The Difficulty Between Charity and Philanthropy: An Aspect to be Reviewed in the Framework of Volunteer Work Actions in Colombia[1].

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Abstract

There are impending challenges amidst the Colombian post-conflict context. This article contributes initial elements for a discussion about the work that many NGOs will initiate with volunteer personnel, regarding the economic, social and professional advantages resulting from this human action. Charity and philanthropy are questioned herein based on historical evidence and a on gamble to achieve an inclusive social bond that guarantees citizens' rights and responsibilities. Different research is reviewed in order to specify key questions to the challenge faced by the Colombian government in terms of restitution of wellbeing to the direct victims and the indirect populations affected by the armed conflict.

Key Words: volunteer work, voluntary action, charity, philanthropy, post-conflict.

Conceptualization of Volunteer Work

If we begin with authors' complexity, impossibility even, of conceptualizing volunteer work (Tavazza, 1995), we will face difficulties to analyze background or even current situations of solidary phenomena, thus hindering the concreteness of theoretical solutions appropriate for immediate needs of the social bond in which we live in; missing the opportunity to use the vital advantages of volunteer work in humanitarian tasks. In other words: if we do not conceptualize or theorize, it is impossible to

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sustain actions, not to mention processes and guidelines, in an organized way, which in turn redounds in benefits for the social bond.

As proposed by Mendoza and Quiroz (2009) in their research work on the state of some aspects of volunteer work in Colombia, there is a risk of "falling in anachronisms and making interpretation mistakes by categorizing a human action that is so old, changing and complex as mankind in a single ambiguous word".

Irrevocably, this makes us swiftly dare to write in theorizing terms with the aim of establishing existing and new conditions to account for this human behavior. Therefore, volunteer work may be understood as simply 'the will to work for the wellbeing of others as main purpose'.

But what we do is condensate diverse studies and efforts to conceptualize this aspect of human work. To overcome this *impasse* we must and will (because we intend to continue contributing clarity and discussion) listen to history and generate notions without neglecting what has been done, placing milestones that provide clarity on the best forms and the most appropriate with the moment's reality, those that have been used to define volunteer work, the actions, organizations and adjacent concepts.

If we refer to the immediate contextual reality, we may initially think that defining 'volunteer work' implies our own context's substantial complications, unlike with other geohistorical places and moments. It does not. Approximately thirty years ago, the discussion, analysis and debate came up regarding different aspects of volunteer work in Europe, especially in Spain, Germany, France and Belgium, among other countries that clearly are pioneers in this topic (Mendoza, 2009).

So, the complication applies to all contexts; we share with other countries, institutional and subjective initiatives the complexity of lacking a clear and precise (and shared) conceptualization of volunteer work and its adjacent topics. At the same time, we must recognize that the first steps, the firmest, have been given by some

states (countries and their institutions) that have experienced real transversal crises, and by pioneer organizations in humanitarian topics, giving them paradigmatic validity and place to the interested parties.

Based on the study used as initial source, the following is the definition of volunteer work that we found:

> (…) Seeking definitions by some authors, it is found that 'volunteer work' is explained by the following characteristics: it is of solidary nature, it is a free action, it entails no economic compensation, it is an organized action. In current society and depending on interpretations, the trait that mostly identifies 'volunteer work' is its gratuity, which is understandable since this is a capitalist society that follows market and consumption values, endorsing axioms such as 'time is gold', in which doing something for nothing extremely stands out (Mendoza, 2009).

This quote is from several studies, with Madrid (2001) and Tavazza (1995) being the most relevant. Indeed, common people and the average professional will conceptualize volunteer work (in the local and foreign context) as something that you do with a gratuity nature and always benefiting third parties that are in need of solidary actions to overcome vulnerabilities or unrest. The question of the contemporaneity's economic conditions persists, as follows: Who is willing to undertake a task to benefit others with gratuity nature? This makes us think that the motives that drive people in volunteer work do not aim at money, thus not necessarily to the 'conscious' motivations that many volunteers may claim.

This is an idea to elaborate further: there is need for more studies about the 'real' motivation of people who dedicate part of their time, life and resources to volunteer work. To that effect, it is important to recommend addressing the 'motivations' beyond behavioral studies, focusing on the unconscious satisfaction of volunteer

work, i.e., the narcissism of those who do it. As stated, this can be the object of a future study.

Therefore, Voluntary Action (VA) has further connotations than the task's gratuity. The 'will' to do good, included in VA, is the humanitarian spirit that touches all actions and the will to work for free. Solidarity, the concept-action that makes the volunteer think about the beneficiary, is the key that human sciences propose as pivotal to the motivation of these tasks.

The condition is thus configured as follows: a volunteer believes he/she has the ability to provide some type of benefit (be it for an individual or a population with temporary or structural vulnerability). The condition of volunteer work implies that potential beneficiaries require the action and participation of others (professionals or proficient in an art or task) in order to overcome situations known as 'social scarcities' (Mendoza, 2009). Volunteers may also participate in interventions or changes of conditions that attenuate the ideal wellbeing, and/or in situations that violate the rights of individuals or groups. Volunteer work is more than just a free task, it is an action that drives from a particular and subjective motivation, that complements the efforts of several social actors or sectors, in frameworks in which it is possible to achieve collective objectives with the work and expertise of parties interested in making a humanitarian contribution.

We may then describe the first particularities of volunteer work to go beyond the idea of 'gratuity': it is a task conducted by someone with a conscious or unconscious motivation (not yet explained by him/her nor by the beneficiary), and with a clear intention or human spirit to 'do good' for others.

It must be considered that intention is mobilized mostly in volunteers and it concentrates in situations of humanitarian crises. We mentioned 'temporary or structural' situations before, these maybe of war, social, economic, political, educational or health nature. Therefore, we will always find at least two intersecting

and converging factors for NGOs and GOs to deploy their actions, some of which occur with the tenacious collaboration of volunteers: a state of individual, community or social vulnerability and the emerging humanitarian intention deriving from the presence of unrest, regardless of a detailed diagnosis of said unrest.

The existence of a diagnosis is not a condition to initiate actions. Even without a diagnosis, urgent activities are undertaken when situations demand it, sanitary emergency crises, for instance, require punctual actions, such as contention measures, for problems that have been barely identified while the diagnosis is conducted. This can become a field for people that are interested in volunteer work: offering their know-how for assessment and diagnoses, while affecting problems directly through specific actions.

Context. Places, Sectors from which VA Come From

We will now define places, 'sectors' for some authors, the source of the actions aimed at solving communities' critical situations. The most appropriate definition we found is as follows:

> (…) The State constitutes the first sector, the private companies the second. The third sector groups civil associations, foundations, benefit corporations, cooperatives, neighborhood clubs, promotion companies, business chambers, professional associations, soup kitchens or civil organizations (…), (Mendoza, 2009).

(…) we locate NGOs in the third sector. This sector is closely related to the citizens' most intimate needs, with an interest that is mostly concerned with the change and transformation of social processes, a pre-text to create said organizations. By pre-text we mean the value of the previous text to the action to relief the unrest, a thorough definition of the objectives that allow many NGOs to determine the nature of their work and the specific actions they imply, as well as their success and continuity.

We may say that the organization, the citizen collective (whether informal or more structured, such as NGOs) depends on the context in which it begins and on its objectives. We necessarily found a clear articulation and rigor in NGOs in terms of the particular conditions of the State and of their specific needs of human groups within reach. Therefore, the organizations that start in this sector are not separate from the social surroundings conditions, nor of "(…) the relationship with the other players of political, economic and cultural realities" (Mendoza, 2009).

This idea forces us to trace the rationale that pervaded bygone VA in history, which in turn determines an ideology[2] (Althousser, 1989), effective in our context, that differs from prior rationale. At the same time, it points where to find information on determinations depending on primary conditions of VA. In other words, it is necessary to go back in history or else there is a risk in the conceptualization and the objectives of organizations that are dedicated to humanitarian matters, to be in discrepancy with reality. When economic and historical conditions of the geopolitical place in which wellbeing are intended to be affected, VA forms that are not the most appropriate may be sustained. This is the outmost importance of historical aspects that permeate each humanitarian action at conceptual and ideological levels. In order to avoid redundancy with thousands of existing studies on the Colombian context (Granda, 1994), we will exclusively refer to a couple of aspects related with the conception of volunteer work in Colombia.

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[2] Ideology is understood as the set of ideas with diverse kind, political or religious, that allow an identification of the people with their actions and mindsets, in a time or geohistorical space. Then, the concept is wider and must be considered the foundation based on the ideas that determine individual and group's ways of thinking and acting, bonded by equivalent social processes and cultural backgrounds.

Conception of Volunteer Work in Colombia. Two Structural and Differential Aspects of VA: Charity and Altruism

It is evident that an amount of organizations and people have chosen our country to perform direct actions for the improvement of wellbeing and life conditions of populations that need support from a third party (targeted on specific topics), be it because of socioeconomic conditions or because they are victims of feelings, marginalization and exclusion[3].

Due to our country's colonial and post-colonial tradition, many VA institutions function based on charity, with strong incidence of the religious institution. The most recent forms of charitable organizations are independent from the political sphere, out of reach from governmental and partisan interests. However, it is well-known that the conception of these efforts relied on the feudal, monarchic and ecclesiastic forms of the Middle Ages. Concerning our country, in the periods known as Conquest and Colony, the largest efforts were conducted by religious missions, which were administered and reviewed by the Spanish Crown; this effort may be considered VA insofar their actions were non-profit, free of cost to the beneficiary and clearly intended to benefit the people, albeit with the motivation of obtaining more followers (Mendoza, 2009).

If we include a clarification of the meaning of 'charity' in the Western context, it is pertinent to address the in-depth work by Le Brun (2010). The author proposes that it is the Catholic Church's attempt (tapping into the daily situations of a specific time) to get the attention of a large part of the population. The underlying element of charity

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[3] An irrefutable current example is the effort of some organizations that encompass many others that are dedicated to humanitarian activities. For an initial outline, we recommend accessing: http://ccong.org.co/ccong/, http://mesadearticulacion.org/, http://www.ong-ngo.org/es/, http://www.oas.org/es/, http://www.un.org/es/ecosoc/, http://www.iadb.org/es/paises/colombia/colombia-y-el-bid,1026.html, which show an outlook of different initiatives, places and sectors interested in changing identified situations in the country and its regions. Also, national efforts are clearly disaggregated and are not easily accessed in terms of information, making its visibility difficult for the researcher or the interested party.

is transmitting a teaching of acting selflessly, making the 'good catholic' act without damnation or forgiveness being the main motivations for his/her actions, simply 'doing good'. Le Brun's work indicates that it is possible to articulate this teaching with the metaphor of a woman's 'proclamation', which is about a ragged lady in the streets, with a torch in one hand and a cruse on the other, shouting that she would rather go to heaven and burn it down and go to hell and flood it, than fearing what would happen after death. A delicate stance to a strict monotheism settled on belief without criticism that has been masterfully used by the Church; this has permeated into an image of 'charity' that is connected with many ways of being good without gaining benefit, even today.

This mystical call was heard and adopted by the West, to the point that it would become the ideal behavior paradigm for the purity of the intentions of the 'do-gooder'. The result: 'doing good expecting nothing in return'. It is a unique matter because we could ask: What is the subjective gain for a person that acts this way? What is the balance between the goodness of a person and the loss of the person offering the goodness? Speaking about charity, are we part of a structure with 'gains' versus 'loss'? What can mysticism bring to charity, and to the will of doing good? What is clear is that charity is forged as the guiding element that makes ecclesiastic love an indication of purity and lack of intention. Also, it indicates the problematic identified by Francis of Assisi: the economic and political interests of a solid ecclesiastic model that took advantage of the concept of indulgence to obtain devout resources (Larragaña, 1981).

All in all, the conditions of mankind's history, precisely in Western history's Judeo-Christian churches, denote specific ideals and actions that permeate the Western world throughout, even more so in the historical moment of the Spanish Colonization of the Americas.

Social processes, deeply affected by the Conquerors and Colonists rationales, directly upset a population that had a completely different social scaffolding. Indigenous societies were subject to profound mutation by the fierce monarchic, feudal and monotheistic position. This is not a mere deduction, there is evidence to support this claim, arising from historians, anthropologists' data and from indigenous people at that time. What is a deduction is the social organization existing prior to the Conquest and Colony (Espinoza Soriano, 1980), which was radically different to the conditions of the new ways coming from Europe; its effects affect the national territory even today: demographic chaos, decreasing birth rates in indigenous population, 'incurable and untreatable' diseases that came from overseas (Mendoza, 2009), all of which can be associated to the forced social changes imposed by the monarchy that ruled in the Conquest and Colony.

Economic transaction conditions changed, degenerating in poverty for the native population, not just because of the mandatory taxes by the Spanish Crown, but because of the economic scaffolding imposed by exploitation and expropriation of indigenous goods and lands, plus the worsening health of the population.

> The deprivation of indigenous people became evident as a consequence of the occupation, taxes and labor exploitation. On the other hand, the white population was also marginalized, some failed to receive lands or were isolated, which eventually led to their deprivation as well (Mendoza, 2009).

Social assistance was (fairly) assumed as a compensation for the damages of the Spanish occupation. Social assistance, as the West had adopted it, came to the Americas to 'prevent, remedy or eradicate' the difficulties inherent to the Colonization process. Then, it "(…) came to Hispanic America in the Colony as part of the civilizing process that would be confirmed in the foundation of the cities" (Restrepo, 2006).

Western ideals were transferred along with the time's administration methods. Social action's motivation was clear: becoming part of the civilizing process (in other words, Christianizing). That is how the original VA arrived in the Americas, seeking to generate more opportunities for the disadvantaged by the social imposition, in which Colonizers set the conditions. From there on, a clear relationship was established, and has endured to these days, between the governmental power (whichever) and the clergy, the latter assuming to transmit the 'best ways of individual and social behavior', conditions of the Western social bond that are nurtured by morals, wellbeing and the salvation of the soul. The civil power, ruled by religion's ideals, would have its reach in the negotiations with the Church: "the use of the Catholic doctrine to regulate social relationships, manifested strongly from the beginning, thus establishing an alliance between civil and ecclesiastic powers, by which they jointly monitored and complemented each other" (Mendoza, 2009; Restrepo, 2006; Restrepo, 1997).

Therefore, the first important VA movement in these lands resulted from the circumstances of the Colonization and in function of relieving poverty and diseases, aspects that were of the outmost importance to European scientific, ecclesiastic and political discussions at that time (Mendoza, 2009). The Counter-Reformation period played its part in VA as well, the Medieval vision of 'being poor' was intensely connected with being 'privileged', to the extent it equated poverty with 'a greater likelihood of arriving to the afterlife with a spot granted in heaven'. This vision drove affluent people to 'charity', using the poor as a bridge between this world and their salvation aspirations. Again, the 'motives' of charity reveal themselves. Back then, suffering played the role of today's organizations in the mindset of the social bond, which allowed volunteer work, among many other forms of action:

(…) Thus the principles that sustained assistance to the poor were reaffirmed as a duty of the good Christian. That virtue –charity– defined theoretical and practical attitudes of social assistance in the early years

of the Colony, the poor or the sufferer were considered a bridge between
men and God. (Mendoza, 2009)

This bridge is critical for the mindset of people that do volunteer work with charity ideals, back then and now, it is a way of establishing a direct link with their beliefs; identifying the suffering of the poor or disadvantaged is a means to reach an aspect of mysticism (not mysticism in itself) that (supposedly) generates a direct relationship with God. Considering oneself a good Samaritan, a charitable Christian, was a preeminent value for most people at that time, and it still is for many, especially for the affluent social and economic class. Accordingly, the Church and its missions were subject of demanding observance by the civil and governmental powers creating the first tension of the ideals of AV:

> (…) The so-called pious works –charity works–, which included hospitals, hospice homes, homes for adulterous women, among others, were houses that captured redeemed goods and riches of the neighbors in order to guarantee their "salvation", decrease the punishments of the purgatory and obtain the benefit of eternal glory (…) The wealthy "mortgaged" in favor of the works –giving money and goods– as well as tithes authorized by royal decree. In exchange, the beneficiaries of this works would pray for their benefactors(…) (Mendoza, 2006).

This was frowned upon by many because it implied that large amounts of money where destined to the underprivileged without anyone else having a chance at them. In other words: having resources invested in the underprivileged did not sit well with most people. This fact changed quickly: investment of resources, as per the monarchy's ideas, specializes and changes throughout history due to the changes in powerful families, it becomes evident to the extent that the intentions and decisions of resource allocation shift to other objectives, for instance, war.

Hospitals were the first works of charitable conditions, these dedicated their task to the service of indigenous people that were sick with European diseases. Spaces were sober and clearly intended as places of retreat, following customary Medieval ideal of devotion to the patron saints of death (Restrepo, 1997; Restrepo, 2006). It is clear that the ideal of 'doing good' for the people in hospital missions is determined by humility, humiliation even, of individuals and populations in the face of misery, sickness and death. The sick, in its representation of the Christian tragedy, are the favorite subject of these charitable actions: their relation to Christ and to the Christians sacrificed by the most powerful in different moments in history. It is the perfect environment to impact the most vulnerable by modifying their belief schemes: showing them how similar they are to the savior in which the Colonizers believed (Christ), justifying their charitable actions. This is why in every major city of our territory with presence of a royal decree or *encomienda* an important hospital was founded by 'hospitable brothers' with donated resources and exclusively religious staff[4] (Forero, 2009).

The matter of health was not the only one in which social assistance intervened; others were foundling children and adulterous women, both social symptoms of an absolutely sexist and patriarchal societal organization. Abandoned children were cared for using money from donations, as well as by tithes collected from the indigenous population (although these were lesser than those collected from Colonists and *Criollos*). The matter of adulterous women follows several hypotheses that are worthy of additional research, but it may be deduced that these were women who failed to endure the conditions of abuse proposed by the social bond (in a specific moment or by some circumstance):

In 1639 a royal decree from the Court authorized the foundation of the

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[4] Cities such as Tunja, Pamplona, Cartagena and Popayan were the first to Benefit from this initiative in the national territory.

House for Foundling Children and Adulterous Women. Its incorporation allocated a seventh part of the tithes collected from the indigenous population for maintenance. The House opened in December 1642, foundling children were taken care of and adulterous women were removed from the streets. Children were guarded by nurses who were paid for their job. In these areas, charity had another connotation, clearly the needed were cared for, but social control was exercised based on Catholic values. The action was grounded on Christian charity and articulated with children protection, and with control and sanction to women that resisted the abuse of the paternal or marital power (Ramirez, 2006).

It is clear that the ideals of the time were influenced by religious and moral ideas, as well as by ideals of social control.

The case of the foundling children is the first social action to deliver possibilities of survival and a dignified elementary education without guaranteeing social mobility of any form[5] (Bourdieu, 1984; Crompton, 1994; Wright, 1983). The case of the adulterous women however, was an effort to 'remove them from the streets' perhaps to prevent replicating their traumas by stopping their victimization, in perfect harmony with the Catholic Church stance in terms of the ideal place of women[6], family and socially-wise (Bermudez, 2009). Those ideals of purity, devotion to beliefs and

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[5] We acknowledge the fact that the term 'social mobility' is very recent. It originates in sociology and in political law discussions, and it indicates the possibilities of an individual or family group to change their socioeconomic place in a determined space and time. It is believed that social and economic strata determine the place of individuals and their possibilities; political and social, as well as individual conditions would be the engines of change and mobility possibilities, without the goal being necessarily 'upward'.

[6] Women's devotion to God and the saints was expected to be larger, and more fervent, parents, especially the father, came second, followed by their husband or 'master'. Patriarchal organization implied women were a symbolical object of transaction between men and lineages, regardless of economic or social power. Therefore, any violation of the order was considered an insult, making exclusion a likely possibility.

'proper conduct' were dictated by Catholic morals and had an effect on women's expectations in terms of maternity, caring for others and extreme modesty, under penalty of being considered heretic, blasphemous and/or prostitutes. Although these are interpretations and deductions based on several reflections, it would not be surprising to find documentation supporting this role of women in the Middle Ages and in the Colony in our territory.

The fourth matter[7], equally important and determinant of VA and its establishment, is priests' role in defending and protecting the human dignity of the indigenous and black population. Fray Bartolome de las Casas, Pedro Claver, among others, denounced, called for attention, even assumed social and life risks in order to restore the dignity of the indigenous and black population, as per the divine command: all men are brothers of God.

Fray Bartolome led a movement that transformed the Mexican people, both historically and geographically, expanding his ideals through different borders and gaining followers to demand respect for the 'naturals'. Pedro Claver exposed the injustices to which black people were exposed, and sent messengers carrying aid, such as clothes, medicine and food to those in need.

It seemed as though these were personal efforts, however (…)

> (…) Bartolome de las Casas and Pedro Claver were not individual players in their purposes, they became the visible head of movements within Catholicism that expected humane treatment of the subdued population, obviously within the Church's intentions of conversion and evangelization at that time (Mendoza, 2009).

So far, the Church's power was evident, but it started to decimate in 1760 with the

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[7] We have referred to the sick, then to the foundling children and adulterous women.

Bourbon Reforms, which (based on the ideas of the French Revolution) removed economic and social power from the Church's representatives. The main goal of this Reform was to increase taxes by capturing devotees' payment to the Church and transferring it to the government's treasure. "This initiative translated in a loss of joint powers between the Church and the state, with the exception of the administration of pious works; their extensive fortunes were expropriated and Jesuits were expelled" (Mendoza, 2009).

The changes in governmental policies led to social changes, affecting the practice of VA, which were exclusively religious up to that moment.

The Crucial Step, Questioning Charity and Altruism

Following the Reform, 'hospices' were conceived to operate in benefit of the vulnerable people (children, women, indigenous and black populations, poor), only now, its vision differs from Christian charity, as follows. Firstly, aid is not provided in function of equality, of men being brothers of God; and secondly, the aid is not intended to open the doors of salvation for the charitable person. The focus of the task now lies in 'human dignity': philanthropy instead of charity. Philanthropical ideals towards the poor do not have another distinction than the condition of vulnerability, which becomes the goal to overcome.

Another aspect that changed was the intrinsic objective of VA: while charity has the double function of generating a fleeting wellbeing for the vulnerable (sustaining the condition) and opening the doors of consciousness of the charitable person, philanthropy set to 'train' to make beneficiaries educated and productive (achieving autonomy). While charity colluded with inequality, and sustained it, philanthropy defined a frame of actions to allow social equivalences and to close the gap between

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individuals and classes[8] (Mendoza, 2009). This is how, by the end of the 18th century, one of the first philanthropic institutions, in direct opposition to charity at the time was founded: *Mision de los Montes Pios*, an institution to care for and protect orphans and widows of war (Mendoza, 2009) initially in Spain.

Another remarkable example is that of Maria Clemencia Gertrudis de Caycedo y Velez, a widow with a considerable inheritance, who in 1783 founded the first all-female school in Bogota "La Enseñanza". The school was for girls of wealthy families, but the founder decided to open a classroom for poor girls to attend (Mendoza, 2009). This is a clear example of the goal of closing gaps by driving social opportunities to attain autonomy of individuals and their families, as well as a reliable social change. Regardless of the personal motives of this woman, what is interesting is the contribution to social mobility in girls and women with limited education.

We ask ourselves: Charity? Altruism? Philanthropy? As per the aforementioned, the proposed problem will necessarily lead us to an individual's real motivations, with narcissism and selfishness at the core of their actions. We will not focus on this discussion again, although its important background and research merits a thoughtful revision (Stiefken, 2014). We will only extract the key element to ascertain a distinction: the beneficiary's logical place. We know that in charity, the sacrifice value of the charitable act's 'object' is *sustained*. Altruism requires a *change* in the object. Thus, the crucial step between the two is given by the conditions in which the object is assumed as an 'end' to generate change from the beginning, instead of as a receptacle of passive and immovable aid.

The philosophical ideas on the nature of human behavior (the dichotomy between Hobbes and Hume's stances) are essential to ignite the discussion, they are also

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[8] Which is why the revision seems interesting since social mobility (without being conceptualized yet) becomes a goal evidenced in this framework as part of what the state of the time proposes, even if the projected ends are more economic than humanitarian, since more productive people mean less immediate and posterior load.

contemporary to the first VA that emerged in political and civil necessity contexts, specifically in contexts in which the war promoted the neglect of many, the most vulnerable, to be precise.

A quick and shallow summary: Hobbes defends the idea that selfishness is essential to human nature and that it affects human behavior, which makes him question human's alleged 'social nature'. If so, a human being's interest in association comes from an own and particular interest, not out of benevolence towards others, not out of charity. Therefore, Hobbes is 'modern' to the extent that he breaks the classical Greek and Judeo-Christian ideas that affirm that men is prepared for society, questioning if selfish interest attests the fact that society is a construct, a fiction, thus not proper to human 'nature'.

The author proposes:

> Men, due to their nature […] are bothered by prolonged solitude […] which is why I don't deny that men tend to associate with others due to their nature. But civil societies are not mere associations, they are alliances, and loyalties and covenants are necessary to obtain them (Hobbes, 1642/1984).

Hobbes states that although society is irritating, association is sought with selfish ends (which may end up being common) as long as there are loyalties, covenants, agreements. "[…] we do not seek partners by nature, we seek honor and comfort from others" (Hobbes, 1642/1984).

However, Hobbes is not an extremist: he trusts that 'something in the human being' may lead him/her to be a good citizen that seeks the common good: an intelligent selfishness. According to the author, this position only explains some social, political and economic phenomena, with individualism being a factor to consider in any sociable situation as a core value of his proposal.

Hume's case (posterior to Hobbes' approach to the detachment of charity due to individualism) differs. He proposes 'good feelings' apply to altruism. For Hume, altruism is the capacity of feeling benevolence for another person, and it is a natural human condition, making it radically different from Hobbes' proposal. Hume proposes his hypotheses on the basis that there is a mistake in Hobbes' theory, since if selfish love exists it is because it reversed its nature with a turn favored by imagination and strengthened by a variety of appearances (Hume, 1742/1993).

If this stance is sustained by Hume's theory, it is because the human 'must' build his behavior around virtue and against vice, delimiting his incidence framework: a moral in which reasons and feelings work together: reason may deal with concrete situations and pull fact-based ideas, whereas benevolent feelings are necessary to 'act', to conduct an action within the ideal, utilitarian moral framework.

Referring to the aforementioned authors, Stiefken (2014) states in his PhD thesis that they are based precisely on the subject of the action and fail to consider the nature of the object. From this perspective and with the help of other theories (structuralism and psychoanalysis, for instance), we will find that the object, its quality and what is wanted from it (how and what is it wanted for) is the differential condition that allows us to affirm that philanthropy takes an additional step by wishing a change in its object. A change that admits the object's independence and its temporary (not permanent) vulnerability condition. The question is: How to change one object for another, how to take a step from a charitable object to a philanthropic object?

Hobbes and Hume's proposal fails precisely in this point, it is not enough to base the conditions for humanity to undertake 'good' actions on intelligent selfishness or utilitarian altruism, it is not true that kind nature is shared by the species; it is preferable to think and analyze a particular situation of the relationship established between an alleged altruistic subject and another and with another, generating a

series and a difference, although the subject may be considered 'the same', there is no repetition in the situations. The question we propose is: What allows each subject to assume a determined stance in terms of the object? Inquiring on the rationale of how an alleged altruistic subject establishes a special relationship with its beneficiary object.

The Possibilities of a Couple Constituted by an Alleged Altruistic Subject and a Beneficiary Object

In this point we have to be consequent: no action is totally selfless. Clearly, social bonds are shaped by common interests but they also imply renunciations, the majority of the times, these are shaped by abandoning the impulse of the desire of using the other (Freud, 1927/2004; Freud, 1930/2004).

When Freud began reviewing culture's ulterior motives, he found that we try to calm our impulses and generate (if possible) actions that are beneficial to a civilized life through organizations, especially religious. However, nothing guarantees good forms, on the contrary, the incidence of desire generates the propensity to transgression, which is in fact natural to the human being in contrast with culture. While the impulse steers towards satisfaction, regardless of the consequences for the object or subject, the law and regulations establish obligations and conditions that prevent us from killing each other.

Western religious organizations, which are based on Greco-Roman ideas, never ceased to think about absolute good throughout their moral historical trajectory.

Freud questioned the Judeo-Christian idea of loving your neighbor as yourself, he stated that this was an impossible condition because the other (the object) is in a position that each subject wants to take advantage of more than anything. Thus, the Judeo-Christian ideal of love is not possible in the Freudian theory.

At this point Freud was pessimistic and with good reason, he had witnessed the Great War and he wrote "Civilization and its Discontents" and "The Future of an Illusion" in the prelude of the Nazi Holocaust. We may, therefore, inquire on the nature of the relationship that the alleged altruistic subject proposes to the object.

We can suppose that the gains of the alleged altruistic subject are narcissistic. This means that the obtained satisfaction aims at becoming complete in the image of the beneficiary object: in the imaginary, there is no satisfactory completeness in the alleged altruistic subject unless a beneficiary object exists. The latter becomes the support of the former, but this is risky because the object may be intimidated into remaining as is for the pleasure of the subject.

On the other hand, in the case of VA, the beneficiary object accomplishes its function as long as *'nebenmenchs'*[9]. In Freudian theory, the vulnerability complex is the indicator of civilization as long as there is an adult that knows how to do things with the baby, who thus learns conditions, limits, possibilities in order for impulses and destinies to accommodate to the counterpart (Freud, 1950/, 2004). This condition must be thoroughly thought of, since it leads to a repetition of the vulnerability and to becoming a victim, therefore generating significant dependencies with the person that is providing the care, the alleged altruistic subject.

Whose responsibility is it? The subject's, since he must manage how to make the object (his counterpart) transition to a condition of desire, overcoming any form of

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[9] Dependency and vulnerability complex repeated from the human being's neonatal condition and displayed in a situation that produces anguish.

dependency that might be taking place. Although it seems like magic, only an ethical stance is achieved: the alleged altruistic subject must know that it is his fault as well, that he can favor some processes and that he is not more special than anyone else, therefore the beneficiary object must move on.

Consequently, charity and Judeo-Christian fraternal love have no possibilities of obtaining results, unless an ethical position demands the couple's relationship to break and shift, eliminating the permanent and constant aid.

Historical Incidence and Contemporaneity: The Challenge of Voluntarily Working with Post-Conflict Victims

Attempting an important categorical leap, we propose as conclusion for this research to think about the contemporaneity of volunteer work in Colombia in the face of the upcoming post-conflict, without disregarding the historical incidence and keeping the conceptual problem as framework, its derivations from the past and other possibilities to inquire about the couple constituted by an alleged altruistic subject and a beneficiary object.

The pace of massive, social processes, structured in a limited way, do not respond to the historical conditions that researchers may propose. This means that the political and governmental changes that paved the way from a Monarchy to a Republic, did not necessarily modify action, thought and human organization models. Old usages and habits may prevail, as well as behavior aspirations that are justified in fading moral stances, but that take root in the ideology and mentality of some people and institutions; negative actions that are sustained are a detriment to the social bond: that is the case of the Colombian State, in which the population recognizes that corruption has permeated and influenced all social actions, a country in which corruption is used by some actors of humanitarian work to generate economic productivity, irrespective of the change expected by the targeted

population.

The history of the Spaniards that came to the territories, plus social difficulties connected with today's corruption, permeated the social bond to the extent it generated different contraband strata with which natives, *Criollos* and Spanish tended to their own interest: resulting in a selflessness that impedes Hobbes' moral pretensions. Individual interest and obtaining gains at any cost are considered the factors that truly hindered pacifying efforts and just actions. So, the real difficulty of achieving improvement is frequent, structural almost, against a State to which corruption has become a condition for any type of social advancement. This text is not indented to justify discussions of any organization's effort, or to report subversive and terrorist actions. But it is intended to reflect how the current state of affairs of a social bond that is ruled by corruption is unlikely to break old habits, unless there is a profound change in this regard. This affects how we think about the alleged altruistic subject and its beneficiary object.

However, let's consider that these (subversive) organizations were founded under ideologies that promised a change that no one wanted to politically assume. The stance of the State, government and institutions of being ignorant of the other, its equal, derived in different conflicts ranging from marking slaves with last names to turn them into property, to identifications with violent parties that massacred cities and towns, to the current and most complex realities of a country that is incapable of recovery due to (individual) fragmented interests focused on economic gain at any cost. This has led to an overall distortion of taking advantage of every possible opportunity.

This reality comes with a dominant difficulty of mistrust in sectors that have the means to improve quality of life, as well as in subjects that prefer 'to contribute a grain of sand' without endorsing a specific social project or activity organized by an institution with a goal of volunteering. In so many words: corruption plus diverse

political and historical difficulties with underlying economic interests, discourage investment in sectors that may positively influence organized VA.

VA also face difficulties due to social representations ingrained in people's ideas and behaviors (which are equivalent to previous models) in which the prejudice of charity still acts as grounds for VA.

This is obvious in the period of the Gran Colombia: while the government and its institutions assumed the State in an administrative, economic and political way that differed greatly from the Monarchical system, thoughts, behaviors and idiosyncrasies were still dramatically determined by the old and Catholic precepts. Thus, rooted ways of thinking were efficient in allowing VA to be perceived as a charitable act only. The following is a clue that is elucidated in history and intended to overcome it: it is better to move away from the charitable act alone on order to prevent populations to continue on a path of vulnerability, aid and lack of accountability for their condition.

With this in mind, there is also a permanent tension between the private and public institutions in our country and the evident economic interests. To this respect, all organizations and interested parties in VA must turn to a variety of concepts, in particular those that involve productive sectors of the economy: the first is the government (responsible for the public expenditure); the second is made up by companies (producing private profit); and the third is the mixed sector (focused on social actions through NGOs' work). In terms of what has occurred with organizations in the 'third sector', Villar's research (2001) clarifies the inception of said institutions:

> (…) more than just a story isolated from the State, public institutions and political parties, organizations in the third sector have been independent and intertwined with the State's institutions, permeated by ideological

bonds, flow of resources, and complementary, conflictive and supplementary roles.

Relationships knitted between sectors (especially between the first and the third) denote the country's historical convergences. These are ruled by the most diverse interests, but mostly by the economic interest. This research does not intend to go further into these matters, which are much better outlined in other texts. The challenge is to ponder on the post-conflict taking into consideration the aforementioned, to provide a dignified place to the object of the benefit: a fellow human being that needs his/her condition as valid interlocutor to be restituted, along with his/her rights and obligations within a secular State.

The challenges of the State are: enforcing the rights of Colombians and protecting the victims of conflict, professionals, volunteers or employees that work to restitute their rights, with everything it entails. It is necessary to stop thinking in terms of accords and documents that allegedly guarantee the fulfillment of said condition, and to start acting from the true elemental condition of the human bond: we are all neighbors. It is not an easy task, justice must be enforced and an implementation that is free from previous vices must be ensured. We must be optimistic, but we must also commit to this topic as citizens.

NGOs have more specific challenges. The most important one is a real social commitment, and not an economic commitment. Also, effectively revitalizing resources and achieving real change in the beneficiaries of social projects, shifting passive attitudes towards their condition. Although this is a Rule of Law in which many conditions must be updated to exercise political decisions and options, it is important for these organizations' stance to be clear in terms of the conflict and its solutions, regardless of their political 'creed'; there are always connections (sometimes at plain sight and sometimes hidden) with the country's partisan dynamics.

The challenge is also to include more social professionals, more people interested in positively affecting social change. It is true that this an economic effort, but this is the space where volunteer work becomes an option. Firstly, NGOs must abide by transparent processes to provide visibility to their task and objectives. Each action, each peso invested socially will reward quality of life, direct and indirectly, as long as it is conducted with the expertise of those who work for the communities in need. This derives from the joint responsibility between productive sectors and citizens that are part of the State.

This section of the research contributes a prompt questioning to institutions that have charity at the core of their mission, or to narcissistic individuals that wish to do volunteer work without humanitarian motivation. There is a need to improve several processes, specifically those of organization of policies that govern AV institutions, acknowledging the real need for volunteers, who in turn, must face more rigorous and beneficial selection processes aimed at their personal and professional growth within the institutions.

The question is: How can the State and the NGOs motivate professionals to conduct volunteer work with a real humanitarian and ethical approach in Colombia? This is the challenge for this ongoing research and for others that are looking for a place in the country's post-conflict.

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