

## MANICHEAISM IN SCIENCE

In the Americas, the simple and exclusive polarization between two extremes, mostly with aspects of irrationality, has become the norm. It is a phenomenon that is taking place at the interior of society in practically all the countries of the world and in some cases has acquired a character exclusive of the other, with a worrying weight. Although we think that science, with its rational and methodical approach, should not be subjected to an extreme duality but, rather, be the object of inquiry, experimentation and change of opinion, the pandemic that affects the world has pushed humanity and, as part of it, the scientific community, to be part in extreme causes.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed uncanny realities. In the political aspect it has shown how the propensities towards one or another political ideologies are capable of altering the thinking of leaders and of experts in matters so elementary as is the recognition that we are facing a sanitary problem of utmost importance. Also, the promotion or rejection of measures that have been shown to be necessary for the prevention of infection, such as the use of facial masks and the distancing between persons.

In the therapeutic aspect, where it has been extremely difficult to understand the underlying processes and to achieve effective success in the treatment of patients, the diverging positions of researchers, treating physicians and health personnel, as well as politicians and government figures about the usage (or not) of certain drugs and procedures have shown to be Manichean. Such are the cases of the attitudes and technical and non-technical opinions, and even studies, regarding chlorine, the antimalarial chloroquine or the vermifuge ivermectine, among others.

The last straw is the outrageous dualism observed between those who stand for their administration and the incredible opposition of others in the case of the only measure truly effective against the propagation of the disease: vaccines.

The dramatically fast progress in manufacturing vaccines that took place in the case of SARS-Cov-2 undoubtedly con-

stitutes one of the successes most representative of the value of scientific research in recent times. On the other hand, the antagonism that the so-called “antivax” have displayed reveals an attitude that can very well be classified as criminal, by blindly opposing the immunization of the population. It would seem unthinkable that among the latter one finds not only people of a low educational level, but professional abound, including physicians and epidemiologists that, trusting conspirative theories of the most uncertain origin, bump up *ad infinitum* the risks, which certainly exist, of vaccination and, bring us close to the Gnosticism of other times and to the world of revelations in order to prove their ideas about a spontaneous disappearance. They voluntarily ignore that, beyond reasonable effectiveness and/or efficiency, vaccines are extraordinary in avoiding and practically eliminating the need for hospitalization of those infected after receiving them and, best of all, bring the mortality index to a level close to zero. They convert what could be considered a panacea or close to it, a universal good, into an intentional venom that causes the most incredible evil, a universal evil.

As if it would be a saving message, the idea is circulated of fighting at all costs against the only practical and effective way to terminate some day with the terrible evil that has affected humanity in present times. Reality is reduced to a conflict between good and evil, and distrust and fear become the goals of the deniers.

The scientific community ought to establish a solidary and solid front to counter the multiple negative aspects pointed at, and secure that our people overcome the current situation, making possible the vaccination of an overwhelming majority of the population and, thus, return to that desired normality of times previous to the pandemic.

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