

EDITORIAL

SILENT SCIENCE

What would happen if human beings were not curious and did not seek knowledge? Can we live without science? Could we really exist as a species without science? The rest of the living beings on this planet have done it and will continue to do so, but not us.

A decade and a half into the 21st century, technological advances in daily living have permeated institutional, corporate and personal communications. Information seems to always be at hand, and the traditional provision of services is changing with the use of digital applications. This "technological revolution" seems to represent the promise that we were told the 21st century would fulfill, but innovation has failed to seize opportunities that are buried in technological massification, opportunities to overcome the underdevelopment gap, activate participatory democracy, access new knowledge, improve education and health systems, diversify culture, abandon dogmas of authoritarianism, caudillismos and decadent nationalisms in favor of promoting human rights.

In the middle of our third lustrum we are becoming aware of the voracious appetite that the leadership of the world has for public resources while the citizens still do not react—Out of omission, complacency or complicity? Now, we humans are trying to dispense with the basic tools that characterize our species: curiosity and knowledge. We allow them to be replaced with lies and entertainment. The purpose of this reflection is to connect the lack of interest in knowledge, investigation, inquiry, and understanding with involuntary permissiveness in the face of the outrageousness of the corrupt.

The underlying idea that science is not necessary has many ways of manifesting itself, the most drastic is cutting education, environmental preservation, and basic and applied research budgets. To deny science and the factual information it contributes, to refute its results, and to discourage and persecute those who dedicate themselves to science, is the strategy that recent leaders in their vanity embody with the rhetoric of economic protectionism. The trouble is that the ordinary citizen, whose center of entertainment, thought and ideology rests in his pocket, simply believes in this rhetoric and so fosters contempt for intellectuals, philosophers, and thinkers who use science in their work. Could this be a strategy of the leadership—the rulers and their political peers? Why the proliferation of causes from the past that we thought had been defeated? Might they be distracting part of the population with euphemisms from four hundred years ago? There exists a danger that the community will incorporate these ideological errors as a collective construct of contemporaneity.

It cost humanity thousands of years and many of its best thinkers to attain the scientific knowledge that just one hundred years ago allowed for the technological advances that we are currently enjoying at the beginning of 21st century. This global retrogression is already being felt in the local environment, in the discriminatory diatribes of leaders who never mention science in their government plans or, if they do, it is contemptuously, as if it were the lowest contributor to human activity. But science is silent, because the essence of the human being—curiosity—is to seek knowledge. Science is not only fun and curious, but what sets the pace for development. It influences health, conditions for the improvement of quality of life, transportation systems, telecommunications, and environmental and planetary conservation. Science is innovative because

it is knowledge. Science is the fundamental basis of engineering because it is practical, and ingenuity is the common good of those who know, think and apply. We possess the tool, let us use it. It is not necessary to be a scientist in order to be a citizen, in order to look for explanations beyond appearances or beliefs. Science is inherent in human nature—it exists in our genes. It is evolution and, in its silence, dwells in all humans.

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