

Cosas que vengo diciendo

Naranjo, Claudio. (2015) *Cosas que vengo diciendo*. Barcelona, Spain

Reviewed by Veronika Mužná

The author of „*Cosas que vengo diciendo*“ is Claudio Naranjo, a Chilean psychiatrist, writer, teacher and speaker. Naranjo is one of three direct followers of Fritz Perls (founder of gestalt therapy). He is dealing with the combination of psychotherapy and spiritual traditions; he also developed the psychology of the enneotype and established the SAT Institute, a school of psychospiritual integration. Claudio Naranjo believes that there is a need to change the world and the patriarchal focus of society and thinks that the only way to achieve this is through the transformation of education.

The book consists of 183 pages and it is divided into a prologue and five chapters, summarizing the author's basic ideas on the values of the western, patriarchal-oriented society and the need for a reform that should be implemented on a universal basis through the education system. At the end of the book, after the bibliography, the author's life and career are described on several pages. The chapters do not directly relate to one another, as it is a sum of Claudio's transcripts of lectures on various topics that are key to his learning.

I consider it important to describe the first chapter in more detail, as it presents the basic principles of Naranjo's thinking from which the book and all his learnings are based. The first chapter is called *Tres amores y tres cerebros* (Three loves and three brains). In this chapter, the author develops his love theory, explaining the conception of three brains and three types of loves:

The reptilian brain, which is the oldest part of the brain, including erotic and inward wishes culminating in the desire to be happy. Naranjo also calls it „inner reptile“. This brain is **instinctive** and it is embodied by a **child**.

The middle brain is the seat of **love** and **emotion**, in which it is embodied by the **mother**, as it is the part of brain that cares and gives. According to Naranja, this love culminates in compassion.

The Neocortex is a part of the brain that is the most applicable in today's culture, as it is the youngest. Naranjo therefore calls it **intellectual**. It suppresses the other two brains and is embodied by the **father's** figure. This concept is attributed to love – friendship, and this love culminates in admiration, that lies in the perception of the other as divine.¹

In education, we are still very much focused on performance in intellectual and schooling skills (intellectual brain) for which pupils are evaluated, and much less emphasis is placed on social skills (emotional brain) and real support for individuality (reptilian brain), which is a disadvantage for people with special educational needs. In my opinion, if more emphasis was placed on education in emotions and feelings, the concept of inclusion would be much more practical to work with, but it would have already begun with the teachers themselves.

Naranjo says that the Christian culture despised the body, the instinct and the search for pleasure and joy; and the culture which our present-day Western world arose in, despises compassion. According to the author, the fundamental problem of Western society lies in the imbalance that arises between the three brains for the benefit of the intellectual brain. He believes that the key to contentment is the fulfillment of the human being, which stems from the equilibrium of the mentioned 3 components and in the knowledge and conscience of oneself through them. This is the imbalance, according to him, which has led to the world to be in a crisis, and the only way to remedy is through education.

So these are the basic ideas which the author works with and further develops them in the following chapters: *Ciencia y conciencia de la conciencia* (*Science and awareness of the conscience*), *La dimension espiritual de la psicoterapia y el nuevo chamanismo* (*The spiritual dimension of psychotherapy and the new shamanism*), *El potencial salvifico de la educacion* (*The salvific potential of education*).

The disadvantage of such a publication is the fact that some topics and some thoughts are repeated throughout the chapters, but the author's way of expression is so keen, clear and creative that he is not boring, yet on the contrary, the repeatedly conveyed idea is seen in a different light.

I noticed the author's incredible intellect from the fact that his thoughts are based on a large number of primary sources, which he uses in a natural, yet non-confrontational manner (and it is a long list, for example: Sigmunde Freud, Friedrich Nietzsche, George Gurdjieff, Rof Carballo, Wilhelm Reich, Stuart Mill, Teresa de Ávila, Hubert Benoit, Konrad Lorenz, Aristoteles, Christus...). I see this as very beneficial in view of the possible controversy that may occur. Because as he says: „*It can be recognized that the word love is a true taboo – a term that can be used in art, in literature and in*

¹ I think this culmination could be accurately illustrated by quoting one Celestine excerpt: Sempronio: „Are you not a Christian?“
Calixto: „I'm Melibea / And I love Melibea / And I love and believe in Melibea.“ (Rojas de, 1913)

religion, perhaps, but not in science – that the academic world is the criterion of the true.” (Naranjo, 2015, p.146)

In conjunction to this, Naranjo criticizes the values of today's Western society, where war values prevail above the values of love, and the competition over the co-operation. I approve of this idea and it seems to me that these oppressed values would be very beneficial in today's inclusive education. What is inclusion really about? I think it is about **accepting** that even people with disabilities who have difficult living conditions are part of our world and society. Naranjo, in his work, represents love in a similar way, it is about the **acceptance** of oneself and of the other person with everything, without conditions, included his shortcomings. I think, in order to be able of inclusion, we should first be able to love.

I think the publication is beneficial for those who would like to learn about Claudio Naranjo, whoever it is, and it could be specially beneficial for those who have the power to change things – teachers of primary, secondary and tertiary schools.

A little disadvantage is that the book does not originate in the Czech translation, however, if the reader understands Spanish, it is not only an intellectual but also an excellent literary experience.

Bibliography

ROJAS, Fernando de (1913): edición y notas de J. Cejador y Frauca (Madrid: Ediciones de «La lectura»)