

# EDITORIAL

Before the current crisis of meaning, it is necessary to "rescue the subject."

**By:** Alfonso Insuasty Rodríguez<sup>1</sup>

Master Hugo Zemelman has gone ahead in this walk through life and existence. He has closed his eyes in order to open them permanently in the teachings derived from his writings, stories, and memories in each of us.

The master left us many challenges in his brief but invaluable contact with our team in Medellín, fraternal exchanges that fortunately we managed to have in this walk through life. So profound teachings that require time and above all great sensitivity to process and assimilate, teachings that sought to mobilize the feeling - thinking. His teachings which were so deep require time and much sensitivity in order to process and to assimilate them which aimed at mobilizing both feeling and thinking.

He assigns us the task of thinking ourselves seriously, of taking care of what happens to us, of being focused subjects, of adopting an identity, of assuming our historicity, and the delegated task of efficiently transforming our environment from what we are. He also assigns us the urgent task of rescuing the subject and strengthen him from his reality, building for such a purpose, the conditions for the formation of subjects capable of making their environment problematic, of developing questions and answers from their very own knowledge. He also warned us that to do so, it was necessary to overcome the arrogance of those who believe to know, the strict and cold science, that arrogance of always believing to be right, of having the final answer and today, before the confusion between the construction of knowledge and the full compliance with a certain and also techno-bureaucracy-scientific variable of the governmental specialized centers which are proud of being the center of the administration of science and knowledge, which consider themselves to have the measurement and the formulae so that they can establish if the construction of knowledge is or is not knowledge. It is even more important to rescue-us, as long as all these devices turn out to be perfect exercises of domination and exclusion of other forms of being and building knowledge.

Not only does Zemelman make us key questions to understand this period of the senselessness, of arrogance, of superficiality, of the negation of the subject and his reality, but he poses us questions like: What is it that we are building?; How are we doing it?, and Why are we doing it? If that what we do, addresses people's real needs or we do it as a manner to satisfy our whims, egos, or as a result of our possible historical myopia, etc. All fraternal, but necessary questions for everyone who creates and wants to build knowledge that result effectively in the recovery of the subject, the transformation of society and history from his own.

---

<sup>1</sup> Licenciado en Filosofía, Abogado, Especialista en ciencias políticas, cursa estudios doctorales en Cultura Latinoamericana (IPECAL), Docente investigador universidad de San Buenaventura Medellín, Editor Revista El Agora USB, director grupo de investigación GIDPAD. [Alfonso.insuasty@usbmed.edu.co](mailto:Alfonso.insuasty@usbmed.edu.co).

It seems that the crisis of meaning, which is part of the Crisis of Civilization, touches all the spheres including organizations which claim to promote the transformation, as the Master used to say in one of his lectures at Saint Bonaventure University, Medellin branch, where today the PhD from the Institute of Thought and Culture Training formation plan is underway in Latin America (whose headquarters are in Mexico), a concrete scenario which served as a legacy of these meetings and search for alternatives so that we can think us from who we are. Some of the features of this crisis of meaning follow:

The commercialization of the subject: A sort of individual who do not build with others: beings, machines that are competitive and trained in the logic of the capitalist market to satisfy the needs of an unnecessary consumption. In this order, the market has found a route to sell that concept of "successful" individual and next, it offers him the commercial offering which includes a fast and easy-to-digest educational package, ready to consume and thus achieve the ideal winner of the market.

The death of ideas: The mass media have sold the idea of a sort of annihilation of Utopias, of ideals, of the end of history; so that everything is and should be "now", forgetting the urgency of making "with others." History does not exist, what exists is today, so any possibility of building a collective project is canceled. That is why mass media have consolidated a lack of human beings who wander without a plan and without questions, who think without thinking, beings who, in the best of cases, read the world through short statements, headlines without analysis, without judgment. It thus strengthens an "individual" who neither questions his reality nor reads his context, someone who does not builds sense. It is so that in university centers learners study not from the definite social issue, but from the personal needs of the individualistic economic triumph (Insuasty Rodriguez, 2012).

The loss of collective construction: We witness the loss of the common sense, of the public, crisis of belonging to the collective with a political perspective. It is a crisis that does not allow us to think about what belongs to all of us; therefore we do not have a real defense and care for what we should define: It is everyone's possession.

In this scenario, University institutions are not left behind, Chomsky (2014) recently said at a conference held in Pittsburgh: "Those universities which progress through business, what do is impose academic precariousness as the only possible destination to education. How quality is affected when instructors do not have job stability: They become part-time workers, overloaded with tasks, cheap salaries, subjected to managerial bureaucracies, and the never-ending contests to fill a permanent position." (Mendoza, 2014).

And Chomsky adds: "for the business sector, student (feminist, environmentalist, anti-war, etc.) activism is proof that young people are not properly indoctrinated," one of the best methods of indoctrination has been that of the loans that students finance their careers, so that student debt ends up being not an opportunity, but a trap "from which young people will not be able to leave in a long time. The credits work as a burden that forces them to stay away from other matters... Perhaps, they were not created with that purpose, but they certainly have that effect." (Mendoza, 2014).

We are witnessing a society that keeps us busy in one and thousand superficialities and we call that important tasks. We evoke David Harvey's concept as we talk about degenerated utopias (Mendoza Solis, 2007), more and more older masses of people, people highly concerned about their hair color, by their new jeans brands, depressed for not being able to

buy the latest cellular phone, people disconnected, but with technology at hand, so much superficiality and even with great force, even in impoverished areas; so much banality stifling the human being, and in this way, we build ill and raving societies, who are easily manipulated.

Today's problems which keep our minds busy and trouble us, are they really ours? Are they due to our reality? Or are they the result of illusions of a bubble world of prefabricated fantasies?

Without subjects there is NO HISTORY nor future itself, Zemelman claims and warns us. It is clear the manifest urgency in every word of the Master Zemelman, the anguish of that historic task of building real scenarios which make the formation of capable subjects of building knowledge from themselves possible, who are capable of building collectively, and therefore, being able to transform history, as a prompt and timely response to a biocide society.



Tribute to Master Hugo Zemelman.  
(October 7, 1931 - October 3, 2013)

#### **Bibliographical references:**

- Insuasty Rodriguez, A. (2012). Sólo Sujetos históricos en Contextos reales, generarán transformación. Kavilando Revista Virtual, [http://www.kavilando.org/site/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1140:solo-sujetos-historicos-en-contextos-reales-generaran-transformacion-zemelman&catid=42:editorial&Itemid=84](http://www.kavilando.org/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1140:solo-sujetos-historicos-en-contextos-reales-generaran-transformacion-zemelman&catid=42:editorial&Itemid=84).
- Mendoza Solis, Y. P. (julio-diciembre de 2007). "Espacios de esperanza" de David Harvey. *Liminar. Estudios sociales y humanísticos.*, 5(2), 193-199.
- Mendoza, M. L. (10 de Marzo de 2014). "El neoliberalismo tomó por asalto a las universidades": Noam Chomsky. Recuperado el 20 de Marzo de 2014, de [www.kavilando.org](http://www.kavilando.org): <http://www.kavilando.org/index.php/2013-10-13-19-52-10/formacion-popular/2624-el-neoliberalismo-tomo-por-asalto-a-las-universidades-noam-chomsky>