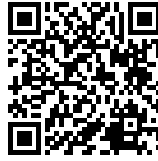




# ARTISTS AS INTELLECTUALS?

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In a society like ours, of consumption, opulent for the few, whose god is the market, the image has replaced the concept. We stopped reading to look, even when we rarely see one.

And so artists, actors, singers, announcers and TV hosts have replaced intellectuals.

This replacement comes from a deeper one; when intellectuals, especially after the French Revolution, came to replace philosophers. It is true that philosophers continued to exist, but the general tone of these last two centuries marks their public disappearance.

Progressivism, that infantile disease of social democracy, is characterized by assuming the vanguard as a method and not as a struggle, as was the case with the old socialism. The old newspaper *La Vanguardia* still exists in Barcelona.

The vanguard as a method means that for the progressive it is necessary to be, against all odds, always on the crest of the wave. Always ahead; in the vanguard of ideas, fashions, uses, customs and attitudes.

The progressive man always places himself in the temporal ecstasy of the future, neither the present, much less the past, has any significance for him, and if it does, it is always in function of the future. He is not interested in the ethos of the historical Nation, and even goes against this historical-cultural character. And this is so, because the progressive is his own project. He is always installed in the future because he has adopted the avant-garde as his method. No one and nothing can be in front of him, otherwise he would cease to be progressive. This explains why the progressive cannot give himself a project of country or nation because it would be placed in front of him, which implies and creates a contradiction.

And as no one can give what he does not have, the progressive cannot give himself nor give us a political project because he himself is his political project.

The progressive man, being the one who says yes to every novelty that is proposed to him, finds in artists his intellectuals. Today, in our consumer society where images have replaced concepts, we find that artists are, in the end, those who translate concepts into images. And the formation of the progressive consists in that, in a succession of truncated images of reality. The *homo festivus*, the

emblematic figure of progressivism, of which thinkers such as Philippe Murray or Agulló speak, finds in the artist his ideologist.

The artist frees him both from the effort of reading (a habit that is irremissibly lost) and from the concrete world. The progressive does not want to know but only to be informed. He is greedy for novelties. And the world is "his world" and he lives in the glass bell of the old neighborhood stores where the flies (the people and their problems) cannot enter.

Porteño progressives live in Puerto Madero, not in Parque Patricios.

The tactic of the progressive governments is to transform the people into "the public," that is, into a consuming public, with which the people cease to be the main political agent of any community, to cede that protagonism to the mass media, as ideologists of the masses, and to the artists, as ideologists of their own elites.

This is a mechanism that works at two levels: a) in the mass media, hundreds of journalists and broadcasters, those loquacious cultural illiterates, according to Paul Feyerabend's (1924-1994) apt expression, tell us what we should do and how we should think. They are the messengers of Heidegger's "anonymous one" that through the dictator "is," says, thinks, works, dresses, eats, plunges us into improper existence; b) through artists as translators of concepts into images in theaters and cinemas and for a more restricted public with greater purchasing power: for those who are satisfied with the system.

The artist fulfills his ideological function within progressivism because he sings the infinite themes of vindication: gay marriage, abortion, euthanasia, adoption of children by homosexuals, consumption of marijuana and cocaine, the fight against imperialism, the defense of indigenism, immigrants, the reduction of sentences for criminals, a nod to marginality and a long etcetera. But he never sings about the insecurity in the streets, prostitution, the sale of children, pedophile tourism, the lack of employment, the increasing murder and robbery of people, gambling for money, etc. No, that is not what Mastroiani's film talks about. In short, he does not see the sufferings of society but its joys.

The artist as an actor represents all those plays where political correctness is represented. And in this sense, as Vittorio Messori says, in the first place is to denigrate the Church, to criticize the social order,

the bourgeois virtues of moderation, modesty, thrift, cleanliness, fidelity, diligence, reasonableness, making the apology of their opposites.

There is no actor who does not rend his clothes talking about the Jewish victims of the Holocaust, although no one represents the Christian or gypsy women in those same concentration camps.

Thus, if they represent Heidegger as a Nazi and Stalin as a master of humanity. The Pope always as an executioner and the nuns as perverts, but the moneylenders as needy and the pimps as liberators. No more depictions of the Merchant of Venice, nor of Martel's *La Bolsa*. The conductor who dares to touch Wagner is excommunicated by the thought police of Jewish aesthetics in classical music.

In the local order, if they represent Martin Fierro, they remove the payada and duel with Moreno. General Belgrano is portrayed as a doctor. Perón as a bourgeois and Evita as a revolutionary. Even when the emblematic figure of every actor is Che Guevara.

All the theatrical hermeneutics is penetrated by psychoanalysis tinged by the logic of Freud and his hundreds of disciples. Logic that is resolved in the rescue of the "other" but to transform him into "the same," because in the heart of this logic "the other," like Jehovah for Abraham, is lived as a threat; and that is why in the supposed rescue I have to transform him into "the same."

The artist is educated in difference; we see it in his outlandish clothing and behavior. He thinks and looks different but his product ends up being one more element for the homogenizing cohesion of all differences and otherness. He is one more agent of cultural globalization.

The pluralism preached and represented ends up in the apology of the sweet totalitarianism of the social democracies that reduce our identity to that of all equally.

Finally, the political mechanism that is at the base of this dissolution of the other, as the distinct, the different, is consensus. In it functions the simulacrum of the Kantian "as if." Thus, I lend an ear to the other but I do not listen to him. A delayed negation of the other is produced, because, in the end, I seek to bridge the differences by reducing him to "the same."

This is the ultimate reason why we have been proposing for years the theory of dissent, which is born of the real and effective acceptance of the principle of difference, and has the requirement of being able

to live in that difference. And this is the reason why it is necessary to practice metapolitics: a discipline that involves the need to identify ideological diversity in the area of world, regional or national politics, trying to turn this diversity into a concept of political understanding, according to the wise opinion of the political scientist Giacomo Marramao.

Dissent should be the first step in making genuine public policy and metapolitics the philosophical and axiological content of the political agent.

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**Featured:** *The Serenade*, by Jacob Jordaens; painted ca. 1640-1645.

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