



Despite being theoretically abolished slavery still exists and is much closer to us than we think. Millions of people are manipulated on a daily basis through networks of prostitution and trafficking in persons, or other forms of exploitation, to meet particular interests.

Fabiola, a young ecuatorian facing difficulties in his country, he proposed to work in Spain in the care of a baby. But when he came here found that that was a lie: "I found that in addition to taking care of a baby, they forced me to sell on the streets and to make the work of the house. Worked more or less 16 hours a day without rest and without any remuneration. In some occasions I even had to sleep in a van". Like her, Bianca was also looking for a better life and that is why he came to Spain believing that she was going to work in a bar for drinks in Madrid. But the reality turned out to be very different: "a club of road in the middle of the field, on the outskirts of a town where I could not move, and forced me to be a prostitute".

"Where is your brother slave?"

These two women - both with fictitious names to protect their identities - put voice and face some of the forms of slavery today. A sad reality that precisely the Pope Francisco complained in his exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* (n. 211): "I would like to be heard the cry of God by asking all: 'Where is your brother?' (Gen 4:9). Where is your brother slave? Where is that you are killing each day in the clandestine workshop, in the prostitution network, in children who use for begging, in the one who has to work hidden because it has not been formalized? Let us not be the unwary. There is a lot of complicity. The question is for all! In our cities is installed this mafia crime and aberrant, and many have the hands fraught with blood due to the complicity comfortable and dumb".

To this question responds, for example Project Hope, an initiative of the congregation of Sisters Adorers that attends, with an integral support program, to women victims of trafficking and exploitation. In particular, since its inception in 1999, have attended 783 immigrant women of 22 nationalities as Fabiola and Bianca, who have generously given their testimony to mission. They have been slaves in the XXI century and, like them, millions of human beings are suffering from slavery, exploitation and degradation.

And so what does know Liberata, a Spanish association that has put to work to men and women in the fight against the trafficking in persons because, as they themselves have, "slaves today are cheaper than ever. Babies are sold for 45 euros in Ghana, are rented children begging in Thailand and in Spain you enslave people who perform agricultural tasks 10 hours a day, 6 days a week, for 30

euros".

Slaves in the twenty-first century

But in addition to these, today there are other forms of slavery, not less dangerous but more subtle, hiding a dehumanizing look toward the person, a gaze that has considered the human being a means to achieve certain benefits and interests. For example, industry emerged around the playback human that includes practices such as artificial reproduction techniques (TRA) or the surrogate gestation and has no false pretenses to promote abortion in pursuit of their objectives. In this regard, the professor and professor of Philosophy of Law at the University of Seville, Francisco Jose Contreras, explained in an article on the industry of the bellies of rent that the commodification of reproduction involves a business logic that includes the sovereignty of the consumer and the "quality control" that makes the child in mere merchandise.

Commodification and objectification of the person

In that sense, professor of anthropology at the University of Francisco de Vitoria, Angel Sanchez-Palencia, explains to Mission how it is possible to have reached this point. Claims to be a process that began with the "gestation of a new paradigm of human relations" in the XIV century, in which, with the development of the technique, the nature became an object that man should dominate to use for their own benefit. And there is also included the man himself. "This explains, for example, the rise of practices such as euthanasia, because what is and what is the effectiveness of a person of 80 years?" It is ultimately the objectification and commodification in terms of production of the person.

However, the work, says Sanchez-Palencia, "is not only a productive force, but it has a development dimension of personal creativity and contribution to the common good that should be the main purpose of any company, not only the achievement of benefits". Unfortunately, an ideal of domain and of production of the person is, unfortunately, so much more frequent than it should in our society.

Also, the professor added that man, to lose the gaze transcendent, cling to "assurances immanent that give the domain of things and of the people". And, to forget the faith and reduce the intellect to a reason scientist, the authority on the truth and the good are in the hands of the science and the law. "Forget God is the forgetfulness of being, in short, and as I said Max Scheler, 'never before as it has now become the man a problem for himself". However, there is still hope, whenever there is a change. "West is not going to transform with arguments, but by offering hope lived, unconditional love, universal understanding...that is what, in fact, has maintained to Spain during the crisis", says Sanchez-Palencia. "Would have to return to the roots of our western culture nutritional, which are the ones that have made large: biblical faith, the intellect greek and roman organizational legal genius; and the meeting of all this is Europe".

This is a big change of direction that would educate and train new generations in the profound dignity of man. It is therefore appropriate to recall testimonies such

as the St Josephine Bakhita, a woman who was a victim of trafficking, sold as a slave and exploited, but in their encounter with Christ, blessed God for their wounds that had led up to him and whose abusers was able to love and to forgive. Because understood that dignity is not given or removed the job he was forced to develop but was inscribed in it by the mere fact of being a person.

"No slaves but brothers"

The Pope Francisco devoted his message for the celebration of the World Day of Peace, 1 January 2015, to remind us that we are brothers and not slaves. Ensured that, in spite of the fact that the international community has adopted agreements to end slavery, "there are still millions of people - children, men and women of all ages - deprived of their freedom and forced to live in conditions similar to slavery". At the same time, pointed to the causes of this great evil of our time: "Today as yesterday in the root of slavery is a conception of the person who supports which can be treated as an object. When the sin corrupts the human heart, and it takes away from his Creator and of their peers, these are no longer seen as beings of the same dignity, as brothers and sisters in humanity but as objects. The person created in the image and likeness of God, is deprived of freedom, merchandised, reduced to be owned by another, with force, deception or physical or psychological constriction; is treated as a means and not as an end".

The bitter taste of slavery

Brazil is the eighth economic power in the world and the largest producer of coffee in the world. However, its economy is based in part on slave labor and child in their plantations. Big multinationals that control in 40 percent of world coffee sales, knew these practices and did nothing to remedy them. These dramatic conclusions emerge from the study bitter coffee made by the NGO Dan watch that, along with many other studies carried out by various associations and NGOs, suggest that at least fifteen coffee plantations in this country, there is now the forced labor, strenuous and degrading conditions that, in addition, are accentuated by the debts incurred by the workers who lead to situations of servitude. Or what is the same, to conditions of modern slavery. However, in 1995, Brazil was the first country in the world to recognize the existence of slave labor within their borders and began to remedy it. Between 1996 and 2014, nearly 49,000 people were released from the conditions of slave labor. Therefore, although there is still a long road ahead, Brazil is an example that other countries will have to continue to modify the practices of those who take advantage of the situations of need for other people.

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