

NIETZSCHE AS AN EDUCATOR AND THE AFFIRMATION OF SINGULARITY

NIETZSCHE EDUCADOR E A AFIRMAÇÃO DA SINGULARIDADE

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ABSTRACT: The article aims to explain Schopenhauer's impact on Nietzsche as a style of master/teacher, incorporating the singularity as the crucial thing that education should promote. To contemplate this task and update the reflection for our time and context, it is necessary to fight the tension between the demands of educational institutions and the power of a master/teacher in the practice of his acting, in order to seek in each student what he has of genuine and original. This is an essay with a qualitative approach that reflects the formative trajectory of Nietzsche himself, capable of promoting his extemporaneous condition and facing the culture of his time. For this, a master is needed, preferably, as Nietzsche indicates, the bearer of admirable serenity, full of a strong and devouring fire to be able to promote the singularity of his student.

KEYWORDS: Nietzsche. Education. Singularity.

RESUMO: O artigo tem por objetivo explicitar o impacto de Schopenhauer sobre Nietzsche como um estilo de mestre, incorporando a singularidade como aquilo que a educação promove. Para contemplar esta tarefa e atualizar a reflexão para o nosso tempo, faz-se necessário enfrentar a tensão entre as demandas das instituições educacionais e a potência de um mestre na prática do seu ofício, a fim de buscar em cada estudante aquilo que ele tem de genuíno e original. Trata-se de um ensaio de abordagem qualitativa que reflete a trajetória formativa do próprio Nietzsche, capaz de promover sua condição extemporânea e enfrentar a cultura de sua época. Educar, formar-se, é uma tarefa que exige paciência, persistência, rigor, disciplina. Para isso, um mestre é necessário, de preferência, como nos indica Nietzsche, portador de uma serenidade admirável, cheio de um fogo forte e devorador para ser capaz de promover a singularidade do seu aluno.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Nietzsche. Educação. Singularidade.

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RESUMEN: *El artículo tiene como objetivo explicar el impacto de Schopenhauer en Nietzsche como estilo de maestro/profesor, incorporando la singularidad como lo que la educación promueve. Para contemplar esta tarea y actualizar la reflexión en nuestro tiempo, es necesario enfrentar la tensión entre las exigencias de las instituciones educativas y el poder de un maestro/profesor en el ejercicio de su oficio, a fin de buscar en cada alumno lo que él tiene de genuino y original. Este es un ensayo con un enfoque cualitativo que refleja la trayectoria formativa del propio Nietzsche, capaz de promover su condición extemporánea y enfrentar a la cultura de su tiempo. Para ello se necesita un maestro, preferentemente, como indica Nietzsche, portador de una serenidad admirable, lleno de un fuego fuerte y devorador para poder potenciar la singularidad de su alumno.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Nietzsche. Educación. Singularidad.*

Introduction

To what extent do educational institutions manage to favor singularity in their formative processes? Considering the debates and formulation of guidelines for institutions, for the definition of curricula, there is a strong tendency to call for the same standard of education for all as a condition for democracy. Is there room in this horizon for differentiation, for uniqueness? For the genuine? After all, what is constituted as genuine in each person is not the result of chance. Uniqueness doesn't happen magically; how then can it not be prevented when the goal is the development of a supposed standard that should be reached by everyone in educational institutions? How to make uniqueness a pedagogical goal in institutions?

To understand this possible pedagogical lack, we need to return to the perspective of modernity and its promises. Emancipation narratives emphasize a rational, conscious, progress-oriented subject and the valorization of individualism as a resource for the consolidation of freedom. A narrative with metaphysical and idealistic spice. To build a different way of thinking about human formation, it will be necessary to undertake a radical critique of the metaphysical assumptions and, to do so, we resort to the philosopher Nietzsche, who already indicated the signs of this narrative in his time, and in this direction, he directs his critique to think about human formation beyond the register of modern logic. His critique faces his own time (and by extension our time) and his main theme is the question of culture.

The culture expressed and analyzed in Nietzsche's texts, considering the spiritual atmosphere of Germany in the 18th century, seems to have much to tell us today. In the constellation of the Enlightenment, the idea of formation and culture ends up being constituted from a subordination to the political demands of the citizen for life in society. Culture is thus an accumulation of knowledge, the establishment of a performance of an individual in tune with

his time, at his service to generate progress, insertion in the job market, and innovation. The incorporation of this perspective, for Nietzsche, activates to the maximum the concept of gregariousness, necessary for human survival, but restricted to consider humans beyond flocks.

For this philosopher, the desire for the massification of education no longer has its own interest in culture, but the taste for forming "ordinary men", useful to their times and integrated into the market and production, able to meet the demands of the State. Any culture that would affirm another dimension tends to be discarded, and the desire is to bring the individual closer to the herd, preventing any singularity that would take him in another direction than the gregarious dimension. Strong instinct in humans, for he needs the community to survive, but for Nietzsche it cannot prevent what can be more genuine in each one. Becoming a slave to welfare, to the goals of the state, impoverishes any human formation and weakens culture. Nietzsche believes that the individual is being educated to belong to a totality and that all goals to be reached are there. Any deviation designates a danger; therefore, all accumulation of knowledge is directed toward the preservation of society. Individuals who announce other possibilities are despised. The seduction for the pursuit of this well-being lives among us, nor does Nietzsche despise this need. However, caution is needed, for all security is accompanied by the presence of a domineering spirit and the demand for obedience.

In this scenario, we can understand the lectures given by Nietzsche, which make up the work entitled *On the future of our educational institutes*, between January and March 1872, where the philosopher criticizes the education and culture of his time, focusing on educational establishments and their educational reforms. Nietzsche reflects on the education of his time and raises a series of questions by denouncing what he defines as the decadence of the educational processes. According to the philosopher, it would be necessary to reestablish the criteria of demand, authority, and obedience that are fundamental to knowledge. For him:

Two apparently opposing currents, both harmful in their effects and ultimately united in their results, dominate our educational establishments today, originally founded on totally different bases: on the one hand, the tendency to *extend culture as far as possible*, on the other, the tendency to *reduce and weaken it*. According to the first tendency, culture must be taken into ever wider circles; according to the second, culture is required to abandon its highest claims to sovereignty and submit itself as a servant to another form of life, especially that of the State (NIETZSCHE, 2003, p. 44, emphasis added, our translation).

Such tendencies - that of extension and that of reduction - are the sign of a carelessness with formation and, more than that, an ignorance of nature's own designs. Culture as a force

and expression of the original comes from the work of the few, and it would be a mistake to imagine that it is the fruit of massification. In these terms, the young Nietzsche defends a culture guided by its own style, capable of sustaining the originality of a people, and, for this very reason, to be cautious with the purposes of politics.

Rare men face dangers and are sometimes excluded, they lose basic pleasures of life, because they are in search of higher things that disturb them; just like Schopenhauer, for he knew that to seek higher things it would not be possible to adjust to the conditions of his time, to surrender to fads, and for him there was always a question: "In the depths of your heart, do you say yes to this existence? Is it enough for you?" (NIETZSCHE, 2003, p. 163, our translation).

The image of a people, of a culture, does not find a fixed point, it is captured in different ways. The greatest example was the diversity of possibilities in the process of appropriating a Greece from very peculiar and diverse alternatives. Nietzsche appreciated the dark side, more linked to the original impulses. Formation, in this sense, acquires meaning by bringing together art, culture, nature, past and future to contemplate the present as a challenge to be faced from a legacy received, preferably in educational institutions. Educating implies reflecting the plane of the individual, but also cultural and historical. The risk of evading the present is great; therefore, the priority task of education is to respect and cultivate the authority of thought through culture.

In other terms, Nietzsche criticized the principle of professionalization extended to institutions, which does not give us the right to sentence him as elitist, but to effectively understand what he denounces: things must have a name and a purpose according to their specificities: technical schools, necessary to society, are not schools of culture and training. What the market wants is different from what culture wants to cultivate. At this point, Nietzsche defends institutions that, inspired by Greece, aim to reach the totality of man's formation, resisting the traps of specialization. Later on, Nietzsche will abandon some positions of this period, however, he will never give up his criticism of specialization and reduction of culture to the interests of the State.

Nietzsche admits that many promises and universalizing discourses are a lure, since they promise what they cannot always deliver. The challenge of Nietzsche's proposal in education, stating that the option for a higher education, which in synthesis promises more difficulties than joys, requires full dedication, and no guarantee of recognition. Would this be a reason to "vulgarize the demands"? Not at all, after all, Weber (2011, p. 143, our translation) states:

"respecting and recognizing the linguistic limitation of the illiterate does not oblige us to accept illiteracy as the fate of humanity." In the same way, Weber (2011) follows, pointing out that the ever-present difficulty in the use of language cannot make us condescending to its use. In this horizon is the defense of education in Nietzsche: the need to find masters for these tasks, which never meant to despise other alternatives.

The defense of singularity

What would then be a formation not subordinated to the dictates of the State? Nietzsche will defend the need for solitude, a distancing from everything that summons the human being to be a presence in an already defined conjuncture. Already at this point, the much-promised modern freedom does not seem to be contemplated, because the small signs of disagreement in relation to society and the many flocks configured in it are considered immoral. We can conclude that the gregarious instinct relied on institutional and formative processes to preserve itself over time and to direct individuals to its purposes.

In this context, Nietzsche's expression - "to become what one is" - makes sense, which implies detaching oneself from the herd instinct in order to assume its form. There is no manual of conduct to follow this trajectory, it implies activating in oneself all the resources and not only rationality. It is not about seeking a "true self," but daring to experiment with the body, understood as the great reason, implied by instincts and impulses. To be an artist of oneself, creating and inventing one's own life. A human capable of not only obeying, being able to select the legacy he has received from the educational establishments, and having the courage to fight his own time. To hierarchize, to calibrate that which can still be preserved from the norms of conviviality without losing the strength to affirm his singularity that, at times, leads him to live solitarily. It is worth pointing out that this individual is not indifferent to his community, he goes away to activate his strength, and wishes to return to share experiences and other ways of living. The singular man is also able to have a different relationship with history, and the philosopher himself has dealt with this in his works. He highlights the idea of forgetfulness as necessary for creation. Emptying the memory considering the excesses of the affirmation of truths that is not justified. An education that only demands memorization, repetition of the past, without taking from them the right to invention, designates a precariousness that can be overcome by education.

From lack of self to singularity

Nietzsche in his own life taught us possibilities of accessing our uniqueness. He himself let himself be led by the atmosphere of romanticism, seduced by Wagner's music and everything related to it. He became a follower, an adept of a movement that consumed him for a long time. In his production in the interim period, especially in *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche is able to analyze from a distance his own fidelity to this time and realize that this is also one of the causes perhaps of his illness. After all, suggests our philosopher:

To what extent does devotion obscure - In later centuries the great man is presented with all the great characteristics and virtues of his century - thus all the best is constantly *obscured* by devotion, which sees him as a sacred image, on which offerings of all kinds are hung and displayed; - until at last he is completely covered and enveloped by them, becoming more an object of faith than of observation (NIETZSCHE, 2008, p. 95, emphasis added, our translation).

Sometimes Nietzsche speaks of himself, but he speaks of all of us, always still devoted to the demands of our time, faithful to some promises or adepts of certain narratives that seduce and enchant us to lead us still to an aesthetic-metaphysical way of looking at existence. In the devotion to narratives, what may be missing is the "self"; pedagogical too is to step away, to go through the privations of educational narcotics, to look at oneself, to venture into creating experiences, to try to get away from the webs that wish to capture us.

The "lack of self" approach is very well presented in Adami's text (2016), when he evaluates Nietzsche's own journey, who needed to return to himself, to decide on the distance in relation to philology. His desire was really to be a philosopher, to move away from romanticism, even away from his master Schopenhauer so as not to lose the power of the self and build his own destiny. In these terms, Nietzsche speaks of the necessary, including his illness, which demanded a change in his outlook, building a new criticism, now directed to his own trajectory. And this process is infinite as long as we have the courage to also face ourselves and our devout attitudes, so frequent nowadays. To what extent has our pedagogical configuration and formation encouraged this critique of ourselves?

Nietzsche describes life as imperfect, in constant becoming, always inaugurating new movements, other horizons. Humans live within this tension, challenged to create new responses, appropriate to new circumstances. The human task, then, implies finding new measures and values capable of continuing the great adventure that is living. At this point, history and what is revealed through the practice of forgetting and remembering can be a good

orientation that the past can offer for the present. Forgetting implies moving away from questions that are already known and solved in order to surrender to new horizons that are thirsty for other answers. We must avoid the risk of always repeating the same answer, it is important to recognize new problems and needs, to experience them, to effectively give life the dignity it deserves. However, it is also important to remember and analyze past situations to reflect on what, already experienced, can eventually teach us in the search for new answers. In a way, when facing new horizons, we are not in complete darkness, we have recourse to a tradition, of which we must take care to face new experiences offered by the becoming.

As Rangel suggests (2009, p. 212-213, our translation):

The experiences already made by men gain meaning from the sincere confrontation of the present, from a surrender to the new historical configurations, what Nietzsche calls an ahistorical attitude. One lives first and then, if necessary, one seeks, in the dialogue with the past, capable measures of orientation. The study of the past for life, therein lies the advantage of historical science. As long as we live well without the past, we should stay away from it, says Nietzsche, but if we find it difficult to deal with the new problems that are offered to us, incessantly, by life, the support of the experiences already made is welcome.

When then do we need history? To what extent are institutions responsible for pedagogical training in this direction of understanding life and the ability to remember and forget? How can the legacy of culture support this purpose and also sustain the function of the teacher in institutions?

On institutional practices - from collective needs to the right to uniqueness

The young Nietzsche emphasizes the importance of institutions when they assume the commitment to culture, to the gestation and creation of the genuine in individuals. To let oneself be captured by habit, to meet more immediate demands, to follow fads and trends, reveals the beginning of a process of decadence. The reverence for culture in institutions should be protected, the rare individuals should be preserved, which does not mean the defense of any elitism in the field of education. It is the defense of a spiritual elevation that comes from culture. What is in question is a kind of "cult" of culture, which, protected and consolidated in the collective memory, needs education to be known and disseminated to society.

There is, in the institutions, a historical sense that knows the necessity of preserving tradition, even to ruminate on the issues of the present. One cannot resort to the past to bury the

present; nor can one wish to consolidate meanings that were not fully lived in the past. To escape the present by idealizing the past is, ultimately, to impoverish life.

The II Extemporaneous² – about the usefulness and drawbacks of history for life - was, first of all, an attack against historicism, a condemnation of the scientific views of history. The fairest criterion for approaching history is life itself. History can be very relevant to life, but it can also be an empty discourse. Thus, institutions must preserve the cultural memory of the past to ensure, through education and formative processes, that something can be sought in the past to build the future. Nietzsche himself made this experimentation starting from the Greeks, by highlighting the Apollonian and Dionysian principles. Abusing this look to the past makes one forget the present and despise the future. Searching for the past never implies repeating it, but appropriating it in order to think about the present. Who can create the conditions for this task?

Neglecting culture produces a sickness that prevents the cultural legacy from being cultivated. We need to capture and decipher values of a people and a culture in order to understand the active forces of individuals in relation to society. Nietzsche, thus, creates categories to understand the various perspectives of history and highlights the value of memory and forgetfulness, as we have already pointed out. Knowing the past already implies a science, it is a methodology of reflection that should be emphasized more than the compulsion to produce narrative and descriptive pictures based on causes and consequences. Nietzsche identifies three basic attitudes toward history, attitudes that can serve life, facing the challenges that always arise, but can also serve a tendency to sacralize the past, imagining that it will find protection. We are at this point referring to monumental, traditional, or antiquarian history and critical history.

The first version of history challenged us to look to the past for models for action, to know what is exemplary in order to orient ourselves toward the future. Nietzsche sought to study great individuals to understand how they responded to the great challenges of their time, without creating any idols, because the point is not to produce a history of heroes, but to learn how, at different times, humans gave their testimony of originality in facing vital issues. To meet unique individuals, not to imitate them, but to encourage each individual to face his unique story in the time in which he lives. The point is to remember strength, courage as a human possibility. This can also be learned in institutions, through formative processes, without being

² At this point we are oriented by the work *Escritos sobre História de Nietzsche*, presented and translated by Noéli Correia de Melo Sobrinho (2005).

seduced by a history that only wants to reveal great individuals and their achievements. History exists to teach men and women of the present that the turbulences of life have already been faced in other periods, and that we can still do this with other performances proper to our time.

Traditional history seeks an eternal origin of its community, as if it were clothed in light and revealed itself as a relic. Bewitched by seduction, they cannot capture historical phenomena in all their depth. Overly imprisoned in the past and obsessed by the origin, their representatives want to elaborate explanations: they are not interested in "great men," but describe practices, convictions, ideologies within which life moves. It is necessary to cultivate ideas, symbols, and cultural practices. On the other hand, this perspective of history neglects to reflect on its own beliefs, the need to prepare for the new, and tends to become stationary in a particular tradition. It can lose strength in the traverses of the becoming, and thus it should make room for other meanings and values.

Finally, critical history, which evaluates the two previous ones and indicates some risks. The past can be a trap, it can end up burying the present. The critical perspective of history denies the past whenever it takes up too much space in human reflection. The past cannot inhibit the strength of the present, make courage and originality wither away when facing what is new and otherwise already experienced. The critical dimension must be instigating, present, and strong, to prevent humans from becoming subordinated to heroes or to well-defined traditions, giving up on what is placed before them as a challenge.

We do not intend to dwell on the II Extemporaneous considering all its depth, it is being highlighted here in order to affirm one of the functions of education in institutions from Nietzsche's point of view. And, furthermore, to help reflect on the necessary question in this text: what can the teacher in the institutions?

In the text *Schopenhauer as an educator* (NIETZSCHE, 2003), the highlight goes to the definition of who the master is, what his main characteristics are, and how he should be, since, operating pedagogically, he would lead the individual to assume his self-formation. After all, what is this clash between the goals of an institution and the role of the master in the formation of individuals in search of what is genuine, original in each one? This text intends to contemplate the reflection about this problem and this tension: what can a teacher do inside an institution, considering the institutional demands? What does the institution eventually prevent or inhibit in the teacher's task of searching for what is genuine in the students?

To understand this, we could bring together two insinuations of Nietzsche (2003), in the work *On the future of our educational institutions*, when the philosopher, in times of teaching,

states that he does not want to devote himself to administrative issues in the institutions, but wants to go through the depths of experience and face the real problems of culture, something that schedules and tables will never guarantee; he wants, even with the institutions, to enjoy a freer horizon, and in this defense he knew that he could never count on the lovers of the administration of schedules and class boards. By contradiction, Nietzsche (2003, p. 46) states in the same text that in times of "serious men, at the service of an entirely renewed and purified culture" at some point the administrative part will be very important, but for other reasons than the current demands, for example, to form calm readers, "able to choose and seek the good hours of the day and their fruitful and powerful moments to meditate [...] not to write a summary or even a book, but to meditate!" (NIETZSCHE, 2003, p. 46-47, our translation). Hasty readers corrupt the work.

An educator must inquire of his disciple, and here we restate Schopenhauer's provocation (NIETZSCHE, 2003, p. 145, our translation): "In the depths of your heart, do you say yes to this existence? Is it enough for you?". According to Nietzsche (2003), rare men, capable of answering this question firmly, show some kind of contempt to those who waste their possibility of formation. After all: "a man who does not want to belong to the masses needs only to stop being indulgent toward himself; let him follow his conscience which cries out to him, "Be yourself! You are not what you now do, think, and desire" (NIETZSCHE, 2003, p. 139, our translation).

Thus, the indigestible narratives that we sometimes evaluate in Nietzsche's text need to be contemplated by the arguments he himself offers us in defense of the function of institutions and of a master who effectively wishes to educate. The contempt for a hasty reader, the obsession with summarizing works before understanding them, strongly reveals the desire to face the submission to a time already steeped in the impoverishment of reflection itself. Happiness and good education will not come as long as the individual is subordinated "in the chains of current opinion and fear" (NIETZSCHE, 2003, p. 139, our translation). This is why Nietzsche (2003, p. 139, our translation) states that there is no creature in nature more sinister than the one "that has been stripped of its own genius and is now wandering willy-nilly in all directions."

It is the task of the good master to prevent this letting itself go in any direction. Or as we announced before, a teacher must avoid "the lack of self" in every student. The pedagogy of a sensitive teacher wants to find students capable of experimenting, capable of assigning to themselves a critical look in order to infinitely reorient themselves toward multiple possibilities.

At this point, we are also called upon as teachers to think about our practice when we follow too much the demands designed by the institutions. We, as teachers, cannot be fully adjusted to our time either; after all, how can we not let ourselves be captured by the countless directions that the institutions sometimes want to take us? Thus, a good expression of a master is indicated in Nietzsche's text - *Schopenhauer as an educator*:

But even if the future left us no hope, the uniqueness of our existence at this precise moment and what would encourage us most strongly to live according to our own law and according to our own measure: I want to talk about this inexplicable fact that we live precisely today, when we have the infinite expanse of time to be born, when we have but the short span of time of a today and when we must show in it, for what reasons and to what ends, we appear exactly now. We have to take responsibility for our existence before ourselves, therefore we want to act as the true helmsmen of this life and not allow our existence to seem like a private contingency of thought. This existence wants us to approach it with boldness and also with temerity, not least because, at best or at worst, we will always lose it. Why cling to this piece of land, to this profession, why listen to the neighbor's purposes? It is equally provincial to swear obedience to conceptions that, in hundreds of other places, no longer compel. West and East are imaginary lines that someone draws with a chalk before our eyes, to fool our pusillanimity (NIETZSCHE, 2003, p. 140-141, our translation).

Nietzsche's provocation is very challenging - after all, for what reasons and for what purposes do we appear exactly now? Why is this our time of life? We have to take responsibility before ourselves for our existence, to let our uniqueness fecundate. Why is our time suddenly the time of a pandemic, why exactly now am I being called upon to think about education again, to create new measures for teaching, for reading, for seminars and events? In the wake of Nietzsche, it would be cowardly of us to wait again for the normality of the pedagogical processes before we act. No doubt we do not want to stop where we are, but certainly the impact of the "disease" has produced something genuine in all of us, as teachers and also as disciples.

"Your educators cannot be anything other than liberators," says Nietzsche (2003, p. 142, our translation). Education "does not seek artificial limbs, wax noses" (NIETZSCHE, 2003, p. 142, our translation), and in our times it also does not want to see us seduced by the technological resources that we need so much now. Certainly, technology offers novelties, it is making communication, teaching practices, and events of great theoretical repercussion possible, bringing together people from all continents. However, we must beware of the pitfalls. In our time, we are in a way impacted, watching institutions enchanted with the possibility of, through a screen, contemplating 100, 200 or more students, claiming that this would be the new classroom, reducing the number of educators, turning pedagogy into a tool that only manages

images, pictures, schedules, colors and pre-formatted itineraries. We need to be alert, because even though we are taken by our time and need other resources to educate, we cannot forget that education is liberation when it is also capable of "weeding out all the weeds, the droppings, the worms, that want to attack the tender seeds of the plants" (NIETZSCHE, 2003, p. 142, our translation).

In pandemic times, we need, to some extent, to cultivate our uniqueness, to extract the genuine from us, as well as to cultivate it in the students to avoid that the weeds, the worms, the waste, sometimes disguised as colors, images, and technological resources, end up installing again the two nefarious tendencies pointed out by Nietzsche: massification and reduction of culture with absolute prejudice to education.

When we are faced with dark clouds, says Nietzsche, it is best to remember our masters and educators. In this context, our philosopher remembers Schopenhauer, the only master he is proud of. Nietzsche says (2003, p. 146, our translation):

Never have we had so much need of moral educators, and never have we been so unlikely to find them; at the times when doctors are most needed, at the time of great epidemics, it is then that they are also most exposed to danger. For: where are the doctors of modern mankind who were themselves sufficiently firm and solid on their feet, that they could moreover hold up another and guide him by the hand? A certain astonishment, a certain apathy, weighs upon the best personalities of our age, an everlasting fascination with this struggle between dissimulation and honesty that is going on within them, a restlessness that clouds their confidence in themselves - which makes them utterly incapable of being at the same time, for others, the guides and the censors.

Finding educators in dark times: a necessary condition when facing fear and dangers. And, moreover, to find moral educators, for aren't educational practices, formal or otherwise, actions that strengthen and propagate values? And what values are necessary in dark times? Nietzsche will say (in *Human All Too Human I*) that education must be guided by the rigor of science and must also abandon its submission to religion. Here we find, some say, an "Enlightenment" Nietzsche, because, as Weber (2011, p. 66, our translation) analyzes, "despite Nietzsche's anti-Enlightenment, his criticism of the Enlightenment idea of progress and improvement of humanity," the proposal of joining science and criticism of religion was one of the central projects of the reformist Enlightenment after the French Revolution and, to some extent, our philosopher integrates this criticism when discussing education. There is in Nietzsche the corrosive component in his critique of morality, but it is also necessary to highlight the constructive propositions of Nietzsche's morality that accompanied him

throughout his life, since the author prioritized the debate around values. The moral perspective is also a way to free the individual from tradition when it shows itself as a collective tyranny. Here again, history has its place.

Rules exist for our survival, but they must always be analyzed from this perspective, because there are no values in themselves and forever. When the stupidity of a rule is revealed, it takes courage and autonomy to change it. To submit to a stupid morality is to give up our uniqueness and prevent something genuine from being born in us. According to Weber (2011, p. 71, emphasis added, our translation), the work:

Human, All Too Human is, in Nietzsche's own judgment "[...] the monument of a crisis. It proclaims itself a book for free spirits: almost every sentence, there, expresses a victory." [...] The meaning of the figure of *Free Spirit* has a strong relation, in a first sense, to Nietzsche's crisis, but also to his victory over uncertainty - which this work erects into a monument. Therefore, it is related to the philosopher's own movements of self-overcoming. There is also a second, more general sense, in which the Free Spirit appears as a characteristic typology of the movements for the liberation of the morality of customs, a necessary but not sufficient stage for the liberation of humanity from the empire of revenge. These two dimensions, although distinct, are inseparable.

The free spirit seems to be the mature fruit of the criticism already started in the philosopher's youth and which is the expression of his own originality. Through the exercise of the free spirit, he learned to confront and criticize the morality of customs, and also to criticize himself. The genuine is to think differently from what one would expect considering his time, his social insertion. As Nietzsche says, the captive spirit, bound to a faith, must be confronted: the free spirit seeks reasons to understand the world. Paradoxically, the idea of the free spirit in Nietzsche also comes from the rupture with his master, Schopenhauer, because despite recognizing in him a moral educator, he realized it was necessary to return to himself, he needed solitude, the distance from the master to produce in himself years of experimentation to approach life again, considering his most genuine way of thinking. In fact, as he says in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, "One pays back a master badly, when one remains always and only a disciple" (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*) (NIETZSCHE, 2010, p. 105, our translation).

To think about our time, it is necessary to be careful and cautious with all those who present themselves as enlightened and capable of all the criticism of a pandemic time. There are still many enigmas to be faced by a criticism capable of preserving the lucidity of those who do not want to be ruled by the empire of revenge.

It seems that this Nietzsche (2003, p. 148, our translation) still learned from his old master: "Schopenhauer's style reminds me a little of Goethe [...], for he knows how to say about what is profound simply, what is moving without rhetoric and what is scientific without pedantry". On this path, Nietzsche himself will follow his reflection on science, always valued, but always subject to errors, to successive revisions, since it cannot harbor the truth, undue aspiration of humans, as well as the compulsive taste for judgment and correction of the other. Our philosopher suggests a difficult task: to defend science without pedantry. We need to resist mediocre writers who reveal a breathless joy without curiosity, as, for Nietzsche, was the thinker David Strauss.

Thus, Nietzsche (2003, p. 150, our translation) finally reveals his master's impact on him:

He is honest because he speaks and writes by himself and for himself; serene because he has conquered by thought what is most difficult, and constant because it must be so. His strength grows straight and light as a flame in the tranquil air, sure of itself, without trembling, without restlessness. In each of these qualities, it finds its way without us even noticing that it has sought it; on the contrary, as moved by a law of gravity, it launches itself there, firm and agile, inexorable. And he who has ever felt what it is like, in our age of hybrid humanity, to find a whole being, coherent, mobile on its own axis, free from hesitation and obstacles, will understand my happiness and surprise when I discovered Schopenhauer: I sensed that I had found in him this educator and this philosopher that I had so long sought. But this was certainly only through books, and there was a great deficiency in that. I was trying harder and harder to see through the book and to represent the living man, of whom I had read the great testament and who promised to choose for his heirs only those who were willing and able to be more than mere readers: that is, his sons and his disciples.

What Nietzsche appreciated most in Schopenhauer was his criticism and insubordination to the philosophical tendencies of his time. He learned in the master the right to uniqueness, the need for self-knowledge. He was able, through this learning, to think about the opposition between the individual and the collective, so propagated by modernity. After all, the singular is, as Weber (2009, p. 253, our translation) says, "much more than the individual. After all, how to explain that the singularity is the exception and the rule is the herd? It is inevitable that we are inserted in a society, marking our individual presence. However, it cannot simply be reduced to anchoring itself in the collective, it cannot give up on itself, and after all, why is it so difficult for man to remain in the presence of himself without evading himself?"

Life in society requires a standardization of behavior and values, a search for protection and security, and we often end up captured by this logic. Weber (2009, p. 259, our translation) helps us think in this direction and writes:

We fear our neighbor, as suggested by Nietzsche at the beginning of his text about Schopenhauer. To be indifferent to one's neighbor, to the community, could imply social ruin. Thus, both the force of social coercion on the individual and his cowardice, associated with his laziness, are strong conditioning factors, creators of inauthenticity, also called by Nietzsche lack of style.

The individual without style has not achieved his uniqueness, does not have the virtue of strength to face his time and the stupid rules. The self-knowledge advocated by Nietzsche (2003, p. 260) will be "the task of the eagle, not the mole," and creates a new relationship of man with the world, another territoriality with suspicion. It implies to dwell on the inside and outside that constituted the human being, to make formative experiments with oneself and with others. Liberation is one of the requirements to reach singularity.

Final remarks

As educators in our time, facing dark times for the most diverse reasons, and wanting to face the tension between what institutions want from humans and what a teacher can do for students, perhaps we have reached the point in this article where it is possible to state that the great task of education involves discovering and cultivating each person's strong point in order to learn to calibrate and prioritize their strengths and prevent one from annihilating the other. Thus, a strong, tough, authentic and honest being would emerge with his time and with others. Someone arises who enjoys disputes, without wanting to annihilate anyone, who wants to argue to test his or her thinking, to put the values that govern us before a tribunal in order to make us think again about life and its countless possibilities. It implies perfecting morality for the benefit of life, freeing man from submission to the collective, from the vulgarity of fads, from the unthinking repetition of worn-out and impoverishing formative itineraries. Finally, there is no lack of tasks for those who want to be masters and affirm the right to the uniqueness of human beings in a multiple and open horizon.

Education, finally, is a process of self-education stimulated by the teacher who wishes to contemplate in each student the cultivation of the free spirit, the one capable of making people think by taking all the risks. What is the purpose? The interest in life, which implies knowing

our time, and sometimes thinking against it. The State, as Schopenhauer tells us, is not the supreme end of humanity, and to insist that the duty of humans is to serve the State is stupidity. It will be necessary - through education - to confront the impoverishment of education, the "cultivated barbarism," which does not give us the right to wish to annihilate the other when he or she frustrates and disappoints us, but to confront, through educational institutions, what is in fact the task of education. For this, the individual, each student, is of prime importance; after all, human things are attractive and can awaken in him the search for knowledge. Pedagogy must capture the virtues of each student, insist on their development, and even educate for solitude, since this is a viable way to deviate from obligations when these are only committed to the world of the market and state bureaucracy (OLIVEIRA, 2013, p. 145).

In short, to educate, to be formed, is a task that demands patience, persistence, rigor, discipline. For this, a teacher is needed, preferably, as Nietzsche tells us, one who is the bearer of an admirable serenity, full of a strong and devouring fire to be able to throw us out of ourselves and think again. Publicly funded educational institutions should constantly work in this direction, to ensure that the rigor and beauty of knowledge establish a struggle against barbarism so that "our sagacious gaze at things close at hand may indicate how much our shortsightedness still prevents a keener gaze at the distant and the general" (NIETZSCHE, 2003, p. 193, our translation), which would certainly lead us to more original and creative formative possibilities. Hopefully, one day the State itself will be able to be surprised by what emerges and is born in educational establishments, in which individuals will in fact insubordinate themselves to be only useful and devout, but, on the contrary, will be able to consolidate sagacious looks at their time, against their time, facing their own myopia and, thus, being able to effectively open themselves to the becoming, with the lightness of those who remain curious and committed to life and history.

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