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From Inaction to Reaction: Progress or Barbarism?

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Argument

"Good satisfies us, as well as Evil," the Brazilian singer Rita Lee might say. The path of Evil is tortuous, winding and deceptive, that of Good is insidious in a good way. Combine the two or overcome the duality that founded several civilizations and religions? It is on this question that this essay focuses, also advancing the issue of the current procrastination (which is occurring).

Development

1.

First of all, why procrastinate? Only at the end of a strenuous task, some will say, like construction and, at another extreme, philosophy, because it takes years off our lives that we refer to a desire for immortality, if eschatological. The voice of blood haunts you, sometimes appearing and sometimes reappearing later, telling you that you must follow in your father's footsteps and seek success, because that is what is at stake, in another area of philosophy. Are these essays a farewell to philosophy that you will soon give up?

2.

Lack brings us down; hunger disorients us; only certainty makes us proud, powerful, full of delirium and excitement. For what purpose? In whose favor? The Queen of England has already left for another place, or instance, or possibility....

3.

One thing that should be respected nowadays is age, even though in traditional or developing societies it happens, in Africa, in Europe, in a certain sense, and it happens differently in the Nordic countries, where there's a lot of intergenerational dialogue and the planning of social life makes people more or less happy. But it gives the idea that they know everything and then they lose interest, in teaching, for example.

4.

Yes, as I said to a colleague from the social sciences, the decapitant is Derrida, that is, his mind is what your head looks like after you've taken a big fat gash out of it... It may be his ear, so that he hears better, but poor man, we don't mess with the dead and we don't mess with his works for free, even though he had a triumphant reception and acceptance in Coimbra. Down here we have Deleuze, hooked on my slender eco-logical intent and, moreover, drinking from the same fountain from which Lobo Antunes makes prose, that is, from the general craziness. That is why I have always preferred Saramago, especially *The Year of the Death of Ricardo Reis*..

5.

But...where am I going with all this? Time is time, past is past, forget it, move on, you will tell me. Well, I am moving on, even every day, burdened with an illness that stretches my spirit, I try to get out of the house, distract myself, meet some girl or other (don't put so much weight on them, that weight that you claim with your more or less philosophical filler arguments...). Go ahead, claim what is yours, there it is, based on the past, on your philosophical itinerary, you don't need to explain everything, to justify yourself, finally stick to your field of knowledge, to your chair, to your job, otherwise they will go around saying you are a pimp, let your enemies discover how wrong they were to steal your space in the village, let them walk and be right, the guilt with which they will grieve over your victory will not die alone, if they have feelings and you know they have them...

5.

Even the sexual act, coitus, has nothing sacred about it, nor is there anything very obscene about it, it is a banal need, like the others, that can be gilded with more or less seasoning, more or less mental accessories, more or less feeling and intention. But it is not something like a physical need, a physical need, I would say like Teillard de Chardin, man wants to love and ends up loving, even if it is the Other in himself.

6.

You don't need to defend yourself all the time, the world is too big or too small for you to insist on a thing, a set of ideas, that only brings wear and tear to you and yours as well. Try to monetize that *thing in yourself* (instead of the Heideggerian "thing itself"). Do you have a mission? Commit yourself, because you are not harming anyone, as the doctor said, go ahead and make an effort, but remember Aeneas, who at the gates of Hell looked back and made Eurydice die forever...

7.

What counts, in the end, is what you take from Time, if only from the Bank of Time, not what Time takes from you, that's why it's right that you are getting old, cheer up, this country is for old people, that's why there is less and less crime, organized and disorganized, because anthropology is playing its role and everything checks out, the foreigners come to help us, because we were also far away and needed to be welcomed, to be "raised.

8.

It's one thing to write what you want to write and be recognized for it, in literature and social science, but it's another thing to write what others want you to write. You are not in a university? You don't have a job in academia? Sooner or later it will happen, you are not alone, because if you went out on the street now, many would come to you and stroke your disconnected memory, out of reality, as Julio's psychiatrist says...

9.

Then, you dig deep inside yourself, where does this idea that philosophers, guys with glasses, are not good in bed come from? Because almost every man and woman thinks about penetration, and I, in this sense, even understand lesbians, that is, can there be coitus without penetration? What is legal, in the Brazilian sense of the term?

10.

One of these days, I lost my fear, entered the urban forest of old, and got used to seeing in people's emptiness (*emptiness*) a chance to get out of the Deleuzian *pli*, that is, to use the *fold* as if it were a hinge and finally slam the door, enter and exit through the big door (which has little or nothing to do with the "narrow door Jesus talks about in the Gospels). The existential gap has everything to do with it, from Virgílio ferreira to Teixeira de Pascoaes, from Unamuno to Raúl Brandão. In fact, I even think that one of the most illustrative novels of our novelistics is really Gaibéus, by Soeiro Pereira Gomes, because it has plenty of time to be brilliant and comical at the same time, except for those who go to the 7 o'clock news instead of going to church to meditate on the evil they are doing, who have no time for anything...

11.

And, moreover, to corroborate what I've been saying, we have the notion of *chiste*, methodologically equivalent to that of *cisco*, *the* name of an American company, so that's all more or less well. The notion of *chiste* is equivalent to that of *twitt*, that is, online, when you are under the pressure of the screen that tires your eyesight, you end up throwing it away, that is, having a schizophrenic tirade. Perhaps this is why much of what is said and published on twitter is untrue or mere co-incidence (co-incidence, as former Prime Minister Sócrates would say), the mere consequence of a perverse need to vent that many of us have, riddled with hormones and stuffed with hamburgers... That is why the Spanish say "deciste"... which we could linguistically and semiotically equate to "desiste". Yes, but sometimes giving up is not only an act of intelligence, it's not even losing, it's a sign that my priorities, in face of what is on the menu of worldly existence, of mundanity, are other. But that's it, I think Bragança de Miranda would say this much better than we would. But the argument is presented, and I take it for the consideration of my future students... Therefore, when the speck is not filled by a "filling" matter, we have to leave it to itself and make a joke, that is, get out of there, before the terror of thinking abominates our spirit. In this way, we can solve various psychological and even psychiatric dilemmas, without leaving the realm of psychiatry, which usually gives us a chemical solution to say that everything is fine. And they still censor those who smoke a pack of cigarettes a day since the second year of college...

12.

In the inversion of values, there is the *manducare* and the "delivrare" (as in the theme "Deliverance", by the Mission), that is, man is on his feet (not the Man of Vitruvius, since he is on a free wheel of bets and more bets, with which many girls are deceived), therefore, we have man inverted, as in some paintings by Paula Rego, that is, Sodom and Gomorrah together (because they are, in a certain sense, concepts) to attack the mythical need for transcendence before God the Father. But, for the rest, the History of Art, since Bosh, shows this to satiety, as for example in *The Temptations of St. Anthony*. In another register, we could put St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila side by side and, without threatening their poetic value, they seem to us to constitute a mixed form of celebrating the union of the bodies, the celestial-divine and the common-earth.

13.

Thus, also the philosopher has to give an account to the common sense, that his task is valid, has interest and that, in a certain sense, he works on "identity", that is, both the personal identity (the I) and the collective identity (the social item, that is, a more or less circumscribed territory that is the nation, protected by the military and police, because there is an almost complete linguistic unity, except for Galicia, this in relation to Portugal). And so, your work, in the sense that Ricoeur gives it, his hermeneutic work, is framed and he can contribute, like the anthropologist, to give a summary, a synthesis of what it is to be Portuguese to the foreigner, to the Other "Other", as Jorge Dias and Orlando Ribeiro began to do...

14.

This Other "Other" can be that *alien* that is perfect, more perfect than we are, in our condition of pure peasants, peasant kids, since one of the characteristics of evolution is precisely imitation, ah, I wish I was like him, I had all the things I wanted...what a beautiful life Cristiano Ronaldo has!" Yeah, but he did it for that, better said, he did it for a living....

15.

Yes, we could call these reflections not so much what is in the title of this essay, but, like Sartre in *The Paths of Freedom*, some reflections on *freedom* itself, that which has always concerned us the most and which is, moreover, the main object of study of philosophy, not to say of social sciences in general, how to live happily in a perfect society. This is what the Nordics and the Americans, without taking away any merit from the South Africans and Australians, have always pursued and what we, following in their footsteps, are going to achieve in the medium term: reduce crime, increase the quality of life, improve the healthiness of our soil, add to cork, tourism and wine other products of excellence, in a market essentially focused on the idea of experience based on a higher quality paradigm than that of Norway or Holland.

16.

It is in the recesses that we become aware of our path, of what we need to do to be better, and perfection is not a defect, as OCD is not, just an achievement of the mind, one is not always right, one is not always wrong, even in a hard race like the Marathon, which is, to tell the truth, 42 kilometers, there are moments when the body almost falls asleep, so stretched is it, but the will to go ahead, to at least finish, to pass the 35, is greater than the body, which is a machine, a wrapping of what is the spirit. That is the Spirit...

17.

Happiness, for me, is to have some tobacco and food so that you can continue your work. I ask for little else, and in fact, if you look closely, before victory is achieved, the head is full of matter of a thousand and one things, and when you succeed, it ends up behind you, that is, you have, in a certain way, to forget in order to remember... In a sometimes unequal fight between Ego, heroism, belief, regret and anguish, but the Human Being was made for these things both to repress and suppress himself, and to take revenge on himself, on that Inflated Ego and achieve a victory that concerns everyone, in a word, the whole human condition...

18.

Remember how much you hated your father's work, since you didn't work on anyone else's, except the Brazilian's? Your hands were swollen from the cement that got stuck in your nails, you didn't smoke yet, it was very hard for you to get up at seven in the morning, but you were there, as you were going to the seminary in the seven o'clock bus with your brother, who today is cruel to you as if you were a commando, when you didn't even serve in the army, because you could see badly even with glasses, it's all inside you, defeat, victory, everything that exists and can already be consummated, that is, the continuation by another way of yourself, a man, whole, of value and principles, extremely funny and creative, rarely opportunistic, generous and a friend to all. For much less some have ended up in prison, not to mention in the madhouse or in the convent. This is not what Goffman talks about..

19.

Then, to safeguard your physical and psychic integrity, you decide to stop, but you keep moving, you don't know why, because you understand that the physical, like **t h e** psychic, can't be pulled all the time, because at the other extreme we have authentic animals in the middle of the jungle, urban or rural, which are the finance guys, for example, and how to be happy in Europe, even in the Northern Europe, is very different from being happy, for example, in Timor, Goa or Angola. Forget happiness indexes...

20.

Afterwards, between fits and starts, you begin to realize that there is a Being greater than you, that Being is God (GOD), but you go in moderation because you were once betrayed by someone who represented Him and, in a way, incarnated Him, no, it was not Christ, nor was it an apostle or missionary, well, it was even a missionary, but everything spirals in your mind, like a cow of fire inside your skull and, at the end of it all, from the caicedo recess (is it because people still go to convents? The mere thought even scares me...), you recognize the young man you were and, in a way, you are at peace with yourself, because you understand yourself. The trauma of the older brother? The question can be asked psychoanalytically, or physically, intellectually, the weak must be cunning, this is how David defeated Goliath...

21.

That's why I argue not only that God is society, society is God, as well as He is Something Else, Someone Else, is something that is above and beyond society, in a sense, Men, that is, you can be god, a god, in a secular, Marxist-Leninist sense, because you have with you the force that created it, in a word, that is, as Èmile Durkheim duly showed in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* and I haven't seen anyone do any serious thinking about it yet. Someone has to go ahead...

22.

Even so, you are not satisfied, there is something that remains to be explained, a link lost in a past in which you "ran away" from a certain way of life to adopt another and, in a certain sense, if it weren't for your need to show society some ethical coherence, you even miss those times, between Saint Benedict and the Discalced Carmelites. Yes, writing is getting it right without hurting, like prayer, a mission that cleanses the soul, in Moscat, a way of life, nothing more, an option? Maybe, for some it is one thing, for others, others, who cares. But you have suffered well and the Church has never apologized to you, in fact, the Blesseds even think you are a Judas, but there you go, you can't please everyone, not even Christ managed to, but at certain moments, in a certain sense made of sentiment, you manage to get pretty close, because, after all, once an anthropologist, forever an anthropologist, even if there is still no order among us and the associative spirit is a complicated thing, even among sociologists...

23.

I have given up pulling on myself, on myself, because I realize that I have exhausted certain things, certain themes, I have saturated myself with certain words, expressions, concepts, but I am still busy with my *Ethical System of Life*, adding up points here and there, little points behind, little points ahead, like the artist who has OCD and only does balls and more balls, that is the only thing she does, balls and more balls and I myself would say to myself and to my brother: Balls!!!!.....

24.

Besides, in ISCTE, at that time, we took everything to the bottom. The path continued in Letters and in FCSH, great universities where there is competition, unfair competition, but my championship is different, it is to continue something and to encourage those who, like me, can reach where I have reached and, who knows, as my friend Pancrazia says, to go further, as I said in one of my works, Beyond Thought...

In the end, I can only say that, either I am wrong or I will be forever linked to the University of Lisbon...

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