

Zero Zen

“As the designers of their inner spaces, men are always involved, installed in the spaces of others, with whom they resonate and vibrate in a relationship between troubled and stressed-out containers providing mutual boundaries and containment” (1).

My Zero Zen Philosophy

Zero Zen is an attitude of resistance. It is being politically incorrect. It is to draw aside the veil of lies and unmask the verse of peace. Zero Zen is to look at myself inside and to acknowledge that all chaos and contradiction live within me and will continue to live within me forever. Because it is impossible to divest from the cultural clothing that I have worn all my life and head of to some Monastery, God knows where or in what imaginary place, to find peace.

There are no monasteries in the crazy world we live in. To get on board the everyday, with all the demands that this system implies, already means accepting that we are Zero Zen. To go to the supermarket and buy packaged food is Zero Zen. To look at ourselves in the mirror of the social networks is Zero Zen.

Zero Zen came to be one day about six years ago; I was sitting in the psychiatrist's waiting room loaded with anguish and depressed. This was my last resort. I had invested hours in yoga classes in the hope that after so much “homming” and stretching my body I would find peace. I was a dedicated student. Surely with a bit more effort I would lose the sense of vertigo, the stress and all my ailments. The teacher, very sure of herself, lit a candle before beginning each class and said a couple of words of pseudo-wisdom (of what brand I do not know), but it all sounded OK.

The psychiatrist made me wait a little bit longer than I would have expected, and so my anxiety was peaking. To calm down, I focused on the plants of the front yard of the house. As I was doing that, the door to the psychiatrist's office opened and my yoga teacher rushed out, with a face worse than mine.

Since that day, my philosophy is to be Zero Zen.

Zero Zen works

TAfter the Copernican twist, in the beginning of the Modern Era, mankind lost all its structural certainty

concerning the cosmos. Against the horrors of limitless space, man devoted itself with hysterical agitation to the construction of his own artificial vessel, swamped with comfort and technical nourishments of an unprecedented perfection; a world saturated by an overabundance of stimuli, in a desperate quest for a stress-free and protecting place.

Peter Sloterdijk describes and defines a new philosophical concept to understand lived-in space and experienced space. He defines it as essentially occupied by and from bubbles, globules and foam. He calls "sphere" that place that men create to have a place where they can exist how they really are.

Spheres are atmospheric/symbolic places; they are the original outcome of human convivence, spaces of co-existence, whether resulting of intra-uterine relations or relations of loving intimacy (micro-spheres). They also represent our insertion in local and global communities and political systems (macro-spheres). The metaphor of the spheroid space refers to a moment of intimacy, of resonances between two, three or more.

Spheres are extremely unstable, susceptible of being destroyed by external pressure or imploding. Wherever implosion occurs, common space disappears as such.

With the demotion of God's circle at the onset of Modernity and the loss of the notion of centre, there appear the notion of earth's globe and the virtual globe described by Sloterdijk as a 'poly-spheroid' world. Countless bubbles concentrated irregularly, sponges, clouds, whirlwinds, foam, are the formless and structure-less metaphors that describe this epoch.

In the absence of metaphysical refuge, man has recourse to armour himself against the horrors of unlimited space. Through technology, the Welfare State, the global market and the sphere of the media have attempted to recreate their original cavern, comfortable and protective of their intimate micro-spheres.

The excess of stimuli, impulses and information modifies perception, which becomes fragmented, disperse and superficial. Today, man lives in a world of agitation and acceleration, in a world of mortal hyperactivity. A world of hyper-stressed bubbles-globules-foams that is symptomatic of spiritual exhaustion.

Zero Zen is an attempt to portray this artificial civilizing world as the society of exhaustion. It uses for this the formless and structure-less metaphors of the spheres, with all their characteristic instabilities

and attempts to reveal through excess and the rupture of form these distributed spaces, torn and out-of-kilter that characterize the mad, frenzied human beings of our time.

Zero Zen uses clay with an emphasis on works that insist on excess, capricious deformation, irreverent colour, an instability of form, trying to show how the dissolution of all things solid, dematerialization, is the most salient characteristic of our time, and how this state is at the same time ephemeral, vertiginous and banal.

Sofia Donovan

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(1) Peter Sloterdijk in "Esferas I", Siruela, Madrid, 2003, p 86.