

THE BEING OF NOTHINGNESS

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Abstract

The reader will find a proposal of philosophical comprehension of nothingness. The intent of this article is to express in nineteen concrete categories that which can be understood by nothingness in the realm of metaphysics. Among other things: that nothingness is, that there is no manner of directly knowing it, that it contains the world without a will, that it is neither deity nor creator, at the same time that it is un-created, incontinent, atimely, absolute, generator of uncertainty, conditioning, and pre-existing to everything that is; in that sense, nothingness implies movement, is enabling, and is associated to chaos and the cosmos.

Introduction

Nothingness is not the physical emptiness, in the understanding that such physical emptiness has not been proven nor entirely admitted, at least in the field of traditional physics. Nothingness is not exactly the not-being, since this would imply a contingency with the being of which it is a denial. Nothingness is not in itself absence, since such absence is dependent on that which allows it to be an evidence of the non-presence. It follows now to define which Nothingness is that which I refer to when I speak of Nothingness. It is now time to center myself on the specific manner in which Nothingness must be assumed. In the nineteen following characteristics, I have summed up the conception of Nothingness proposed in this writing.

A Nothingness That Is

First and foremost, Nothingness *is*. There would be no sense in speaking of it to deny it at this moment. The first thing we can say about

Nothingness—even in the understanding that we can say nothing with a total conscience of it—is that it *is*.

Probably, the greatest evidence of Nothingness is the existence of the Being. Then, in this sense we can prove that Nothingness is through apodictic methods; this is to say, through observing everything which is not Nothingness. In other words, that Nothingness is behind all that which is visible, tangible, touchable, and perceptible. That what we see can be seen is due to the existence of a separation between what we see and oneself as the observer. That same separation is a limit of the existent, which supposes that the existent itself isn't everything that exists. And, therefore, the entity of that which exists has a limit: it has a border of being which ends the point where it isn't. In such a way that the first affirmation about the existence of Nothingness is due to the limit that what *is* has over that which is not what it is. Nothingness allows the Being to be. The Being enables the being; that is to say, it allows entities to be. The being contains a substance that can be or not, which is why the not-being is implied in the being's possibility of ceasing to be. In a hierarchical dimension of the ontological, Nothingness is the fundamental basis of everything that *is*. Now, that Nothingness is does not refer that our cognitive capacity is able to know it.

An Uncognoscible Nothingness

Nothingness cannot be profoundly known; only supposed, inferred, imagined; conceived in an indirect manner. Not controlled by intellect. Nothingness supposes something greater than the human capacity of understanding it. It is not feasible to know that which overcomes our understanding, which is why Nothingness, among all things, is what mostly escapes our manner of describing ourselves in the world.

Mainly in the West, a manner of perception centered on the Being has been forged; a metaphysics of the perceptible, which is difficultly overcome. Nothingness is not an object of study, but rather is only contemplated through not regarding it; it is assumed, not known. Furthermore, the means of human knowledge are methodologically incorrect for the comprehension of ontology of Nothingness; of omnipresence that surpasses the timeliness and minuscule smallness of our minds. As if it were not enough, language is incapable of correctly

proceeding with the description of Nothingness, since all of that which may be intended to say in it, would suppose a categorical description which, in itself, is completely insufficient to board Nothingness.

Finally, Nothingness is uncognoscible since all concepts make of it an aspect of the world of what is, in the contrary manner to Nothingness. The comprehension of it should begin by assuming necessity in a distinct manner of perceiving reality in the Western world and the world itself. It requires the grasping of a second order ontology in which even that which is not—in the conventional manner of being—is anyhow something. This new ontology must be spread out and rooted in such perception that permits the comprehension of Nothingness itself; a Nothingness which doesn't only extend due to the anthropological capacity of perception, but that is even above and beyond the world itself.

A Nothingness that Contains the World Without and Within It

Nothingness, upon being related with everything that is, is therefore in the same place where something is. This also supposes the presence of Nothingness in the world and out of it, since the Being is not only in the world. There is also Being out of the world, and there where Being is, implied or not in beings, there is Nothingness, in the manner of a situated nothing. The counterpart to this process—as was already mentioned—at least in the sense of the existence of Nothingness beyond the confines of the world, is incompatible with the Aristotelian and medieval suppositions; but it is time for the West to begin to propitiate the rupture with the conditioning frames of its thought.

The main argument for the justifying of Nothingness outside of the world is that the world itself is upheld, encompassed, rooted, related, contained, and dimensioned by Nothingness itself. There is nothing within or out of the world that is beyond the reach of Nothingness. There does not exist anything that Nothingness does not possess; everything that is, is *in* Nothingness. The movement of the stars, the heavens, and even of the clouds themselves, is enabled by the corporal limits of their own entities. There, where the limits are, is also the presence of Nothingness.

I coincide with the stoic vision about the existence of an absolute emptiness from which the world is possible. However, I don't share their ideas about the cosmic order applied to human life in the manner of destiny, since the comprehension of Nothingness itself implies the comprehension of the almost infinite possibility of circumstances that modify the relation of the existent. It is understood, therefore, that the happenings of the world do not respond to a linear occurrence in the style of cause and effect, but rather there exists a multiplicity of factors that modify the interactions of the existent realities. To comprehend Nothingness over the world doesn't suppose the assumption of a destiny but rather the contrary, precisely because Nothingness does not have a will.

Nothingness without Will

The denying affirmation of destiny comes from assuming that Nothingness does not have a will and that, therefore, without a will, there is nothing to assign a destiny; which leads us to the conclusion that there is no destiny. That Nothingness has no will, certainly does break the perception of something or Someone present in all places with the power and force to implicate itself on the lives of individuals in a manner proportional to its wish. So then, precisely, since a will would suppose an appetite; and the appetite would imply a mental apparatus to structure the hierarchy of its own wishes; and this, in turn, is derived from a mental structure; it is inappropriate and naive to suppose that Nothingness, or any supposition born on the basis of a Being superior to humanness, would have will.

Furthermore, a will supposes, in that which possesses it, a constructed identity; which would be improper to say of Nothingness. There is no Nothingness that has a will; with it, the intentionality of Nothingness is broken. Now, this does not suppose that Nothingness, due to its lack of will, no longer has contact with living beings or no longer has any type of influence. This would be false, for though the influence of Nothingness over what is cannot be denied, this is not by the will of what is, or what is with Nothingness, but is rather a natural, expected, comprehensible consequence of ontological nature that cannot be impeded. What is, is related to Nothingness, even considering the involuntariness of Nothingness and the likely indecision of what is, if this being is someone.

Nothingness is the enabler that allows things to be, just as the interactions of the things amongst themselves. This doesn't suppose randomness either, but rather causality due to movement which, by the way, we don't have the capacity to comprehend either; since the almost infinite set of relationships between things, affairs, and people that allow reality to be the way it is, escapes our perceptions. That Nothingness doesn't have a will, places it in a higher illusionary hierarchy than any personified Deity, and with a will included. Nothingness, therefore, is not the Deity, though it has been associated with it multiple times.

Nothingness as the Non-Deity

Very much in spite of Meister Eckhart who related Nothingness with his structure of the Deity, we are to decide that his explanation is erred by the conditioning factor in which the Dominican placed his own creed. Upon recognizing the reality of Nothingness, he couldn't do more than make evident that it couldn't be the Absolute; and since, in Eckhart's structure the Absolute could only be God, the consequent relationship is understood. However, in the understanding of the common configurations of God, at least in the West, anthropomorphism and even a loving will have been added to it; so, Nothingness must not be observed as such Deity since it is, certainly, above such representations.

To categorize the divine from a human structure is naturally a distortion of that which can be something inexplicable—uncognoscible, as was previously mentioned. The word God resounds in our mind as an ample array of constructed images; symbols that culturally identify it. The perception I propose of Nothingness has the advantage, at least for us—or we have the advantage before Nothingness—of not being related to such a high number of preconceptions about it, such as the term *God* has. I must assume, as well, that it is not possible to grant a conceptual content to Nothingness under the risk that it, precisely, cease to be Nothingness. There is no manner to refer to Nothingness unless it is with silence or in a collapse of reason itself—as I have attempted with these pages. Certainly, to speak of that whose description does not fit into words since these do not reflect it, could be a waste of time, unless that which is attempted is to generate a respectful approximation before that which is uncognoscible and superior to any willing deity.

Finally, Nothingness is prior to everything that is. If a contrary or different force than Nothingness, had created everything that exists, it would have to have created it from Nothingness. The efforts of Augustine of Hippo to try and explain the inexistence of time prior to creation do not fit in here. If there was a creation, then there was also a prior moment that would have supposed the in-creation; that is to say, the moment in which the created, was not yet. Nothingness, due to this, was understood in the Middle Ages as the necessary counterpart prior to creation, which supposed the possibility that “its” Creator could create by, precisely, containing or enabling what it would create. However, beyond opponents in struggle, we are to understand that there is a creation but no Creator. And that what exists is a product of an unending succession of events that we cannot explain with certainty.

If the existence of a Creator is antagonistic to the existence of Nothingness, certainly Nothingness is that which should prevail, thus eliminating the idea of the Creator. The Creator would suppose a will to create; Nothingness, upon not having a will, does not imply that desire, and even less the need to create. We haven’t either to refer that it loves the created, for Nothingness did not create it; it was simply the necessary scene for what is, to be. Precisely, since it is in Nothingness that the Being emerges, it is Nothingness that contains it.

The Nothingness that Contains the Being

The form in which the Being comes forth from Nothingness is still a mystery. It is probably more honest to admit the mystery itself before conjuring up a solution which supposes a creating will. Anyway, even in relation to the ideas about the origin of the universe, it is understood that Nothingness was necessary to establish, itself, the frame from which existence originated. If we are to understand the origin of the Universe in the Big Bang, we are also to recognize the need of an initial material from which the expansion surged after the explosion. The explanations that we are able to provide until now, arrive at this point.

However, that our imagination encounters difficulties in conceiving the origin of something out of Nothingness, does not suppose that there is a manner to deny—once we have exiled from our minds the solution that implies a creator—that Nothingness itself has been

prior to the coming forth of what we see today. I reiterate: we are not debating if Nothingness is the creator or that Nothingness creates; we have already said no. And this is due to us assuming its involuntariness, and every creative act would suppose the will of the creator. It is not Nothingness that creates but it is, definitely, the frame that permits the origin; that allows something to be able to be generated, gestated—even by its own self. Certainly the created could not have created itself, in the manner that a rock that doesn't exist would suddenly decide to exist and could create itself. There is no self-creation, or creating will, but there is Nothingness which supposes the possibility of change, of modification. And all new origin, every passing from what is not to what is, supposes precisely that: the preceding not-being that we are to associate in a strict sense with Nothingness. It is, then, a Nothingness that fertilizes; a Nothingness that enables the possibility of that which is not, to be; and that which is to be or cease from being.

This Nothingness, if it is the depth in which the Being surges, is also still the depth in which the Being is, once originated. Later, when this Being ceases to be, then Nothingness is once again the depth in which this Being that was is melted. However, Nothingness is not the creator of what is.

The Non-Creating Nothingness

The issue about the origin of life is much less complex than that which refers to the origin of the Universe itself. And it is because the answers about life are found in the Universe. Today we know that life assumed an aspect of chance; a situation that enabled life and the evolution of it; which, furthermore, is and has been subject to conditions once again associated to multiple causes of nature.

This issue may result annoying, especially for the small minds that necessarily require a creating macro-mind in order to find a sense of life. The majority of the people suppose that a creating source is required in order to have a source of sense. If this is the case of the reader, we could suggest to him to not to break that structure but to break, in any case, only the actors and backdrop of the scene. If the a priori condition for what exists to exist is Nothingness, and considering that what exists has to cease to exist in order to find itself once again with Nothingness, then—precisely—Nothingness is the sense. It is

not that Nothingness suppresses the sense; in fact, it propitiates it. It must be distinguished that Nothingness isn't a source of sense either; prior to it is the rupture with all possible sense in order to, based on the non-sense, construct a sense that is truly personal, situated, intimate. Now, if Nothingness is the depth that allows the origin, and all the originated comes from that possibility, then, it is inferred by it that Nothingness could not have been created.

The Un-Created Nothingness

I have already mentioned the ineludibility of Nothingness as a necessary condition for the possibility of the origin of everything. So, if Nothingness had been created, what would have been the source from which the Nothingness that was not could come to be? If our answer is that the source didn't exist, we are definitely mistaken. If we dare to answer that the source has never existed and that what is does not previously need to not be in order to later be, we are mistaken again, even worse. If we had to speak of levels of Nothingness, from which the inferior nothings were created based on the source which the superior nothings supposed, then we would only have to recognize that the ultimate Nothingness, or what would have been the source of all the others, would be the Nothingness that we search for.

We can only solve this riddle in the recognition that none of the three options are possible and that, in fact, Nothingness has been un-created since it is a-timely. And if Nothingness had been created, we would have to assume various inconveniencias that place us in greater problems. For example, what would be the not-being of Nothingness that allowed itself, upon being created, to effectively *be* Nothingness? If there is a Nothingness of nothing, this prior Nothingness would be the real Nothingness. Moreover, if there was the possibility of a not-being of Nothingness, this in itself would have to be the already existent *Being*, which is why it would not have to, in itself, be created since it already is. And we would agree that what already is cannot be newly created as if it were not.

Being so, there is no possible manner of justifying the creation of Nothingness; and it becomes unnecessary, in itself, to have to muse over the identity of the Creator of Nothingness itself. If Nothingness has not been created—as has already been explained—then it is assumed

that Nothingness does not have a contingency, understanding this as the dependence on another external thing or entity in order to be.

The Incontingent Nothingness

By contingency I refer to something that can occur or not. It is the risk assumed in the containing of the possibility of being, or of not being, in direct relation to other occurrences. In the same manner, when I refer to contingency, I also refer to the dependent connection of one fact with another one; to the ineludible interconnection between two situations in order to be among them. For example, in order to eat, we need food to be; therefore, our feeding is contingent to the existence of food and we ourselves are contingent to our feeding. In other words, we keep on living if we feed ourselves and this is possible only if there is food, the existence of which—or not—is, in turn, contingent to many other factors. That is why the dependence or conditioning of one thing by another is implied. Food also has a contingency towards he who is fed in order to, effectively, feed.

When I speak of an incontingent Nothingness, I specifically mean that it does not depend on anything else in its surroundings in order to be Nothingness. For example, an individual's ideas certainly exist as entities of reason, but they are contingent to the individual of reason who is thinking them. In some way, creations are contingent of their creator. That is why the idea of a creating God supposes contingency towards that same God. It is likely that we haven't realized that the idea of God which sustains such a vision of God is, precisely, contingent to ourselves to the extent that we think it or not. We could ask here, who has created who? And also: are the ideas of God obviously contingent to those who think them, or are we who think contingent to a creating God? In this case, if we were to pose such a question, my reply would be the first one. With Nothingness, it occurs differently; for in addition to not having been created, and so liberating itself from the act of being contingent that this implies, neither has it been a creator, which is why contingency doesn't apply to it, at least not as a creator.

Neither does Nothingness depend on man's ideas about it, for even without these ideas, Nothingness keeps on being. Even in the understanding that Nothingness is prior to man, it is totally possessing of an incontingent characteristic towards humanness. It is also

incontingent of the world for it is above the world itself. And, finally, incontingent to itself; for even in the supposition—too naïve—that Nothingness makes nothing of itself, even so it would keep on being Nothingness. This same concept is connected to another one of Nothingness' characteristics, which is its atimeliness.

The Atimely Nothingness

If Nothingness has not been created and is not contingent, not even over itself, with this, it guarantees its atimeliness. This is to say, Nothingness does not have a beginning, nor will it have an end. And this follows a very specific logic: Nothingness will continue to be Nothingness even when only it is. Even the denial of everything that is, the destruction of everything that breathes, the annihilation of all matter, and the proliferation of the smell of destruction over the face of what would have previously been the earth; even in this panorama—which would no longer be desolating upon there not being an individual that would humanly see it as such—Nothingness would continue to be.

It is likely that these conditions would propitiate Nothingness to be, in that instant, in its originating state—though not as a source, for it is not the origin in itself. At the beginning of everything that is, Nothingness was already, since it is prior to everything that is. When I have said at the beginning of these descriptions that Nothingness is, obviously I refer to a *way* of being that is distinct to the way of being of the rest of what is; in other words, everything else.

Nothingness, with that particular way of being, due to it being incontingent, to its independence from what is, *is* since always and for always, without any limitation, in an atimely manner. Being so, in Nothingness there isn't either a present or future, for the lines of timeliness from our human cognition exist as a measure of the movement implied in change. In the understanding of it being incontingent, Nothingness doesn't suppose changes. Nothingness cannot be in any another manner different to how it is, due to its impossibility of being modified, to its immateriality. Now, when we affirm—from Heraclitus—that the only thing that remains is change, we must consider the following aspects: 1) it is usually supposed that God is immutable and doesn't change. Then, if God cannot change, he is not change; and if change is the only thing that remains, then God does not remain.

2) In the same manner, if God changes, this would suppose that he is temporary and, therefore, is not eternal; but if he isn't eternal, he isn't God. 3) With regard to Nothingness, we wouldn't have such problems, since if in fact it is true that Nothingness is not change, and if it is also true that change is the only thing that remains, this is possible because Nothingness enables the change of what is to the not-being. Nothingness is required for the Being to change. Time, as an issue related to movement, is in the Being and not in Nothingness; which is why Nothingness keeps on being eternal anyhow. Being so, there is no time in Nothingness and this is due, in one word, to it being Absolute.

Absolute Nothingness

In Absolute Nothingness, true denial is a denial of denial, such as Heising surmises in Nishida's thought:

Calling reality itself an absolute nothing means that all of reality is subject to a dialectic between the being and the not-being; this is, that the identity of each thing in the world is bound to an absolute contrariness. In other words, Nothingness does not only diminish the importance of the being's fundament, but it also plays down any other model of coexistence or harmony which sublimates, transcends, weakens, or darkens in any other way that contradiction. At the same time, it means that the ascension of nothing towards the waking in human consciousness, the "seeing the being itself directly as nothingness," is as much the point in which the self can sense itself directly, as it is the point in which the absolute comes to be more utterly real. (Heising 2002, 96; all quotations translated from the Spanish by the present author)

That Nothingness is Absolute, also means that it is completely related to everything that is; that everything that exists to our eyes is related to Nothingness, and that everything we don't see is as well. Nothingness is total implicit and ontological relation with everything that is. Furthermore, that Nothingness is Absolute, supposes as well that it is completely Nothingness, in the affirmative sense of the expression. It is authentic, complete, and homogeneously what it is, and it is in a total and imperturbable manner. Nothingness is Absolute, not in the sense that the Being does not exist, but because it is in itself, and with itself, absolutely Nothingness.

Nothingness, from this perspective, is over and above everything; it is beside all sides of everything, inside and outside everything. Upon not having time, neither does it have movement; even without the existence of such movement, it is in every place. How to understand any type of symbolic construction about human wellbeing that is not associated at least partly with this absolute idea? Even, being completely paradoxical, we are to say that what we have understood and wanted to suppose as constructive for man, is commonly rooted in a partial metaphysical vision that only finds what is real in the Being, when the Being itself is subjected in a great extent to Nothingness. There is no complete manner of conceiving, for example, human development or personal growth without conceiving Nothingness. Thus, Nothingness itself, the fact of Nothingness, the ineludibility of Nothingness, makes the structures of personal improvement that do not suppose this human condition to be within Nothingness, become obsolete.

It is because Nothingness is the universality of all universalities and everything remains subject to it, such as Heisig explains:

In the same manner in which there are classes within classes . . . there can also be self-determining universalities contained by even broader self-determining universalities. If there is a class of all classes, then there must be a universality of all universalities; this is to say an ultimate reality that determines everything, as it determines itself. The transition from one class to another was exactly what Nishida tried to capture with his logic of the locus, locating the universalities within universalities and coming, finally, to localize everything in the absolute Nothingness. (Heisig 2002, 110–11)

A Nothingness of this type that reaches everything but that is not within man's reach, naturally supposes in itself an impossibility of human certainties.

Nothingness as the Rupture of All Certainty

It is not in itself that Nothingness has the will of breaking the certainties which we humanly construct. Nothingness has no will—as we have previously mentioned. Rather, due to Nothingness it is that our conceptions about what is Truth and what is not Truth are only fictions. Since the constructs from which we judge reality are, totally and openly (though not always consciously) a product of a contextual

situation, from which the lessons that suppose a cosmo-vision have been generated, each individual has a different notion. Now, at the time in which we gestate our convictions, we are to refer to ideas that, as such, have no other sustenance in themselves than fiction itself. What we believe, we could not believe; and what we don't believe today, we can believe, if our evaluating optic is modified.

With this we have that our most profound certainties are only ideas that can be modified. For if we have stated that Nothingness is around everything that is and the ideas that we have are—they are on the plane of the Being—then the same ideas that we conceive, create, and assume are, by the fact of being, called to not-be, to disappear, to be denied or overcome; refuted, in one word.

To the extent that we can assume that our certainties are truly mobile and that the ideas on which we deposit our tranquility or our pride itself are only our creations, then there will there be openness to humility that will lead to more complete and real lessons. That is why:

The Western thinker must resign to two idols over all: the idolatry of the argumentative reason and the idolatry of the clear reason, united to the individualist will. We cling to the first, in philosophy, for fear of the alleged irrationality of the emotive-narrative-imaginative world. We cling to the second, in theology, for fear of the pantheisms. However, as a consequence of both idolatries, we remain captive in the jail that we ourselves have edified: that of a rationalist and dualist thought. It is imperative to go through a treatment of both deformities and the emptying of idols. (Nishida 2006, 134)

The recognition of Nothingness is, therefore, the unavoidable companion of the openness to the recognition of a life without certainties, without fictitious sustainers that do not liberate. It is the opening of the eradication of the belief that, as humans, we must be sustained by something or someone. This denial of socially assumed certainties can be the necessary possibility for the gestation of a consciousness more centered on the self that is Nothingness and not the self we usually suppose.

Nothingness as a Possibility

The originating capacity of Nothingness is strengthened when the individual is capable of voluntarily emptying himself of false idols,

of his own rational supports, of his untangled intellectual faculties, in order to deposit himself in the contemplation of the incontemplable. The recognition of the impossibility of completeness from the culturally created conventional constructs, and which have been adhered to our persona, supposes the opening to a redefining of one's own moral idea; therefore, the ethical or philosophical discerning exercise strengthened in itself.

Nothingness, once again, can take the sense of an enabling Nothingness that is the guideline for creations (this time of the human in question). Nothingness does not select those who look to fill themselves of it in order to empty themselves; instead it is personal will that assumes, or not, Nothingness. To fill oneself with Nothingness is precisely to open up the possibility of a new conception of things. The fuller of Nothingness that one is, the emptier in the healthy sense of the issue; then, more possibilities will be had to construct with better foundations, or that the foundations be deeper.

Denial, or the understanding of the self's inexistence—creation of our own consciousness in regard to the corporality that is possessed—is also a possibility of understanding that one only is upon not being and that one is what one is not. This is warned when it is understood that Nothingness is at the same time the real alpha and omega.

Nothingness as Preexistence and Peak

We come from Nothingness and to Nothingness we return, was a recurring idea in Sophocles that is hard to deny, though many times concealed. Prior to personal existence, and prior as well to the existence of the world, Nothingness was. Even before all consciousness could be a witness to that which would occur, Nothingness was already a reality. Bound to its category of atimeliness and continuous and immutable existence, Nothingness becomes, with regard to humanness, preexistence and peak; the beginning and end of the period in which man on earth illusively believes he is something. This time is enclosed, embraced on the borderline by Nothingness itself. There is no manner to attempt to not be on the globe of Nothingness; a globe that is seen from within and in which one is without ceasing, even after death.

We have generated, culturally, some religions that promise the idea of a paradise; a super-earthly dimension in which we can be

reunited with our loved ones, see and enjoy them once more, meet them once again after a time in which “our valley of tears” ends. It is to be understood that this could be a psychological need in the sense of denying the absolute losses of those who we love or, probably, of reducing the fear of one’s own disappearance. But though it is understandable, fiction is not justifiable. Though some fictions do well for life, it is not recommendable to spend life always lying. Nothingness is the end of life, the obligatory end, the entrance to the point of no return. With death, nobody has stolen something from us. Life itself was not ours; it has simply been a sigh in which we can try to realize Nothingness’ majesty in a limited manner. Dying is not bad news; it is evidence that we must thank, for at least we have lived a little to know that we will die. To die is only to return to the original state of insignificance. There is no turning back, no more idealist and fantastic imaginary trips to a dimension of pleasure, surrounded by harps played by angels. No. Only the cold and revered Nothingness is what corresponds to a life of uneasiness. Certainly to think of death, in the Nothingness that precedes and follows our life, can help to live better. And to live better, is to understand, to the extent that is possible, the conditionings that suppose being beings from and for Nothingness.

A Conditioning Nothingness

Not only is the fact of being preceded and followed by Nothingness a conditioner of it, but that life itself is situated in the space of Nothingness. That the things (all of them) that surround us can be exactly the contrary of what they are; that situations can be modified; that what is may change and cease to be; that our emotions, tastes, projects, hopes, fears, plans, partners, situations, problems, and limits can be and later not be; means to be unprotected before the inevitable swaying of circumstances that escape our personal will. In fact, even the will itself is a modifiable personal aspect for, if it is true that the will is derived from criteria, it is also true that criteria is derived from the lessons learnt, and these themselves are derived from circumstances which are, most of the time, outside of human control.

Due to the aforesaid, one of Nothingness’ conditioners is precisely the impossibility of freedom. If this may sound like a tragedy, seeing it with benevolent eyes, this situation that Nothingness propitiates

can also be liberating of the need to be free. Further along this will be covered. It is sufficient at this time to focus on Nothingness that, upon being the alpha and omega of our precarious existence, just as the ineludible companion of the Being that possesses our diluted self, is by it also the condition itself of life, the sine qua non situation that life itself is. That Nothingness is a conditioner of life is intimately related to the fact that Nothingness implies movement and the consequent change.

Situated Nothingness which Implies Movement

Nothingness is atimely since it has not been created, but mainly upon being incontinent and absolute. Since the rest of what it *isn't* in that manner, then, everything is subject to change except for Nothingness itself. That reality is contingent, supposes that everything is connected to everything; and that any event, seen or not by me, conceived or not by me, is associated in a greater or lesser degree to me, in unforeseeable and unimagined manners. That Nothingness is situated implies as well that it is at the border of everything that is and that it is directly associated with the possibility of the not-being of things; therefore, it is Nothingness which enables (not which generates) the change of that which is to another manner of being, whether it be in the categories of quantity, quality, location, or substantiality of what exists.

That I relate the situated nothing to the not-being, does not mean with it that Nothingness is the not-being, an issue previously discussed, for if Nothingness was only the not-being, then it would be necessarily contingent to the being of which it would be a denial of, which would be a contradiction to the affirmation that Nothingness is incontinent. Furthermore, if Nothingness was only the not-being and it would need the being of which it is a denial of, then upon achieving the not-being of such being (this is to say when the being is what it wasn't previously and what was is no longer), then Nothingness would cease to exist for it would no longer be the not-being of what it ceased to be in order to effectively be, for now, neither being nor the not-being. It will be said, then, that that which has been generated is now something new and that that new modality also has a not-being—with which it would be in accordance—since that new not-being of the new being that contains the Being would be evidence

that Nothingness is not contingent to the only being of which it is not-being, but that it is related to everything that is.

In other words, Nothingness has sufficient flexibility to contain the possible not-being of everything that is now and everything that will be sometime. At the same time, it also includes the not-being that is ready to be something specific. Hence, it is not only the alpha and omega of human individuals but of all existence in an unending association to the Being and the entity (being) that contains it. If Nothingness is connected to everything, then the idea of chaos is formalized.

Nothingness Associated to Chaos

The idea of chaos is precisely that: an idea. And we use it to describe the situation of the existent that we can't explain since its complexity is greater than our capacity of elucidation and interpretation of things. It had already been said that upon being contingent to everything that exists, we are also in the same manner connected to all of existence. This supposes an immense quantity of interrelationships between things that make it impossible for our limited perception to provide an explanation of the reason why things happen as they happen. Some would respond, without caution, that destiny is the explanation of the origin of changes. But the reality is that the issue is far more complex than assuming a strange force that delimits the course of things. It is not only a strange force, like the supposed destiny, but rather billions of interwoven possibilities which, once again due to the randomness of causality, make things and our perception of things be exactly as they are.

Upon first sight, this can seem chaotic. But it is only for our limited vision. Behind such chaos there is also order; a cosmos that we don't completely understand but in which, without a doubt, Nothingness interacts.

Nothingness Associated to the Cosmos

In spite of the visible chaos, the cosmos is real, though not always visible. Certainly it is preferable to see the chaos than to not see it, for only the passing through the conception of chaos can lead to the consciousness of what underlies the chaos that we suppose: the cosmos.

There may be individuals who aren't capable of going through such a process and they see order where such order doesn't exist. To see things as ordered when they are not is more of a perception disorder. Better than that is the comprehension that, in spite of the disorder that is seen and recognized, there can be an order. This order is not a destiny, but an order that supposes, in spite of a touchable disorder, a reason of being; a possible structure.

In other words, it's not about the absurd and blind denial of problems, or about not seeing chaos. Instead, it is about attempting to see the chaos—in fact, it is an indispensable prerequisite—in order to understand that the cosmos exists, in spite of seeming unexplainable, incomprehensible, and unprecedented to our intellection. If we have already assumed that Nothingness itself breaks our certainties, then we can obtain a bit of tranquility even in ambiguity, however irrational this may sound to more than one pretentiously controlling ear.

In the infinite ocean of connections between the Being and Nothingness due to its always stable relationship, there are unexplainable situations that should be left for Nothingness itself to take. Not only the comprehensible must make sense for, on occasion, the sense is in that which is truly incomprehensible for our anxious, and generally nervous, intellect. The cosmos of chaos is a fact. If it is seen as such, then Nothingness does not only become a possibility before us but a vivification.

The Vivifying Nothingness

The recognition of the previously mentioned categories of Nothingness, can lead the individual by the hand towards the vivification of the vivifying Nothingness. With this I mean that Nothingness can become, if it is correctly assumed, a philosophy of life that is not limited only to pseudo-intellectualizations, but that implies a greater commitment with what is, at least while what is, *is*.

To assume Nothingness and understand the lightness of our own being, is to touch Nothingness itself in flashes of profundity that enrich the poverty-stricken interior, usually distressed. That is why, assumed in this manner, it is understood that the best praise to the possibly existent God is to deny him; since in doing so, he is permitted to be as he is. The silence before the Deity is the deserved praise in that words don't get in the way of his honest consideration.

With regard to the sensorial, there is also the possibility of that which is not perceived. For example, we can be overly concentrated on what must be heard, even on what we want to hear, and leave aside the silence, the space without sound in which one truly listens. To vivify Nothingness is to see beyond what is in front of us; to know how to see, even to pass through only the evident. Nothingness vivifies us upon being in each step that we take in life; our own shoes lead us but Nothingness allows them to be able to advance.

Nothingness vivifies us, for there is no other manner of being than within it, over it, from it. Nothingness surrounds what we are; we never leave the eternal circle of the Nothingness that vivifies us upon containing us. If the notion of Nothingness usually begins upon being a type of “infinite idea” sensed in the innermost of the self, little by little it is turned into a metaphysical principal in itself. It is what Nishida called “the universality of the universalities” (Heisig 2002, 96), for he understood that Nothingness is the highest principle of reality, the one that diminishes all the other thought universalities. Hence, to vivify oneself is not only to center in on that which is highest, but rather on that which is the highest, lowest, deepest, innermost, and outermost of the Being: Nothingness. That is why: “the same as with all things, just like with human consciousness, it is the absolute nothing which must provide a locus in order for the self-identity to occur, a place that neither the historical world of time nor consciousness itself can provide” (Heisig 2002, 96).

However, even if one could, for a few moments, obtain the locus that Nothingness provides, one is never in conditions of completely conceiving it.

Conclusion:

Nothingness Is Not What Is Conceived about Nothingness

Finally, in light of congruency with what has been presented up to now, it must be recognized that Nothingness is more than what has been said. I must assume that the previous paragraphs are not more than a failing as it is, for I attempt to name the unmentionable, to unravel that which only is the dark tangled core which is never brought out to light.

In part, in that relies the sense and transcendence of Nothingness: in that it is never possessed by human explanations; it escapes the control of reason since, if it was only a conceptual topic about which to converse, then it certainly would not be Nothingness, but rather we would have turned it into something, precisely making it not be what it *is*.

In spite of it, an honest hermeneutic of Nothingness supposes to privilege the trans-linguistic intuition, due to the linguistic limitations which are connatural to the consensual expressions. Nothingness is outside of all consensus; its incontingency makes it independent from possible interpretations. To speak of Nothingness doesn't suppose the necessary intelligence to attempt to speak better of it upon attempting to completely describe it, but rather the wisdom to assume that Nothingness has been, and will be, much more (or much less, or simply different) than what we can say of it.

It is likely, then, that my descriptions are only a useless passion. However, I think that if the reader has been able to understand the silent message behind the words it is because, in part, Nothingness itself has been able to express itself trans-linguistically; and that, without a doubt, is *something*. No concept that would want to be expressed to Nothingness can be successful, unless what has not been said is seen in what has been said, that more than what has been presented is understood, that more than what has been shown is seen, and that nothing is made out of everything that has been attempted to be something.

The conception of Nothingness shown previously supposes, in an inalienable manner, an implied form of understanding that which is human. The anthropological conceptions derived from a metaphysics centered on the Being are to find in a metaphysics centered on Nothingness an obvious repercussion and inalienable change of anthropological paradigm. To make a noun out of Nothingness, at least in a cognitive manner, supposes also an alteration of the conventional models on which are founded the anthropological definitions from which we have generated the systems that direct human institutions today.

The modification of our conception of the Being, noting its dependence to Nothingness, also implies the change, in a proportional manner, of the anthropological vision from which all remaining construct is erected. Following, I will demonstrate such implications

of Nothingness for humans and I will leave the final portion of the chapter for an analysis of the anguish that this change supposes, prior to our liberation. Afterwards, in the fourth chapter, I will board the consequences of this new vision of man in our way of conceiving human development.

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