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ADVERTISING AND PHILOSOPHY. REASONABLE RESEMBLANCES

María Teresa Pellicer Jordá¹: University of Murcia. Spain
maite.pellicer@um.es

Antonio Parra Pujante: University of Murcia. Spain.
aparra@um.es

ABSTRACT

Advertising transmits a philosophy having its own life, which entails the sum of some of the aspects that shape the diverse philosophical theories of all times. The comparison of the principles between some and other philosophies will offer a joint vision, which will allow us better understanding of the advertising phenomenon. Along this article, we will analyze the most important principles of the main ethical theories and find reasonable resemblances.

KEY WORDS

Advertising-Ethics-Philosophy-Standards-Morality-Society-Values-Adverts-Education

PUBLICIDAD Y FILOSOFÍA. PARECIDOS RAZONABLES

RESUMEN

La publicidad transmite una filosofía de vida propia, la cual supone una suma de algunos de los aspectos que conforman las diversas teorías filosóficas de todos los tiempos. La comparación de los principios entre unas y otras nos ofrecerán una visión conjunta, que nos permitirán comprender mejor el fenómeno publicitario. A lo

¹ **María Teresa Pellicer Jordá**: La autora es profesora en la Facultad de Comunicación y Documentación de la Universidad de Murcia. Es autora de dos libros, titulados 'Ética y estrategias publicitarias' y 'La publicidad como industria cultural', así como de varios artículos en revistas especializadas en Comunicación.
maite.pellicer@um.es

largo de este artículo, analizaremos los principios más importantes de las principales teorías éticas y encontraremos parecidos razonables.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Publicidad-Ética-Filosofía-Normas- Moral-Sociedad-Valores-Anuncios-Educación

1. INTRODUCTION

As Henri Bonnet explains:

"For centuries, the philosophical thought in our Western civilization has offered ethical principles, sometimes incompatible and therefore in constant discussion, to justify or promote certain forms of life, moral demands or socio-political ideals, from those Platonic dialogues - so far in time and in force in their ethical subject - up to the recent and controversial postmodern philosophers (1999: 21-22)."

2. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The truth is that advertising advocates also certain values, lifestyles, etch, which form a philosophy proper to advertising. Throughout this article, we compare the main philosophical theories of all times with the advertising philosophy, which will allow us to find reasonable resemblances. To this end, we will analyze the main philosophical movements, with particular emphasis on the following points:

- Concept and defense of ethics and morality in all areas of life. This way, we will know the importance of these issues and how they are defined according to various theories.
- The idea of happiness reflected in each of them, as it is directly linked to morality and is the main message conveyed through advertising. All ads, regardless of the product or service they sell, ultimately transmit the idea of happiness the consumer will have when getting that product or service. Hence we want to know what concept of happiness there is in each of these theories and whether this concept is present in them.
- The way of living and acting they propose, because advertising also works in this area by suggesting ways of behavior.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1. Advertising, the sophist of the 21st century

The first philosophical movement we will discuss is sophistry, a stream whose

principles are reminiscent of present time as far as advertising is concerned, as you will see in the following lines.

The sophistic movement appears in Greece in the fifth century. It is externally characterized by a few notes: they are itinerant teachers, travelling from town to town, teaching young people and teaching for money through a fee, a new case in Greece that quite surprised the society of the time.

But what was this teaching? These philosophers - who were not considered as such by Aristotle and Plato - taught "*the art of speaking persuasively in public, through the practice of argumentation and continued exercise in debates on ethical or political issues (Melero Mellido, 1996: 11)*", something fundamental in the Athens of the time. This Idea is to be highlighted, because persuasion is the ultimate advertising tool. In such a case and making an analogy, we could say that sophists taught make advertising that time, an eminently oral advertising. Therefore, the Sophists taught how to convince, using persuasion, just as advertising does today. Moreover, the courses taught by sophists (Melero Mellido, 1996: 15) were the object of prior advertising, a *epangelia*, the formulation of which could be very general. For example, Protagoras promised moral perfection or political excellence. That is, Sophists already knew of advertising promises and slogans, which makes this philosophical movement even more valuable to us.

Returning to the earlier idea of rhetoric, the teaching of Sophists, we must emphasize the following idea they put forward: it is to say things in a way that they convince, to say good. The truth does not matter. Perhaps that is why Sophists were not considered philosophers, as we mentioned in previous lines, by Aristotle and Plato, who defended the truth and good thinking (Marias 1941: 69). Here we also see an analogy with advertising. The important thing is to sell, not the truth. Things have to be said, as Sophists advocated, in order to convince. That is what matters in advertising, selling, a qualifying aspect that we will continue to qualify throughout this piece of research.

From the above, we can draw the two main criticisms made to sophists: "*Sophists were not serious thinkers, but a kind of chatterboxes, without any serious philosophical knowledge; and they were profoundly immoral (Marias 1941: 53)*." This idea was ratified by Aristotle, when he said that "sophistry is apparent, not real wisdom; and the sophist is a businessman of apparent, not real wisdom (Marias 1941: 75).

Let us highlight another aspect within sophistry: the presence of money. As we have seen, Sophists taught the art of rhetoric in exchange for money, something unusual and criticized in Greece at that time. At this point, we also find similarities with advertising, where the economy, and thus money, are essential.

Drawing an analogy between sophistry and advertising, we could say that the Sophists taught persuasive techniques, rhetoric, in exchange for money. The application of this knowledge was up to the student, who would determine where,

when and how to apply this knowing how to convince. We could continue with this analogy by saying that advertising is a student of Sophistry, which learned the technique very well and decided to apply it to the sale of products and services, which allowed making money.

But let us go further with Plato's description of Sophists:

In the first place – the sophist - turned out to be a salary hunter for wealthy youth (...) Secondly, someone who trades in the sciences of the soul (...) Thirdly, the sophist has not been revealed as a retailer of the same subjects (...) Fourth, someone who offers for sale the products of his invention to teach sciencea (...) And fifth, a sort of athlete in the competition of speeches, who has appropriated the art of eristic (...) The sixth point is certainly debatable; however, we agreed to grant him that he is a purifier of the opinions that are an obstacle to knowledge of the soul (Melero Mellido, 1996: 73-74).

In this description we can also find references to current advertising. We make the following interpretation, according to quotation from Plato:

- Advertising is a salary hunter for wealthy and not wealthy youth, as it encourages consumption, which has different connotations as we shall see throughout this piece of research.
- Advertising trades in the sciences of the soul, because it sells values, stereotypes, dreams, desires, emotional well-being, etc.
- Advertising is a kind of athlete in the competition of speeches, mainly due to the existing huge advertising competition and the need to convince faster and faster than the competitor.
- Advertising is a purifier of opinions, since, as we shall see below, it is responsible for creating models of behavior and social habits.

We have seen that sophistry and advertising have many more elements in common than the ones we could initially think of, leading us to affirm that sophistry in Greece is today's advertising. They agree on postulates, objectives and ways of acting. Advertising is the sophist of the 21st century.

3.2. Socrates and the need for morality

As mentioned earlier, man had become the protagonist of Greek philosophy. If the Sophists focused on how to make man, on the outside, Socrates begins a reflective stage, where what matters is to know oneself. This stance is what would lead the philosopher to say that "unexamined life is not worth living (Chris Robinson, 2005: 32), a life in which the gods and they, through nature, offer man what is important in life, something that is especially important in his theories.

As we see, the Socratic ethics urges to know oneself, but it also has moral shades, something not seen in the previously studied sophistic trend. This is what interests us out of its postulates, the introduction of the concept of morality. To Socrates, moral knowledge can be achieved through debate and discussion, but he clarifies that "morality is not a kind of knowledge that can really be taught (2005: 33)," adds Dave Chris-Robinson.

Right and important, as we said, it is that Socrates reflects on morality and its necessity in life. Morality becomes, thus, something essential to get happiness, another important thing to note in the Socratic philosophy. The philosopher himself explains it as follows:

Even pleasures themselves, which are the sole purpose that seems to lead men to incontinence, it cannot lead them to get them, while self-control is what mostly makes it possible to enjoy pleasures. (...) But only those who have self-control can look at things that matter most and, with words and facts discerning them in their classes, choose the good and stay away from evil. So this was the way he said that men came to be the best and the happiest and the most able to discourse and dialogue (Xenophon, 1967: 169).

You see how morality becomes, according to Socrates, the cause and reason of happiness, morality makes the best men, the men who can best govern. But as we said, not only this idea or morality, which the philosopher introduced in all areas of life and leads to the best professionals, is important but the conception of happiness as a result of that morality is also relevant. That is. ethical and moral behavior makes men happy, according to Socrates. If we consider that our paper focuses on ethic or lack of ethic, in many cases, in advertising, we might conclude, always following the Socratic postulates, that ethical advertising would make men happier, an issue on which we will continue reflecting all over this piece of research.

3.3. Plato. Happiness as the supreme good.

Plato's philosophy is very wide and, therefore, we will focus on those aspects that are useful to us for our research. These are: the concept of good, happiness and the introduction of the concept of society as something important to man, according to Plato. These three aspects are the ones we consider to be more important to our object of study and, therefore, we will analyze them conveniently.

We started talking about the concept of good of Plato, a philosopher whose main goal was always to find the essence of things. To Plato, the true good of man is achieved through virtue, which is related to knowledge. But how is that knowledge acquired? The philosopher explained it through one of his myths, the myth of the Phaedrus, a myth in which the soul is compared to a chariot drawn by two horses, one docile and of a good breed and another wayward (sensual instincts and passions)

run by a charioteer (reason). This chariot goes around the world of ideas, but the difficulties to guide the shooting of the two horses make the soul fall and, therefore, be embodied in the body, a body that will be either animal or human depending on whether the soul has been the ideas or not. Thus, the origin of man is "*the fall of a soul, of celestial origin, that has seen the ideas but, when incarnating in man, does not remember them* (Marias 1941: 77)." Plato explains it this way:

So let us say that (the soul) resembles the joint forces of a winged team and a driver; the horses and drivers of divine souls are all excellent and of a good breed; but in the other beings, their nature participates in good and evil. So, in us, the driver runs two horses, one is excellent and of an excellent breed, the other is very different from the first one and is also of a different origin. Now, such a pair of horses has to be painful and difficult to guide. (...) The virtue of the wings is to take what is heavy to the highest regions inhabited by the race of gods, and participate in what is divine more than all corporeal things. Now, the divine is beautiful, good and wise and all what has similar qualities; and it is also what sustains and fortifies the wings of the spirit; all other opposing qualities, such as evil or ugliness, weaken them and make them lose (2003: 164).

With this myth, Plato recalls once again the idea, as Socrates would do, that knowing is not seeing what is outside but what is inside of us. That is the method of knowledge which will make us reach the virtue and, therefore, good.

Another myth that is of interest to our object of study is the famous myth of the Cave, a myth in which the situation of man with philosophy and the structure of reality is symbolically represented. From this myth, regardless of the reflection on the principles of Plato, we can reel off a major idea: how difficult it is to swim against the tide. This is a very current thinking which can also be reflected in the advertising world and its effects on society. Hence the reason for citing this text. Continuing our reflection, we can say that advertising today imposes a certain world, success-guaranteeing habits of life and, ultimately, models of behavior. As it happens to a chained person who knows that reality is not as his peers think and fears for his life if he tells them, we could say that today, according to the standards set by advertising, it is difficult to swim against the tide without being socially damaged by that feat. It is an interesting reflection that can be transferred to any field, and that we apply to the world of advertising. What would happen to someone who wanted to distance himself from the patterns of behavior that are socially accepted and largely implemented by advertising? Would he be ostracized by his peers? Or else why we all want to take that model of life, even if we sometimes do not have the economic resources? Why should all of us carry the latest generation mobile or anyone aspires to have a Mercedes Benz? Could it be perhaps because those lifestyles that are, again,

suggested by advertising are those who assure us social success and nonmarginalization?

Attention to the following quotation from Plato: "*If a character type is stronger than the others, so to speak, don't you think that it will drag others along?* (Blackburn, 2007: 131)." Yes, only this way can political systems arise. This idea of the author confirms the approach we have described in the previous paragraph. The point is that the stronger character, in this case advertising is stronger for its ability to spread and the values it transmits, values and desires that are part of the aspirations of all. Perhaps that is why advertising is stronger, because it makes us believe that we will achieve, ultimately, long-awaited happiness through social success and everything it promises us.

Another interesting quote from the philosopher is this one: "*Look at what I'm going to say, which of these two things does painting always and in all cases aim at? Does it represent the facts of the real world or appearances? Is the appearance what it represents or the truth?* (Blackburn, 2007: 150)". We consider this quote to be interesting since it reminds us of some of the criticism to which advertising is subjected, whether it sells real things or appearances. We will continue mulling over these ideas, but we will continue to study the philosophy of Plato in this myth.

As Julian Marias explains, this myth symbolizes "*at the same time the ontological structure of reality and the significance of philosophy*" (1941: 79), introducing a fundamental unity between these two worlds. But we must not forget that the journey of the man of the myth is a round trip: the chained person, once he has seen the world of light and freedom, returns to the cave. That is, "*he will explain reality from the shadows, from the ideas of sensible reality* (1941: 80). Plato considers thus that "*philosophy is the intellectual process that allows fleeing from the world of appearances to enter the world of ideas* (Roura, 2001: 26)".

Once the concept of good of Plato has been studied, and the supreme idea has been considered, let us move on to study his conception of happiness, directly related to the previous idea. To Plato, happiness is possible when man is capable of reaching ideas, that is, up to the essence of things. That essence is reached through virtue, which was dealt with above. We see how the concept of happiness Plato is very deep and has to do with the inside of man and not with his outside, as advertising has us believe.

The third of Plato's ideas that we would like to highlight is related to society. The philosopher sees society as something natural to man, ie man needs to live in society because he is not self-sufficient but needs others.

As explained by the philosopher (1989: 59), the city can be considered too, like the soul, as a whole composed of three parts, corresponding to the psychic. These parts are the three great social classes that it recognizes: the people, composed of

merchants, industrialists and farmers; watchers and philosophers. Each of these groups has a virtue: the virtue of the producing classes is temperance, that of watchers or warriors is strength, and that of philosophers is wisdom. One important idea in the concept of society put forward by Plato is that education is which will determine the class that one is to belong. As we see, the principle of specialization is the basis of morality in the State of Plato. As he says, " *there is nothing more harmful to the city that mutual interference of these three classes or change of roles between them and nothing could be described as a crime with more reason* (Blackburn, 2007: 87)."

Within this concept of society, the philosopher introduces another idea, that of justice, which would be good balance and relationship between the individuals with one another and with the state, and the different classes among themselves and with the social community.

Regarding this third idea of Plato, we must make several comments. The first refers to that differentiation of social classes and the idea that, when they intermingle, problems come up and balance of society disappears. In this regard, we note that advertising tries to homogenize society, ie, that there are no social classes or that all of us aspire to a social class to which we do not belong, obviously a social class above ours. Hence come many of the frustrations of the people, who see how their not being able to afford certain goods condemns them to a lower social class. This is one of the recurring ideas in advertising, which always encourages us to get more.

A second thought is that, if in society of Plato, education determined the social class to which one belongs, in today's society the determining factor is money and what you can buy with that money.

3. 4. Aristotle and his pursuit of happiness

The philosophy of Aristotle is primarily focused on the pursuit of happiness, hence the importance of his theories to us, because, as we explained above, happiness is the ultimate dream or feeling sold by advertising. Hence the importance of studying the different conceptions that have existed about it over time. But the question of happiness will not be the only thing that interests us about of the philosopher, but there are two others that we will also study: the introduction of the concept of fantasy and the conception of trade of Aristotle.

We started talking about happiness, a concept around which the whole philosophy of the Greek author centers. To Aristotle, good is the ultimate end of things and therefore of human actions and he puts happiness as the highest good, that is, as the greatest good that men can have.

The next question in this regard is, what is happiness to Aristotle? "*Happiness is the fullness of the active realization of man, in what it has that is properly human* (Marías 1941: 103)." A definition that is suitable for any time since it is certain that happiness is a direct consequence of the complete fulfillment of man. He adds that "*all generally*

agree that happiness is the greatest and most precious of goods to which man can aspire (Aristotle, 2000: 22)."

But how to achieve that happiness? According to Aristotle himself, the three greatest goods of happiness to man are "virtue, prudence and pleasure (2003: 15) or, what is the same, external goods, the goods of the soul and the goods of the body. To be happy, according to the philosopher, one must achieve harmony between these three goods and he summarizes this view in the following sentence: "*Fairness is the most beautiful, health is the best and getting what one loves is the sweetest thing to the heart (1992: 82).*" We see how Aristotle conceives happiness as harmony between these three goods, but stresses the need for man to strive to achieve them. Thus he says that happiness is not an effect of chance. It is both a gift of the gods and the result of our efforts. Only in light of happiness we do everything we do and he adds another interesting phrase to our study: "*One becomes virtuous by undertaking actions of virtue (1992: 105).*"

According to the above, to Aristotle, happiness is achieved through the efforts of man to get those three precious goods, implying man's fight, a fight to take man to achieve his goal. The funny thing is that this Aristotelian conception of happiness and how to achieve it that seems reasonable enough to us is different from what advertising conveys: happiness achieved through what is material, without any effort or with the effort of the purchase. This is the way one is happy, as advertising ads try to convey.

The second aspect we will address within the Aristotelian philosophy is fantasy. The philosopher, in his theory, introduces the concept of imagination, which is interesting to our subject because advertising plays a lot with that fantasy and our fantasies, fantasy to succeed, be handsome, young, etc. Through an ad, advertising encourages our imagination and our ability to imagine. In this sense, Aristotle explains that "*in front of what is pure, typical of perception, we have the fantasy (...), which is a weak thing. Imagination has a nature of weakness in relation to the strength and clarity proper to the real things (Zubiri, 2005: 25).*" Xavier Zubiri adds that "philosophy, at least as inspired by Aristotle, assigned a third character to fantasy, which is free mobility (2005: 36). That free mobility is what makes, for example, buyers of a major brand, such as Nike, feel better regarded, socially speaking, and they ultimately feel in a particular social group, although it may not be so, as discussed below.

Aristotle went further in his philosophy, referring to trade ethics, the third aspect we want to emphasize, since advertising has a close relationship with trade, as it seeks to advertise products of various businesses, which are called brands today, for sale. Sergio Ramos summarizes the concept of trade shared not only by Aristotle but by later trends as well, and he does it this way:

He -Aristotle- distinguished between *oikonomikos* or domestic trade, which he approved and considered essential to the functioning of any society, and *chrematisike* or trade for profit. The latter, which we can clearly identify with advertising, was clearly deemed by Aristotle as devoid of virtue and he even regarded those engaged in these practices, particularly to lend money, as parasites. The great thinkers of the Middle Ages, theologians committed to

their church, also condemned the avarice and greed of merchants. The idea that trade and business are amoral dates back to that time. This way of thinking did not change when businessmen separated ethics from economy in the late eighteenth century due to the influence of the classical economists, who justified economy with a utilitarian approach and, for purposes of analysis, considered it a set of lucrative activities outside ethical considerations. Back to this period dates the notion that ethics is one thing and business another, that is, as the saying goes today, business is business (2008: 9).

3.5. The Cynics. The independence of man.

We have seen so far several conceptions of happiness, something about which, let us repeat it, we care especially as it is one of the most important advertising claims, if not the principal. Now we will know the conception of happiness of the cynics, a different conception from the concept studied so far, but it introduces an important element: the independence of man, another aspect also partially related to current advertising.

With the Cynics, the paradigm within the philosophy studied so far changes. As Julian Marias explains:

The cynical doctrine, if it exists, is very scarce; it is rather the renunciation of all theory, disdain for the truth. Only what is used to live matters, as understood in the cynical way. The good of man is simply to live in society with himself. (...) The pleasure of senses and love are the worst, what must be shied away to the utmost. Work, exercise, ascetic behavior, it is the only desirable thing to man according to the Cynics, and indifferent family and homeland. They feel they are citizens of the world. It is the first major appearance of cosmopolitanism, which will gravitate so strongly in the Hellenistic and Roman world (1941: 110).

Thus, we see how the Cynics talked about man's independence and the renunciation of truth, the latter being shared, in part, by the Sophists. Advertising focuses more on social success, it is true, but always from man's independence. Now, for the Cynics, pleasures and riches have no place, something totally antagonistic to the current society and the concept of advertising.

3.6. The Epicureans. Pleasure as the true good.

With the Epicureans, again we see another change in the philosophical paradigm. The Epicurean philosophy is materialistic, unlike the trends studied so far. Everything is corporeal, formed by the aggregation of various atoms. To them, the universe is pure mechanism without purpose of any of the gods to intervene in it.

That attachment to material things, as we say, is another aspect advocated by current advertising, and it is not the only aspect of the Epicureans that interests us, but there is another that we will analyze: the positive conception of pleasure as the true good of man. Epicurus himself explains it this way:

We say that pleasure is the starting point and the end of a blessed life. Because we recognize pleasure as the primary and innate good. We begin every act of acceptance and rejection based on it, and it is to pleasure where we return when using our experience of pleasure as the criterion of all good things. (...) Every living creature, from the moment of birth, revels in pleasure and endures pain caused by to natural causes regardless of reason (Long, 1984: 69).

This positive conception of the pleasure of the material is interesting, as so far the intellectual and intangible pleasures were the only ones allowed by philosophers to win happiness for all. Pleasure becomes, this way, what identifies the things that are good or bad for man, according to the Epicureans. But we should make an exception. Epicurus requires very specific conditions for pleasure:

It must be pure, without mixture of pain or displeasure; It must be durable and stable; it must let the man finally be his own master, free, imperturbable (...) With this, sensual pleasures are completely removed to make way for others, more subtle and spiritual, and above all, friendship and the joys of the deal. Violent passions are excluded from Epicurean ethics. The ideal of the wise, then, the serene man, moderate in everything, governed by temperance, without concerns (...) Neither adversity nor physical pain, nor death alter the Epicurean (Long, 1984: 69).

We again see at this point identifications with current advertising, as success in social relationships is one of the fundamental values sold by advertising. In fact, even when it seems to sell the idea of sensuality, it is with the aim to attract other people, so that social success is once again the transmitted value.

Regarding prudence, Epicurus states:

Prudence is the starting point of the sources of pleasure and the greatest good. Therefore, caution is something even more valuable than philosophy. From prudence stem all the other virtues and it teaches that it is not possible to live pleasantly without living wisely, nobly and justly without living pleasantly. For virtues are naturally linked to living pleasantly and living pleasantly is inseparable from them (Long, 1984: 75).

Thus, we see how, to the Epicureans, happiness is easily achievable. You only need to find pleasure and avoid pain. Doesn't this conception remind us of the model of modern society? We believe that the similarity in terms of the philosophy of life of the Epicurean and modern society is quite large, despite the centuries that separate them. This view, as we shall see, was created largely by advertising, which advocates consumption and the purchase or acquisition of material products as satisfactions of pleasure and thus the cause of happiness.

3.7. Kant. Duty for duty's sake.

The following philosophical theory that we are going to study is that of Kant. From him, we are interested in three fundamental issues, in our view, that Kant reflected in his theories: the concept of man, the importance of duty and morality and the concept of happiness.

According to Roura "*when Kant made his appearance, rationalism had become dogmatism and empiricism, for its part, spoke of experience as the only possibility to get knowledge and it had absolutely invalidated reason, leading to skepticism (2001: 27)*".

We began studying the concept of man according to Kant. His theory revolves around the question: What is man?, a question which, in turn, includes three others: What do I know?, What should I do? and what do you expect? That is, the author, to know what man is, must first know his chances of knowledge, the right course of action and the goal or goals that will be achieved with such behavior, because, to Kant, the way of action is essential in achieving any goal.

The next question that arises from the anterior approach is, how should we act? According to the philosopher, the answer is clear: with morality and responsibility. Regarding the first issue, that of morality, Kant's theory is based on duty for duty's sake. It is, as Roura explains, "human behavior should not be conditioned by any good or end to be obtained and, therefore, not be based on a series of moral maxims which ensure the provision of that good. It should be based on duty for duty's sake (2001: 27). In this case, happiness would be an end, in principle, it should not be sought by man, but is a result of these actions based on morality. That is, to Kant, things should be well done because it should be this way, regardless of the goals you pursue. This is a key idea because it highlights the importance of always acting according to morality, ignoring the claims of each and this idea should be applied to advertising, which should always comply with the ethical and moral standards, regardless of its purpose

Thus, we can summarize Kant's thinking with some of his maxims:

- Aspiration to virtue: man must do things in the best possible way.
- The moral content becomes the moral duty of every life.
- The binding of duty
- Work only according to such a maxim that you may want it at the same time to become a universal law (Kant, 1967: 78)
- Man is an end in himself, he has dignity
- "Act so that you use humanity, both in your person and in the person of any other, always as an end at the same time and never merely as a means (Kant, 1967: 41)."

This last aspect, the binding of duty, would be what Kant called the categorical imperative. According to the author, the moral duties are unconditional and universalized. It adds that "*moral laws - the categorical imperative - derive from the legislation of one's own will (1967: 225).*

Kant distinguishes two types of imperative: one is the categorical, of which we have already spoken, and the hypothetical imperative. He explains them as follows:

All imperatives command, either hypothetically or categorically. Those represent the practical need for possible action as a means to achieve anything you want. The categorical imperative would be the one that represents an action in itself, without reference to any other purpose, as objectively necessary. Then the imperative says what action possible to me is good, and it represents the practical rule in relation to a will that does not perform an action just because it is good and also because, even if I knew, its maxims could be contrary to the objective principles of a practical reason. (...) The hypothetical imperative only says that the action is good for any potential or actual purpose. (...) The categorical imperative, without any reference to a purpose, ie, with no other desire, declares the objectively necessary action in itself, it has a practical value of an apodictic principle (1967: 62).

The second issue raised by the author is responsibility for the acts. We should not do things just because they are good, we have a duty to do them and the duty to take responsibility for our actions and words. These statements have an implicit issue: human freedom, which is what makes man responsible for his actions. Kant distinguishes two worlds: the world of nature and freedom. The first one is determined by natural causality, but next to it, Kant admits causality by freedom that prevails in the other field. This idea of responsibility is important in that society today has little interest in it. In fact, freedom, as Kant says, is what must lead us to take that responsibility and, as we know, the idea of freedom we have in today's society and advertising is very different. It is rather a freedom that allows us to do whatever we want, without studying the consequences and, of course, without an implicit responsibility. Kant also deals with the idea of happiness and he does it as follows:

Power, wealth, honor, health itself and the complete satisfaction and contentment of the state itself, under the name of happiness, give value, and after it, sometimes arrogance, if there is no willingness to rectify and fit the influence of this happiness into a universal end. (...) In reality, we find that the more man worries about a cultivated reason to enjoy life and achieve happiness, the more he stays away from real satisfaction; so many, and precisely the most experienced ones in the use of reason, just end up feeling. Be honest enough to confess it - a certain degree of misogyny or hatred of reason, because computing all advantages they have. I do not say and the invention of the arts, all being of vulgar luxury, but even of the sciences that

look like a luxury of understanding, find out, however, that they have thrown up more aches and pains than happiness, and rather envy than despise the ordinary man, who is more conducive to the direction of mere natural instincts and does not allow his reason to exercise great influence on his doing and omitting (1967: 27).

As we see, the author emphasizes that there is an obsession for happiness, an obsession that in most cases not only does not make us happy, but miserable instead. Man always wants more and society, and in this case advertising, shows parameters of happiness that man can rarely get. Having the latest car model or the most expensive clothes are, according to advertising, the key to happiness, though it is really not like that and not everyone has the economic power to acquire these products. That is, today the money is that which makes happiness, because it is what allows us to buy, buy chic clothes that allow us to have more friends or have the most modern and stylish car that will allow us to have a better job or use products that make us eternally young to have a beautiful, rich and intelligent partner. This is the approach of advertising regarding happiness, happiness that sells its products and services as if they were wrapped in its magical aura, an aura that leads immediately to the best of congratulations. We have emphasized this idea throughout this piece of research and will continue to talk about it. Why? Because, like other philosophers, Kant says that happiness itself is an indirect duty - at least - and that duty to be happy is what makes one's conduct to have a true moral value. That is, all authors point to happiness of man as a duty or an end one must reach. True, everyone craves for it, but we may not know where to find it. So we trust that happiness promised by advertising, which seems very sure to know where it is.

3.8. Nietzsche and his will to power

With Nietzsche we see a change of moral approach. In fact, the author defends non-morality. As Julian Marias explains, he is a powerful affirmer of powerful individuality: the highest good is life itself, culminating in the will to power. Man must overcome, end up in something that is above him, as man is above the monkey; That is the superman (1941: 48).

This analysis of Marias summarizes the fundamental points of the philosophy or approach of Nietzsche. First talk about the individuality of man. Secondly, the will to power that everyone must have. And these two ideas lead us to the fundamental idea of the philosophy of the author: the superman.

This superman is characterized by the following features:

- Rejects the morality of slaves;
- Creates new values, alien to morality and directly related to the world of life;

- Does not believe in God or transcendent realities;
- Likes risk, new experiences;
- Loves the intensity of life, joy, excitement;
- Is the master of his own life and lives in freedom

If we analyze these characteristics we realize that the superman Nietzsche talks about is by no means a negative character, but he has values like self-improvement, the joy of living, the struggle. The truth is that Nietzsche has often been misinterpreted and used for other purposes, his personality being manipulated according to the interests. It is the case of Nazism, who used this concept of superman in the wrong way and as a justification for heinous acts.

In addition, this, strong, powerful, independent superman is the superman and the superwoman advocated by advertising. We should all be supermen, is the morality of the strong against the weak and the sick. Only the strongest one prevails, the handsomest, the cleverest, who does not believe in anything or anyone but himself and his possibilities. Is it not true that the weak, the sick or the failed is what never comes in ads and the protagonists of ads are strong, lively, classy and in a good social position, ie power?

3.9. Utilitarianism. Pleasure leads to happiness.

The following philosophical trend we are going to deal with is utilitarianism. Under the name of utilitarianism we find various trends born in the late eighteenth century and developed throughout the nineteenth century in England. The three most important figures in this movement are Jeremy Bentham, James Mill and John Stuart Mill. One of the backgrounds of this trend is found in Helvetius, who claimed that man's life revolved around the pursuit of happiness and desire to avoid pain. And in that aspect, the pursuit of happiness, is where we will focus within utilitarianism. According to Mill, the foundation of utilitarianism or the Principle of Greatest Happiness maintains that actions are correct insofar as they tend to promote happiness and wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. But what is meant by happiness? It would be the "*pleasure or absence of pain, so unhappiness would be pain and lack of pleasure (Robinson-Chris, 2005: 71),*" the two sovereign masters of man that determine his behavior, as added Dave Robinson . This idea was ratified by Bentham, who believed that utilitarianism could be a change in society, a reform that should be based on the concept of pain and pleasure as two fundamental elements in nature. To the author, this greatest happiness makes it possible to distinguish between right and wrong. Derived from this approach and as a result thereof, we see that the basic premise of utilitarianism is the search for maximum pleasure for the greatest possible number of people, and that pleasure is the direct cause of

happiness. That is, the utilitarians thought they knew how happiness is achieved, with pleasure and absence of pain. Another novel idea in this flow is that the utilitarians believed it was possible to measure these pleasures, a complicated and impossible task in our view. But how could you get this? As follows: according to its intensity, duration, certainty or uncertainty, proximity or remoteness and the number of affected people (2007: 71). As explained by Esperanza Guisán, in the theories of Mill *"it is demonstrated that human happiness is a difficult achievement that involves the implementation of a series of moral springs, that it does not resemble the happiness enjoyed by our brothers the pigs (2007: 7). "* But they go beyond this idea, as John Stuart Mill thought that the pleasures could be measured not only quantitatively but also qualitatively, as they pointed out that certain pleasures were more desirable than others, such as the intellect. The truth is that, as noted by Esperanza Guisán, this quality of the pleasures raised by Mill is one of the differences between the doctrine of the author and the one put forward by Bentham that have made him be considered – first this one - a semi idealist utilitarian (Mill, 2007: 52).

In this sense, and as a reflection of these utilitarian assumptions, we can say that advertising shares these ideals, because, as we have said on previous occasions, it sells happiness, through products and services, which in turn make it possible to quantify it. That is, the one with more cars, more money, more properties, who wears designer clothes, etc. is happier than the one who does not have that lifestyle. This is an interesting issue that we will continue to address throughout this piece of research. But Mill goes further and says that the utilitarian morality does recognize in human beings the ability to sacrifice their own greatest good for the sake of others. He only refuses to admit that the sacrifice is itself a good. A sacrifice which does not increase or tends to increase the total sum of happiness is considered useless. The only self-renunciation which that is applauded is love for happiness or some of the means that lead to the happiness of others, whether it is mankind collectively or particular individuals, within the limits imposed by collective interests of mankind . Mill argues that morality relates to the following idea stated by Dave Robinson, who affirms that *"to the utilitarian's, reasons are unimportant, only the consequences count. The emphasis is on the act rather than the agent (...) Hence, utilitarianism is also known as consequentialism (2005: 73) "*... In this sense, Robinson adds that:

"in his essay On Liberty, Mill showed his concern about the tyranny of the majority. He was a great pluralistic. A healthy society would be one composed of a wide variety of individuals and different lifestyles (...) Provided that the freedoms of others are not interfered, everyone should be allowed to think and do what they want (2005: 77) "

The earlier idea stated by Mill is recalled again by Esperanza Guisán when she says that we cannot emphasize enough that the utilitarianism of Mill has nothing to do with selfish hedonism (...) but is rather universal hedonism, putting personal interests and those of others on the same level (Mill, 2007: 66). Moreover, Mill believes that "*education and public opinion, which have such great power in human formation, should use such power in such a way that they establish in the mind of every individual an indissoluble association between his own happiness and the good of the group* (2007: 67)." On this issue, we stress, like Mill, the importance of public opinion in the formation of man and, is it not true that advertising creates public opinion? Hence the need to reclaim more responsibility and ethics in its work, as it becomes an important factor in society. As a final thought on utilitarianism and its practical application today, we can say that at present, a lot of the ads that we see in the media are based on this theory, since they sell happiness, that is, products that make you happier even if it does not become true at all. That is the current maxim of advertising: sell dreams to make people happy and convince them that a cold cream can get that radiate happiness and forget all the problems. And this is done without considering the real reasons, as postulated by utilitarians. They only take into account the consequences, that is, the final goal, to sell. The reasons, which would be the means, do not matter. Deceiving consumers by promising things that will not come true is all the same. By wearing clothing of a particular brand I will not have more friends, for example, as sold in some ads. And another question, is it not true that in today's society we do have a way to measure pleasure and happiness? Perhaps it would be through consumption and the products that we have. Those are the ones that make us more or less happy, or make us believe it at least, as advertising transmit to us, right? This is another idea that we will develop along this paper.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The first movement that describes a part of current advertising is sophistry. What matters is rhetoric: it is to say things in a way that they convince, saying them well. The truth does not matter. This disdain for the truth, at least the absolute truth, is reflected also in the Cynics. So as we see, two philosophical trends whose principles coincide on many occasions, which is derived from the advertising practice, an idea that we will put in details later.

Let us go beyond and add the concept of happiness to that of truth. What does advertising sell today if not pleasure or happiness? Everything we buy carries, inherently, an immaterial value, which always ends in happiness. For example, an ad for a cold cream, the person who shows it is a wonderful lady, who radiates happiness, youth and joy. But will the cold cream really have the same effects on our

face? Anyone can conclude that no, we never will resemble the woman in the ad, nor be happier to use this cold cream. Well, the central idea in the philosophy of the Stoics, the Epicureans, Kant or utilitarianism is the happiness of man, the same central idea of current advertising: making us believe that we will be happier for using a particular product.

Seeing the theory of Nietzsche is like seeing another principle of advertising today: craving for power. Thus, in any advertisement they not only used some people of great physical beauty as a lure in most advertising campaigns, but they are also socially successful and belong to a higher social class, that is, they crave for power. The same craving for power that advertising tries to sell to the consumer. That is, the cold cream will not only make me happier but it will make me look like that woman in the advertisement, of a high social class, with power, social prestige and success. If we continue to analyze the theory of Nietzsche, we see that we can extrapolate another of his key points to advertising: what is good is healthy, vital, the domain of power. The bad is the weak, the sick and the failed. Is it not true that advertising postulates these good values according to Nietzsche and leaves out the bad values? And another question, is it not true that advertising implies that those bad values can become good values by using certain products?

Thus, we see how the philosophical paradigms of different periods and authors are similar to those governing advertising activity. In any case, this similarity comes only to demonstrate again the success in the use of ethical criteria when evaluating the advertising practice.

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Authors

Maria Teresa Pellicer Jordá

She holds a PhD from the School of Communication at the University of Murcia, where she works as a professor of technical subjects of advertising research, Responsibility and Advertising Self-regulation and Communication Deontology. She has a degree in Journalism and Advertising and Public Relations. She has written two books, entitled 'Advertising as Cultural Industry' and 'Ethics and Advertising Strategies' as well as numerous articles in professional journals. She also has extensive experience in the field of communication, since for several years she worked in well-known media in the region of Murcia.

Antonio Parra Pujante

He holds a PhD from the School of Communication at the University of Murcia, where he teaches. He is a well-known figure in journalism, both regionally and nationally, as he has worked in major media. He is the author of numerous articles and books related to the media such as 'From Release to Major Media' or 'Journalism and Truth'.