178 - ETHICS, EDUCATION AND HEALTH. REGARDING THE NEW POSSIBILITIES OF FREE TIME, IFESTYLE, PHILOSOPHY AND HAPPINESS.

Suzana Albornoz
UNISC - Santa Cruz do Sul / RS - Brasil
suzanaa@unisc.br

1 - INTRODUCTION

This short article, of introductory character, is intended to portray a particular presentation of a complex problem that requires a more patient revision. It is a matter of reflecting on the possible meaning, for the everyday life of people today and the search for good direction for their lives, of the new opportunities of free time brought about by automation, both in the production processes themselves and in other levels of life of the majority of the population on the planet, which includes and along with it constructs a new lifestyle.

The new technologies reduce the time spent on material production, leading to higher amounts, associated with the possibility of better quality of free time, which can be devoted to rest and, as never before, facilitate communication, living, sports, tourism, arts, culture, social and political participation, education and health.

Nevertheless, this rising amount of free time does not happen at once nor does it happen harmoniously. Work has occupied the center of human life, economy and culture in western societies for some centuries now, that is why idleness, in other times considered to be a privilege, is expanding nowadays, instead of being viewed as an opportunity for human growth, intellectual development and creativity, before anything else appears as a negative side, emptiness and pity.

Although "free time" is considered to be a time for leisure, it continuous as an activity *locus*, maybe of agitation and dispersion, far from the idleness concept, which evokes laziness, listlessness, *dolce far niente,* but also contemplation and thought.

On the other hand, within a context where professional activity is split without considerable prevision nor prudence, or better still, chaotically, at random, whilst new health problems threaten those who work hyperactively, running the risk of diseases for lack of physical exercises, everybody is faced with, in a challenging manner, the question of what free time means for the unemployed or underemployed, as well as for the employed.

The contradictory problems now imposed on human health by situations created by new technologies challenge the sources of practical philosophy and education, which might offer them, upon revalidating, classical responses, tested over long periods of human experience.

2 - PREVIOUS REMARK ON THE ETHICAL QUESTIONS BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE NEW CONQUESTS OF SCIENCE

The scientific establishment poses to contemporary men, particularly to professional scientists, new ethical problems difficult to solve. It is not that the more perennial matters are not equally difficult to solve, once it is inherent to human condition to make constant choices as to how to act, which direction to follow, what seems to be the most correct (and if the most correct is desirable and viable) and, before and after acting, reflect and deliberate on the consequences and on the action rules, even if the final choice keeps a sense of undecidedness and imponderableness, which is typical to what is called freedom, destiny of our condition.

The ethical plan conveys in itself a character of dilemma and the decision might be tragic, once a choice makes human conflicts surface, where contradictions abound. However, by virtue of many conquests of science - for example, the technical and scientific possibility to clone human beings - the novelty is extreme, thus, the unexpected and the absence of experience raise the collective perplexity to such an extent that the capacity to decide what is right and what is wrong becomes insufficient, common opinion becomes hesitant and most contemporary individuals find themselves deficient in the revision of concepts and conscience habits.

The new questions humanity is confronted with on account of the results of scientific research, which simultaneously potentiate the intelligence and the capacity to produce and create - for example, as mentioned above, in the genetics plan, the possibility of human cloning - require an enormous and bold collective effort, either for understanding the new phenomena or also for supporting the foundations of human action, improve the rules, and reeducate the moral sense.

Our reflection here is on the margin of the question, but not least relevant, from the central event of potentiation and the application capacity of human intelligence, where doubts and certainties, interpretations and theories relative to epistemological and anthropological elements entwine. Although geared toward the dimension of doing and acting correctly to live, this short essay does not dare, nor is it aimed at, the delicate ethical questions directly linked to the new technical and scientific capacities, among them cloning is perhaps the most impressive example, of biggest transforming and tragic potential, but it is just an example.

With a practical objective and applied to the areas under the responsibility of the educator and the health professional, this text is aimed at highlighting, to make people think, the consequences that might spring from the speedy technological transformation, that is to say, of automation, for the world of work and lifestyle within the contemporary society, in search of "social well-being".

In search of this objective, the questions lead to an interdisciplinary reflection, for one thing, sociological, of society theory at its educational scopes, work, health and leisure and, on the other hand, philosophical, whilst referring to a conception of human life with regard to the history and tradition of moral philosophy.

3 - FREE TIME AND REFLECTION: IDLENESS MIGHT GIVE BIRTH TO PHILOSOPHY

Domenico De Masi, an Italian labor sociologist, developed the thesis that nowadays there is more and more free time, which can be devoted to doing nothing, to studies, but also to other activities non-productive by themselves, however, creative, and "creative idleness" is the expression he consecrates at the analysis of the phenomenon of the consequences of automation in the world of labor nowadays.

The analyses and ideas of De Masi seem to be very similar to the utopists of other times; they might not describe the effective reality, in the major part of the socioeconomic world of the present time, which is now going though changes difficult to keep pace with and describe; but is comfortably situated in the possibility plan, along that edge where the real possible is

elaborated, as all utopias did and continue doing, understood in their positive sense, just like the concrete utopia is developed, exhaustively explored in the huge work of German philosopher Ernst Bloch.

It is a classical belief that "philosophy is born from idleness". There is an intimate affinity between the free time, what automation promises to expand in our reality, and philosophy, the thinking activity, the reflection. The quantitative expansion of free time in the lives of our contemporaries brings the possibility, of course, of an intensification of reflection, an intensity most important to realize the essence of the human beings themselves, and to solve the urgent problems like perennials of human existence and life on the universe of the planet Earth.

After all, what does it mean to philosophize?

Let us recall again the origin of the philosophical tradition in the West, in the Greek schools of thinking, around the character of Socrates, who did not correspond to the character of nowadays academician established in a modern institution, producer of sophisticated texts, submitted to the international academic community because, as we know, Socrates never wrote any text; the founder of the Athens school used to practice his philosophy by exchanging his life experience among friends, at the plaza of the town, in short, in an oral form and in everyday life situations.

The great philosophical tradition which developed from Socrates to Emanuel Kant, in Germany, in the XVIII century, has been questioned since the XIX century and criticized by geniuses like Karl Marx and Friedrich Nietzsche, both with an influence on contemporary history and on the present thinking, therefore, on education and ethical reflection. It is like forcing Socrates to renew his suicide by cicuta maculata, when he is not understood in this search for clarification through dialog, encouraged by the stigmatized conception of ironic melancholy, that everybody can discover the truth through intellectual reflection and biological effort.

The great rebels of the XIX century with their criticism of the intellectualism of the Athens School and their descendants, anticipated the concrete problem of the XX century, potentiated in the XXI century, of the authority crisis of tradition as confronted to new technologies and other traditions in a globalized world, in a multi-cultural coexistence. However, in the loss of the spontaneous strength of the tradition linked to particular cultures and religions, in a paradoxical manner, bring us back again to the philosophical tradition, as it becomes pressing to rethink or even retake the traditions, after the scrutiny of thinking and the learning of reflection in dialog form.

What does it mean to "educate through philosophy?" What is the service installed by the first philosopher of the West? 4

According to Hannah Arendt, in his unfinished book *The life of the spirit,* the reply of Sócrates - which, in reality, we will never know if it was his or Plato's reply, who in fact wrote his dialogs, once up until the present time specialists do research and disagree on texts that Express the Idea of the master or his disciple and writer, also a great philosopher - it is not a reply in the common sense, once the characteristic of Socrates's reply is, in fact, a non-reply as a whole, always finishing with another doubt, another question, so that Socrates's reply turns into a varied multiplication of questions.

Socrates's method, through which one reaches the truth and can also teach virtue, is a continuity of the questioning; it is the questioning itself, which refers to and jumps from one question to the next. To discover knowledge and truth through philosophy, because, in the Socratic meaning, is to educate through the question, which returns, remakes itself and transforms.

Even so, without ever reaching a final conclusion, it is said that Socrates believed that virtue could be taught; that talking and thinking about piety, justice, courage and things like that could make people more pious, just and courageous, although neither definitions nor "values" were given to them so that they could direct their future behavior.

Hannah Arendt reminds us that Socrates's real convictions on such subjects can be better understood if illustrated by the metaphors used by him to talk about himself and the art of dialog, and never ending questions. Such metaphors utilized by the Father of Philosophy to say what "to philosophize" means are still strongly expressive nowadays and might tell us more than the definitions of what it means to educate through philosophy, to teach how to think and teach virtue through thinking.

On several occasions, the Socratic work was translated by the metaphors of the "horsefly", "electric ray", as well as - this is perhaps the most famous metaphor - by the "midwife", referring to the "birth of ideas". Socrates himself used to call himself "horsefly". A horsefly knows how to sting the citizens, which, without it, will continue sleeping for the rest of their lives, unless somebody wakes them up." (ARENDT, 1992, p.129)

Arendt also recalls that, in *Teeteto*, Plato makes Socrates say that "he knows how to bring the thoughts of other people to birth because he himself is sterile". Socrates compares a "midwife" - a woman dedicated to help other women to give birth to children, while the philosopher dedicated his life to bring ideas to life, daughters of men's minds. Arendt also refers that, according to Plato, someone called Socrates "Electric Ray" - a fish that, by contact, paralyzes and benumbs. Socrates would admit the similarity, provided his listeners admitted that the "electric Ray" paralyzes other people just because itself is paralyzed. The philosopher accepts the comparison but justifies himself saying that "it isn't that he leaves other people perplex, but he transmits to them his own perplexity". The "electric ray" seems to operate the opposite effect as compared to the horsefly: while the former cheers people up, the latter paralyzes them. These are the contradictory effects of philosophy, continued exercise of questioning and doubt, which the Socratic metaphors unveil and stress.

A final metaphor was used for philosophy while practiced by Socrates, like questioning without definitive conclusion: the one of the wind, which sweeps what was established, confounds and disturbs. Hannah Arendt also recalled that the people of Athens, who accused Socrates of aggression to the tradition of the town with his philosophy, told him that thinking was subversive, "that the thought of wind was like a hurricane that sweeps off the map the established signs by which people guide themselves, arousing disorder in the towns and confusing the citizens" (ARENDT, 1992, p.130).

And therefore - disturbing, paralyzing and destructive of common concepts, the practice of questioning arouses and causes a change to the spirit, taking it/ raising it to a different plan, as if it was a parturition, childbirth.

Expanded free time geared toward creative idleness may be exposed to disturbing action and paralyzing action and destroyer of prejudice, to the "wind" of philosophy, whose most profound vocation, often the most relinquished, is to contribute to clarification and practical wisdom which are supposed to lead to human happiness.

4 - THE PURPOSE OF ETHICS IS HUMAN HAPPINESS

Whilst in the previous item we focused our attention on Socrates (or Plato...), we are now supposed to focus on his most immediate and consecrated disciple, Aristotle. Before the formal ethics, or else, the ethics of duty just like it appears exemplarily in the illuminative modernity, in Emanuel Kant, the old position of the ethic of the goods is anti-positioned, just like how Socrates thought.

Although we do not know how the structure of the three books by Aristotle on the question of human action was formed - *Ethics and Eudemo, Ethics to Niconomacus, and the Great Ethics -,* it looks, without any doubt, the authenticity of the ideas presented in *Ethics to Nicomacus (or Nicomaqueous Ethic),* one of the most clever ethic treaties of all time and still very update.

Before anything else, *Ethic to Nicomacus* is a theory of happiness, or a moral philosophy geared toward human happiness. 6

It seems clear to Aristotle that all men are in search of, and we all are in search of happiness. This is the supreme good desired by everyone and everybody agrees with this. But as to the ways to reach it, any agreement seems difficult. Some people seek happiness through pleasure and comfort; others seek it through wealth; and even others, try to be happy through honors - in today's terms, say, through status, prestige, fame and power associated to it.

But if we give deep thought to the subject and meditate slowly about it, we will see that virtuous life is the only one that leads to well-being; to be virtuous is a condition to be happy, once being virtuous which makes happiness possible means that a sense of equilibrium has been developed in everything one does. Therefore, virtue identifies itself as "fair means" between two extremes or two vices: one, for excess, the other, for shortage. Prudence or ponder is, therefore, condition for any virtue and, in consequence, for happiness.

The philosophical reflection on virtue and on justice, according to Aristotle, clarifies us that the most adequate good to guarantee happiness to men, for it is the one that most agrees with human nature and the least dependent on external and material goods circumstances, is the theoretic activity itself or contemplation, thinking activity, philosophy, which induces ponderability and prudence, root of virtue and happiness. And this is how the net is weaved and the yarn gets yarned seemingly in a definitive way.

5 - PHILOSOPHERS POINT TO THE NEED OF EDUCATION

For the most famous philosophers of philosophy's history, the need for education shows at Ethic's conclusion, in other words, at the end of the elaboration of practical philosophy. In Aristotle, we can find that, at the domain of practice, "the end does not consist in the study and theoretical knowledge of the different actions, but in its execution …" (ARISTOTLE, 1987, p. 522-523). And, as the philosopher himself clarifies in another document: "It is not a matter of knowing what is good, but to become good. It is not a matter of knowing what virtue is, but to be virtuous. It is not a matter of knowing what courage is, but to become courageous" ...(ARISTOTLE, 1984, p. 61).

For the requirement to start the practice of virtue, what shows is the need of the master's mediation work. Public education is provided for by good laws, which are established by citizens involved in the political establishment, intended to favor life in society, the practice of virtue, equilibrium, respect for everybody's individual nature. Personal education, through which every civilized citizen is supposed to progress up to the level of virtue, in order to discover the universal rules of action through science, which is even more perfect and necessary than good laws. Also in modern philosophy, in the exponential character of formal Ethics, Emanuel Kant, philosophy on moral action concludes its reflection leading to the realm of education.

When the philosophers finish reflecting on the ultimate concrete consequences of the action norms, they find out the deficiency of a humble and prolonged effort, which is supposed to favor men of flesh and bones, full of drive, interests and illusions, particularly in their childhood and youth, the formation of that sixth sense for the right and the wrong, the allowed and the forbidden, the good and evil, the tolerable and the intolerable for the choices of human freedom. To what has once been called "practical reason", but which can also be seen as something beyond reasoning, a kind of "habit" or "sense", based on moral sentiments.

CONCLUSION

Of what we have alluded to so far, although in a fast manner, what stands out is the interdependency of education and wisdom, as well as of wisdom and happiness, condition and consequence of health. The automation process introduced by the new technological inventions, which permeate all corners of life, reduces the time spent on material effort and makes more free time possible, whilst frequently it transforms the human activity itself, as De Masi says, in "a mix of work, study and leisure", as long as the work becomes predominantly intellectual and requires more intellectual skill than physical strength.

This is not exempt from problems: for one thing, it renews the question of physical activity, essential basis for health and should be sought after within the free time; on the other hand, it also leaves open the question of the quality of intellectual activity which will go side by side with idleness, turning idleness creative or path to happiness.

These two questions do not get solved in spontaneous and automatic manner, they require a lot of effort from the educators. Therefore, education, like the development of skills and knowledge, and also the development of reflection and wisdom, becomes an essential means for human health and happiness, presupposed as Ethic's ultimate purpose.

Education changes its meaning: from a means of tradition transmission and adaptation of the new generation to knowledge, uses and customs of the adult generation, and as training in known chores, as it has predominantly been over the long years of its history, at the present moment it comes to an effort to understand a complex and constantly changing world; effort to understand, seeking to establish links between the phenomena and domains studied and acknowledged, the scientific and erudite tradition as well as through the network of information available to the public in general, on the internet.

Finally, in view of this complex task, it is up to the effort of the educators to help the individuals to see sense through reflection, with its foundations on the humanities - letters and arts as well as in human sciences and particularly in philosophy, to the new situations challenging the modern men.

REFERENCES

ARENDT, Hannah. *A vida do espírito.* Rio de Janeiro: Relume/Dumará, 1992.
ARISTÓTELES. *Éthique à Nicomaque.* Paris: Vrin, 1987. *Ética a Nicômacos.* Brasília: Edunb, 1992.
_____ *Éthique à Eudème.* Paris: Vrin, 1984.
ALBORNOZ, Suzana. *O exemplo de Antígona.* Porto Alegre: Movimento,1999.
_____(org.) *A filosofia e a felicidade*. Santa Cruz do Sul: Edunisc, 2004.
_____ Reflexão sobre Ética, 2003.
_____A filosofia no cotidiano. Anais do VI Forum Nacional de Educação.UNISC, 2006.
_____Jogo e trabalho. Cinergis, UNISC, 2002.
KANT, Emanuel. *Crítica da razão prática.* Lisboa/Pôrto: Edições 70, 1986.
SCHAEFER,Sérgio. A concepção de felicidade em Aristóteles. In:*A filosofia e a felicidade*. Edunisc, 2004.

PHILOSOPHY AND HAPPINESS

ABSTRACT

This essay aims to reflect about the conditions of development opened by the new possibilities of free time by the proccess of automation; the human happiness as first goal of the Ethics in its classic conception; the mutual dependency between philosophy and happiness, education and health, also, the education of the wisdom as condition of quality of life, health and happiness.

ÉTHIQUE, EDUCATION ET SANTÉ. SUR LES NOUVELLES POSSIBILITÉS DU TEMPS LIBRE, STYLE DE VIE, PHILOSOPHIE ET BONHEUR

RESUMÉ

Cet essai cherche à réflechir sur les conditions de développement humain ouvertes par les nouvelles possibilités de temps libre par le processus d'automation; le bonheur humain comme finalité première de l'éthique dans sa conception classique; l'interdépendance entre philosophie et félicité, éducation et santé, donc, l'éducation de la sagesse comme condition de calité de vie, santé et bonheur.

ETICA, EDUCACIÓN Y SALUD. SOBRE LAS NUEVAS POSSIBILIDADES DEL TIEMPO LIBRE, ESTILO DE VIDA, FILOSOFIA Y FELICIDAD

RESUMO

Este ensayo busca reflexionar sobre las condiciones de desarrollo abiertas por las nuevas posibilidades de tiempo libre por el proceso de automación; de la dicha humana como finalidad primera de la Ética em su concepción clásica; la interdependencia entre filosofia y felicidad, educación y salud, luego, la educación de la sabiduría como condición de calidad de vida, de salud y de felicidad.

ÉTICA, EDUCAÇÃO E SAÚDE. SOBRE AS NOVAS POSSIBILIDADES DE TEMPO LIVRE, ESTILO DE VIDA, FILOSOFIA E FELICIDADE

RESUMO

O presente ensaio procura refletir sobre as condições de desenvolvimento humano abertas pelas novas possibilidades de tempo livre ou "ócio criativo", oriundas do processo de automação; a felicidade humana como finalidade máxima da Ética em sua concepção clássica; a interdependência entre filosofia e felicidade, educação e saúde, logo, a educação da sabedoria como condição de qualidade de vida, saúde e felicidade.