't suppose neutralizing the individual or deforming the possibility of deciding, but it does suppose that the set of decisions is always composed of decisions that are situated, structured according to a specific conditioning environment. The

⁵ *Vid.* Bourdieu, Pierre, *Invitación a la sociología reflexiva*, 2005.

⁶ Sartre, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

⁷ *Idem.*

following could be objected to me: if the human condition is adaptation, how to understand the individuals that are un-adapted to society? Are they, perhaps, beings without nature? The response unto that is not simple, but is offered as follows. We would have to distinguish two concepts of adaptation: as following standards established by the majority (referring to people), and as locating a manner of being within the surrounding environmental conditions – not referring directly to an issue of social consensus. Those to whom we refer to as un-adapted are not necessarily so in reality if we consider the second form presented.

This is to say, that he who has opted for executing certain conducts –outside of the conducts normally elected by the members of his group– is not precisely un-adapted; for, in fact, he has taken those decisions as a function of what surrounds him. Deciding to be different is already a manner of having adapted because one is being different to something; therefore, inevitably and in any way, adaptation is real, but not in a conventional manner. Adaptation is then the being-in-relation as a possibility. That is a natural issue, the opening, the possibility of being influenced; at most, malleability. In society, as a malleable mass, everything humanly possible fits in; even that which, based on the structures, we have agreed is not to be accepted. Now, the fact of not being accepted –since the non-acceptance emanates from a specific structured context and field– is already a manner of adaptation, with which the option of understanding adaptation as uniformity is broken.

Adaptation doesn't suppose equality or linearity either in the manners of being human. It simply refers to the following up – or not – of issues established by an ineludible environment. Such an environment is not the essence and only in that environment is the idea of liberty (an outlined liberty, we said) possible; the expectation of which –generated by that same structure– we only free ourselves from by accepting Nothingness. In this manner, the previously mentioned examples about evolution remit us to the fact that the species that became extinct, couldn't adapt in a convenient manner to the environment in order to achieve survival; but they *did* adapt in a manner that consequently made them disappear. In humans, adaptation is an inevitable implication, which is already non-dependant on the decision more than to define the content or the manner of adaptation, in the case that it is. Moreover, as I have stated, even the option of something is always in the structure, it is a manner of adaptation. If we speak of essence, adaptation precedes liberty. We decide the manner in which we adapt but not the fact of adapting, even in the understanding of an un-adapted liberty. Is it possible, in this context, to liberate myself from liberty? Yes, to the extent that I adapt myself to that reality of ineludible adaptation, which eliminates anguish. Why does Sartre see the manner of liberty in anguish? Precisely because he proposes to exercise it from an exclusive and forced manner of adaptation that doesn't include implicit adaptation and looks for a subjective essence of liberty which, upon not being –not arriving, not being achieved– cannot do more than anguish us.

Anguish is possible only to the extent that I believe that my forthcoming is in my hands. Anguish is to the extent that I suppose I am the direct creator of my future. But that is only possible in my head when I have not understood that I am only a cosmic stain in the immensity of the Universe. It is not about centering in on myself in order to know me, but that there is no knowledge possible of myself closed off to the world but, rather, from my being-in-relation. So, even the denial of the structure is a response to the structure; furthermore, it is a structured response not only by me. Any proposal of liberty that supposes un-adaptation is already a manner of adapting to the context.

We also live in a constant adaptation to a physiological and biological condition that belongs to us. If in this instant I am hungry, that hunger doesn't belong to my Being; rather, due to my

condition of being, to my relationship with my body, to my being a body, to my corporal-human constitution. I can eat or not eat, but this is always in reference to, precisely, the hunger. If I opted for eating – without worrying about the type of food for now – I have adapted in direct manner to what my condition, my relationship with my body, supposes. Even not eating is a consequent adaptation to hunger, though it doesn't tend towards the satisfaction of such and that can (or not) damage me. This possible damage to my organism is the consequence of my manner of adapting myself; an implicit derivation of my being-in-relationship-with-my-body. It happens in the same manner with any decision before any appeal of those to whom I relate. To get married or not, to have children or not, to study or not, to travel, to live, to have conflict, to argue, to kill, and all possible acts, are only possible due to what is within our reach in a limited manner. This context constitutes the condition from which adapting becomes man's concern.

I can even remain immobile and not opt, but that is already a manner of adapting. We could say that the immobility, or inaction, was an adaptation, but since that already supposed an adapting condition, it has also supposed a decision, though not always liberty. Liberty, in this case, is only a leftover of what our perception supposes is our willpower in decisions. But, since that same will, understood as appetitive faculty, is one that is situated, conditioned, and in relation, liberty is nothing more than a constant dialect; but never a liberty of essence, nor an absolute liberty as human pretension would desire.

There is no form of being without adapting to the structure. In the West we have forged all of our history from the Being's structure. It is time to adapt, today, to the de-structuring structure of Nothingness, for our approaches centered on the Being have already brought us enough problems. And the problem is not the Being as such, but to understand it as absolute and detached from Nothingness. It is necessary to further adapt ourselves to our intimate structure, which is clear evidence of the Being's dialectic with Nothingness. Such dialectic supposes change; an ineludible change.

NOTHINGNESS AND THE BEING: THE INELUDIBILITY OF CHANGE

It is possible that one of our fears towards the option of Nothingness that I propose is our so fortified centralization of the Being. But change is an ineludible issue that is even evidence of Nothingness' presence, even in our structuring based on the Being.

One of the clear demonstrations of our limitations over our Being is the irrefutable fact of our changes. We are changing in every instant without deciding it, and this is part of the Being's, and Nothingness', dialectic. We die every second; every instant is death. It isn't that we reproduce life, but that each time there is death in us – or in a different life – because our existence is not the same each instant, we change, we become modified, we are someone else. But this occurs so abruptly, so immediately, that we don't realize it. We suppose a continuity of life when, in reality, the only thing that is continually reproduced is a being that is and dies, that is and dies, and that is and dies. In the same manner, we don't notice that we are moving and that there are changes to our feet due to the earth's gravity around the sun; we don't grasp our unending and reproductive death. No matter how much I run, I am unable to leave myself behind; nor by travelling very much will I avoid being a stranger of my own body. No matter how many times I attempt to jump, I will never be taller than mi height. We don't realize it: immutability is only an illusion; the continuity of life is also. It is a dirty game with our own consciousness.

It could be objected at this point that “we have always been the same since our body has accompanied us during our whole life”. Now then, how sure are we of that? We should realize that our cells today aren't the same ones as a year ago, nor even a day ago. Our cells die, they

reproduce, and they change. Our body is not necessarily the same one; it isn't even in a superficial manner. Can we say the same thing of our thoughts and manners of understanding the world? Affirmative; unless, of course, somebody assumes that they think in the same manner today as they did when they were a child, before which I must not avoid saying that I would request social recognition to such an incredible waste of time. Can my liberty, supposedly essential, avoid cellular modification? No, it doesn't depend on me, just as I can't avoid either the multiple conditionings that my body inflicts on me. Even, in regard to sexual impulses, we must recognize that they are a consequence derived from having-to-be a body. And though it is known that there are people who affirm that they "have controlled all of their sexual impulses", the fact in itself that they need to be controlled is evidence of their impossibility to opt for a situation that supposes not having anything to control.

Due to all of the aforesaid, it is assumed that changes belong to the structure in which we are due to us being. Liberty is an illusion; let us begin by liberating ourselves from such an idea. Let us not be afraid of assuming Nothingness, of emphasizing our impossibility of being immutable beings. We cannot avoid the inoperability of the haughty attitude that emanates from the supposition of having it all under control. We change, many times without our will.

What is it that generates in us, for example, the fantasy that we are still the same? Without a doubt, it is the impossibility of our consciousness of being conscious of everything. Have you ever been conscious of every single breath you take in a complete day? Are we sure of grasping everything that is in our surroundings; that we hear all of the sounds and see all of the images before us? Do I perceive the blood in my veins, my heart beating, my neurons working, my pupil dilating, my hair growing, or my digestion carrying itself out? Our conscience is always partial; we never grasp more than brief portions of the total. And these brief portions of the total is – nothing less – that the conscience of the past, the memory, the association of images that remind us how we were beings in relation previously. Because of the supreme inconsistency of our conscience we suppose continuity, but we don't grasp the multiple and unending ruptures of our own being with itself. What is the self, then? Only the most sophisticated figuration of the conscience. If existence is the essence and it is unceasingly modifiable, then my self –that which supposedly *is* at every instant– has no more life than the present instant which vanishes for the being; that disappears upon being; the being in whose being fades; for while it is not what it will not be later, then neither is it. What remains of who I have thought to be if the self is not? Am I me or am I something that writes and thinks? Am I a portion of matter in constant adaption that, due to its conscience, imagines an identity? I have already said that I am not conscience; my self is a product of it. Some of us had thought that what distinguishes a robot from a human is that the robot doesn't really have a self. But, rather, as of today we can begin, together with them, to feel the yearning for that which we have never had in spite of our most sophisticated programming, product of our adaptation over millions of years.

Hence, the only human nature is that of adaptation. If the essence is conceived as human nature, then such nature is modified according to that to which one is to adapt. The contents of our adaptation are modified and we adapt to things that are outside of us. Our manner of existing is invariably *in* adaptation; we are beings whose existence is condemned to adaptation. It will be told to me, as the counterpart of my affirmation, that there exists an immutable spirit that is never modified and that we –upon being forged by such a spirit– couldn't be mutable either. Now then, such a relationship with an Absolute spirit is unlikely to exist since, if it is Absolute, it couldn't be related in its Being with us, the non-absolutes that we also are. If there were Someone Absolute that was not Nothingness, then I would have to become It in order to understand it; I wouldn't be able to understand from human conceptions. Furthermore, I

wouldn't ever be able to become It since –is such Absolute Spirit centered on the Being were real– it would have to be, in a compulsory fashion, immutable due to its characteristic of being Absolute. And, therefore, I would never add onto it for there is no necessary, nor possible, sum of me with It; I could never be It ever since I *am* and It *is*. Hence, the sum of beings would duplicate the Absolute, with in itself cannot have additions. In any case, if it is about including myself in Something Absolute after dying, the only option left is to thing that more than adhering myself to an Absolute Being or Absolute Spirit, I would constitute myself in the Absolute Nothingness; to which I would unite myself upon not being, for it is not corrupted upon adding myself since it is still always the Zero. Different to a sum of two beings that are in the end a distinct result, the sum with Nothingness – once having become it – cannot be modified, in the same manner that Zero plus zero (though this zero may be added a thousand times) will always be the same. The supposition of a life after death in which two entities centered on the Being are fused is, inevitably, chimera.

There is no immutability in any Absolute Spirit centered on the Being, and, therefore, neither is there immutability in our being. There is an Absolute Nothingness and, due to it, there is also mutability from our being in relation to it. Change is always, but such changes are lost from our perception due to the constant sequences of our consciousness. Within consciousness, present, future, and past are presented; within consciousness are act and potency; within consciousness are existence and essence. However, in the strictly phenomenal, only the present is, only the act is, and, therefore, only existence is.

Now, since the ontological –the concept and its coining– is also a product of subjectivity, an apparatus of one's own consciousness, there is no manner then to understand the ontological outside of the conscience. It isn't possible to understand the Being without contingency. Only the Absolute would be incontinent and – such as was mentioned with the spirit issue – its possibility wouldn't fit, or at least not in the world of the humanly explainable, not in the Being. The Nothingness that we see – upon not seeing – is a perception of the unperceived since, at the same time, the impossibility of its perception permits us to perceive it. There is no human manner to escape Nothingness. We could certainly turn into it or, even more, let ourselves be Nothingness. In this case, we would only escape such conscience of being possessed by Nothingness, but not Nothingness as such.

I need the conscience of the pasts in order to believe the myth that I am; unless, of course, I can confront the conscience of my own Nothingness. If I remember, for example, a punch taken to the face years ago, then I could verify today that the punch is no longer there. There is no inflammation on my cheek or bruises. Therefore that past, that punch they gave to someone who I no longer am –leaving aside the idea that not even now am I– is proved by the fact that it is only in my conscience, a conscience of the past. The past is only, for me, to the extent that I locate it in my conscience. Now, being radical with this argument, the present is also exclusively grasped due to the conscience. For example, if this punch – the one I mentioned – was being given to me right now (and I imagine the reader does not lack the desire for it), then, I would only grasp the pain if I were in the condition to grasp it in my conscience; for we all know that pain is experienced in the brain, our conscience of pain. All of this in the manner of the reception that the conscience makes based on the sensorial emission. The present and the past are a sensible experience in me to the extent that I am conscious of both. If for some reason I were not conscious, I could, equally, receive the punch but – though I may see the effects of said punch on my face –I would not have “lived” such an event for I did not grasp it as something that was happening. What makes us thing that only what we grasp occurs? And, furthermore, what makes us think that what we grasp actually occurs?

If one is awake or asleep, it doesn't matter. In the end, nothing is real for Nothingness is real. No matter how many times you may awaken or fall asleep, no matter how many dreams or not you may encounter, you won't come out of the bubble of mental fantasy anyhow. Life is a prolonged hallucination, product of the conscience. That is why the conscience, that is the most complex aspect of me, is also a conscience of the self. Said self is only a fiction more than in the conscience for, though it would be desirable up to this point, I *am* not my conscience.

The conscience defines what is and is not for me, including the concepts of Nothingness. Whether I grasp Nothingness, or not, does not suppose in any manner that Nothingness is, or not; for in the non-grasping is there more Nothingness in itself for me. Even today is there something that remains of Nothingness for the human being? Without a doubt. Could the human race perceive all of Nothingness? Without a doubt, no. For surely there will be aspects that will never be known by a human being, by none of us. There will be aspects that will be a perpetual absence in what refers to the human discovery of them. Nothingness overcomes the conscience. And not only my conscience but the whole set of consciences of all of humanities history, had and to come.

CONCLUSION

When I affirm the possibility of contemplating Nothingness, I know that it may sound to some as contradictory, antonymic, or paradoxical, to say the least. The issue is, precisely, to delve into that possibility; to understand that Nothingness is contemplated by not contemplating it (not being) in what Is. Through the Being we delve into Nothingness. To contemplate it is to see beyond what our eyes and our understanding perceive; it is to caress that which, in spite of being uncognoscible, can be sensed through trans-phenomenal and trans-linguistic means.

Contemplate Nothingness can contribute to the liberation of our structures without liberating ourselves from the structure that supposed we would react before them. We can decide the liberation of the structures; not over the existence of them in context, nor in the world of the others who accompany us in the world. To contemplate Nothingness is always an individual option of adaptation to a structure from the un-structure; it is the consequent affirmation of Nothingness derived from the Being's structure in which we are outlined as entities. The same fact of opting for Nothingness is already part of the response to the un-structured structure that Nothingness itself supposes for us. It is already time to return to Nothingness, to consider it for it has always been, has remained with us; we are part of it. Nothingness can be the necessary guideline for our liberation; a human liberation from within Nothingness. We don't need any more responses from within the Being, centered univocally from within the stifling structure of our truths. Let us give Nothingness an opportunity – and ourselves an opportunity before it – to vitalize our Being. Let us contemplate Nothingness before definitely being it.

References

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