ETHICS IN THE LIQUID CONSUMER SOCIETY

LA ÉTICA EN LA SOCIEDAD LÍQUIDA DE CONSUME

ÉTICA NA SOCIEDADE DE CONSUMO LÍQUIDA

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to analyze the ethical behavior of man and the sudden transformations of the ethicity of individual or social man, in relation to the surrounding world within the theory of liquid society, founded by Zygmunt Bauman. According to this theory, interpersonal relationships in contemporary society revolve around the ephemerality of friendships and sudden changes in behaviors established by the solidity of their old environment. The analysis of ethics in liquid society concludes that, necessarily, the ephemeral and consumerism are imposed; the stable forms of social relations that sustained the solid society are set aside.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Ethics, morals, liquid society, Zygmunt Bauman.

RESUMEN

El objetivo de esta investigación es el análisis del comportamiento ético del hombre y de las súbitas transformaciones de la eticidad del hombre individual o social, en relación con el mundo circundante dentro de la teoría de la sociedad líquida, fundada por Zygmunt Bauman. Según esta teoría, las relaciones interpersonales en la sociedad contemporánea giran en torno a lo efímero de las amistades y a los cambios repentinos de los comportamientos establecidos por la solidez de su antiguo entorno. El análisis de la ética en la sociedad líquida concluye que, necesariamente, se impone lo efímero y el consumismo; se dejan de lado las formas estables de relaciones sociales que sostenían la sociedad sólida.

KEYWORDS: Ética, moral, sociedad líquida, Zygmunt Bauman.

RESUMO

O objetivo desta pesquisa é a análise do comportamento ético do homem e as transformações repentinas da eticidade do homem individual ou social em relação ao mundo circundante dentro da teoria da sociedade líquida, fundada por Zygmunt Bauman. De acordo com essa teoria, as relações interpessoais na sociedade contemporânea giram em torno da efemeridade das amizades e das mudanças repentinas nos comportamentos estabelecidos devido à solidez de seu ambiente anterior. A análise da ética na sociedade líquida conclui que, necessariamente, a efemeridade e o consumismo assumem o controle; as formas estáveis de relações sociais que sustentavam a sociedade sólida são deixadas de lado.

PALAVRAS CHAVES: Ética, moralidade, sociedade líquida, Zygmunt Bauman.

INTRODUCTION

The forms of social behavior of a society are controlled, monitored and punished according to foucaultian theory and, therefore, also in a global society: "in this context, surveillance is therefore understood as 'surveillance of individuals.' Furthermore, legal scholars tend to consider surveillance merely as 'surveillance technology,' (potentially) requiring regulation." (Galič, 2022, p. 307)these projects—at least, for the most part—escape the scope of (European. Failing that, aboriginal communities or peoples are solidified in the memory of their ancestors built by generations says Bauman., "in his most recent book, *On Education in a Liquid World*, he condenses his thoughts on education" (Yáñez, 2013, p. 137). The postmodern generation inevitably destroys ethical theory, regardless of its trademark of moral solidity that binds it to the community; for it is subtly violent by accommodating itself to the circumstances around it.

The morality of society with its particularities, in general, is to act vertically; this is how the character of the future generation is shaken, closing social gaps and imaginary borders from one community to another: "the fear of leaving home, of an accident happening, of being robbed, of not finding a job, of contracting a disease, of being forgotten, of environmental threats, of terrorism, of violence, of murders, fear of being free" (Canaza, 2018, p. 238). It feeds ethics its vertical control, currently it has been diluted in the torrent of liquid behavior with the purpose of coping with a spell of citizen of the ethical world, which is not repressed by the stereotypes marked by the elders. Political struggles over ideologies mark the border milestone of a heterogeneous morality, acceptable without vertically determined parameters. Adults and power makers guide human behavior, transgressing and coercing liquid ethics that give meaning to human existence in a volatile context.

In the formation of ethics and morals, the different religious manifestations in the world intervened as a fundamental role with their culture next to each other almost seconded, but the evolution of society turned them into legal laws that challenge the duty to be Kantian. Each country has its legal norms that monitor its members for alleged human right conduct; within each country coexistence has its own conventions derived from totems. As a result of this ethical phenomenon of liquid society, individual satisfaction that leads to moral tranquility is important. Accommodating oneself to the circumstances of the social phenomenon, is part of the liquid society, the mental health of citizens is protected under the mantle of ethics accepted without question, distancing itself from anarchy and absolute tolerance of the other.

Liquid freedom for infants is a guarantee of ethical self-control, since the imposition generates resentment and frustration that does not prepare for a coexistence to the uncertain future. This research analyzes the ethical discourse of the liquid society that fights for its preeminence with the solid ethics established by generations, and is considered the best option to maintain the stillness of society and that does not integrate the social chaos that the current generation lives: "to declare that our ancestors invented ethics is to deny that they discovered it or that it was revealed to them [...] However, declaring that ethics is a human invention does not imply that it was arbitrarily designed." (Estany, 2022, p. 300). The methodology used is the triangulation of the information with the existing literature, in relation to the theory of liquid ethics based on Bauman's analyses.

Ethics in the liquid society

Bauman, is considered one of the most diligent researchers on liquid modernity or experience of postmodernity since he was ahead of his time; thus, the current situation corroborates his theories explicitly and raises the liquid society in stages: "first focuses on what still remains of this gardening society, that is, the obsession and compulsion to produce order. Putting things in

order, in practice, that means categorizing, classifying, separating, counting people" (Tabet, 2017, p. 292). Ephemeral friendship relationships and remote interpersonal communications make human coexistence colder, that ethics almost established in every society or village and urban culture, were quickly replaced by the culture of a fortuitous and ephemeral relationship.

The experience rooted in well-established stereotypes ceased to be stable: "it is not the creation of new needs that constitutes their greatest concern but the fact of minimizing, attacking and ridiculing the needs of yesterday" (Grimaldi, 2021). Things in the world were created by necessity, that creation by necessity almost the next day becomes unnecessary, because one must create others of greater utility and novel productivity that is feasible to acquire in ephemeral form by modern man, "having a concept analyzed with rationality according to the structural changes of society allows us to understand the private individuality of human beings" (Gutiérrez, 2022, p. 172). Several philosophers and researchers of ethics in liquid society during human history thoroughly analyzed the sudden changes in behaviors and social manifestations over time.

There is an excessive competition to assert and identify oneself under millions of human beings in the world, as required given the situation of this social phenomenon. The customs and traditions of an entire generation are changing rapidly, without some of the solid components with an ethic rooted in tradition identifying in time and getting on track at the speed of change.

Those who remained in time with the ethics established by a certain generation, which kept these cultural manifestations active, stop these accelerated changes; while in other societies and cultures they have already surpassed almost completely, and it is indicated that: "the message that conveys this entertainment is that no one is indispensable or has an absolute right despite the individual efforts he has made in favor of the collective" (Grimaldi, 2021). We live in a hyper-cybernetic situation persecuted by algorithms wherever you go, the information found in cyberspace is millions, university students and the general population cannot consume everything at the same time: "we live now in a society of entertainment or, rather, taking a term of recent appearance, in a society of 'well-being'. There is a real contemporary obsession with 'well-being.'" (Tabet, 2017, p. 293)

Millions of contacts on social networks, research articles, opinion, news, books that contain a large amount of information, processing it is impossible for an established area or discipline: "Bauman quotes the thinker Eriksen who indicates as an example that more than half of the articles of human sciences will never be cited and that, in short, it is essential to know how to protect yourself from 99.99% of the information that we really do not want" (Grimaldi, 2021). The social sciences lag behind in their scientific development due to the pre-eminence of the natural sciences to the detriment of the social ones; however, in society it is everyday life in relation to social science, aspects such as "seu principal objetivo é mostrar a contribuição de Sloterdijk e Anders para o estabelecimento de uma tecnoética liquid, embora o termo em si seja pouco explorado pelo autor" (Provinciatto, 2021, p. 261). Employers prefer workers who are willing to change abruptly without warning and live up to today's consumer ethic. Accommodating to excessive changes, without warning, is the novelty of the general population around the world.

The lasting and intimate friendships with which it was necessary to share in a constant and almost obligatory way, took an irreversible turn: the friendship is liquid, objectified with excess of freedom without limits, "what is needed is to update the profile practically minute by minute to continue harvesting comments and reactions and increasing the number of followers" (Posadas, 2013, p. 124). Social networks that control daily life in real time is an imperative necessity, there are no loyalties of oath or honor, claims of ethical compliance, matter of an oath of pawned word, considered a law. These forms of ethical loyalties vanished over time, feelings change with a but-

ton or digital key, flexibility in social relations and ways of thinking are elements valued by current ethics: "Bauman points out that the supreme value of consumer society is that of the happy life" (Grimaldi, 2021). The constant search of the human being, from the social dawn as from conception is to find the happy life, there are the self-help works that swarm to encourage that happy life longed for and never reached in the infinity of human existence.

The transience of social ethics

Sudden and abrupt changes in society collide with the ways of life established by a certain social sector of culture, whether local, national or international: "ethics and moral standards become debatable discourses in the face of the emergence of new circumstances and social actors" (Aguilar, 2017, p. 10). The archetypes of a society, together with the age group, internalized the ways of life and behaviors established with lasting purposes that guide the route of coexistence of their society. These forms of social coexistence of ethically related communal groups enter a situation of constant conflict between assimilating the fleeting culture or remaining in what has been established for generations:

> Modernity emphasizes ethics as the systematic code of law that is imposed on men and women from the outside. Modern ethics is understood by Bauman as a project of perfectibility and, therefore, also implies the oblivion, if not the destruction, of the ambivalences of the human being in the world. (Bravo, 2019, p. 114)

During the historical process of humanity, marked by its own contextual phenomenon, ethics changes in order to accommodate its context with individuals of a different generation "what makes modernity 'liquid' is the accelerated and unstoppable 'modernization' by which – like other liquids – no type of social life is able to maintain its form for a long time" (Hall, 2017, p. 279). That generation marked the milestone of their destiny with another social order of behavior shining to their way of life that collides with the past.

The forms of social coexistence are subject to conflicts in the changes of scenarios of established behavior, in that sense, accommodations and rearrangements are necessary to calibrate modern society: "they have been almost all their lives with the same person, the same one with whom they married when the photos were in black and white. They've had the same job since they left college at the age of 23" (Redondo, 2017, p. 01). There is no doubt that the changes are linked to the exchange of personal and individual life, fluttering the entire architectural structure of the forms of personal manifestation, which compromises family intimacy. The professional, once his academic training is finished, seeks to obtain a stable job in an entity, preferably from state, since private entities have relative contract workflows. Currently, stable work is not a priority in the lives of young professionals; on the contrary, their interest is to change their workplace decisively.

The best kept memories of important scenes in life, were cornered to the liquid transience of definitively replacing the preserved review; the discourse of modernity is sharpened "based on dramatic phenomena, such as that of the displaced, that of refugees, that of the miserable and that of a whole enormous, endless list of what Bauman himself called 'human waste', surpluses, surpluses" (Constante, 2017, p. 386). These changes also correspond to the constant modifications of the political, cultural, social and economic life of the nations that enter the era of liquid modernity, leaving aside the family traditions that are transmitted from one generation to another, with the sole desire to keep stable that morality and ethics of the good citizen of a nation.

Constant migrations, for different reasons, threaten the good coexistence of their fellow citizens who saw their ethical manifestation rendered useless by other forms of conduct outside

them. The rejection of migration is unanimous in nations that feel the threat of foreigners, because they modify the solidified behavior of social and historical traditions and resort to a series of protection instruments such as "their data-driven monitoring practices transform cities into extraordinary apparatuses of surveillance in which citizens' interests, emotional states, and behavior can be continuously monitored, nudged, and manipulated" (Galič, 2022, p. 306)these projects—at least, for the most part—escape the scope of (European. The migrant is synonymous with being liquid who has no homeland, is a citizen of the world who does not identify, even less forms roots in his social development.

It is a situation, where everyone creates their own surrounding reality, their infinite world that does not obey archaic or outdated patterns and norms in time. The best way to live at the rhythm of liquid modernity is to detach, as soon as possible, from the ethical burden frozen in time that does not lead to anything today: "the relationships of our grandparents with ours have very little to do with ours. Fear of commitment, rolls of a night, love disappointments... For many young (and not so young) people this can be the bread and butter"(Redondo, 2017, p. 03). The desperation to control the youth according to the prototypes of the grandparents of commitments until death, were leaving aside and do not matter at all to the liquid young people of today. The love life is volatile, it is a need for business profitability of both parties to preserve, otherwise they immediately leave their functionality and each one seeks his individual benefit in another scenario that is materially profitable.

Perhaps, the most important characteristic of liquid modernity is lived at the rhythm of an eternal traveler without any destination: "Bauman's liquid reality describes precisely this scenario, which invites movement, flow and the search for new experiences, but without taking root anywhere. They are citizens of the world, but of nowhere at the same time"(Redondo, 2017, p. 04). The wars of territories should not matter to the young people of today, because they are episodes that generate nationality and an identity that they do not possess, less do the postmodernists of today want "with the new technologies private rights, the principles of will, equality and individuality, have come to be valued, altered and questioned from an undescribed ethical and aesthetic normality, but alive and in continuous transformation"(Ríos & Matesanz, 2020, p. 233). Youth is engulfed by the consumption of the ephemeral; as well as the adult generation that disregards society by "protecting from the proliferation of the collateral victims of consumerism: the excluded, the outcasts, the marginalized class. Their task is to save human solidarity from erosion and to prevent feelings of ethical responsibility from being extinguished" (Posadas, 2013, p. 226). The constant struggle between archaic and modern morality, due to its historical process, is constant. The generational changes of ethics, leave aside the classicism of generations that kept social customs untouched, called by Bauman the solidity in time.

CONCLUSION

The sudden and constant changes in the ways of life of each society are constantly threatened; to remain ostracized is to cling to the solid society, with definite formations and principles that must be repeated for generations. Those generations that repeat the stereotypes violated by the solidified elderly, lose prominence today, because they live at the liquid speed of constant changes and rearrangements that allow us to be at the forefront of liquid change: "this perspective is the result of the end of modernity, a moment in which, for many, ethics ceases to provide solutions and loses its place" (Monopoli, 2007, p. 115). Clinging to established situations has no place in the society of consumption and volatility of customs.

Generational changes in waves, paradigms, and ideologies, are doomed to perish with liquid society where it does not find room for its ethical solidification. The surveillance and punishment of ethical behaviors of a society constitute the fundamental essence of the survival of old stereotypes in a community, town, city or urbanization. Ethics in liquid society becomes volatile, changeable, accommodating to what comes and goes in the new forms of social behavior: "sustainable development requires a humanistic vision that is articulated with the directionality of science and ethics as essential axes in the interpretation and solution of the most pressing problems that affect humanity" (Marín et al., 2022, p. 374). The permanence in time of the acquired behaviors, become increasingly modifiable and acceptable; since, they passed different stages of social and historical construct of man.

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