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Presentazione della Rivista

Dada. Rivista di Antropologia post-globale is a digital periodical review. The access is free on www.dadarivista.com

The review intends to focus on the issues of anthropology and contemporary philosophy in order to face the classical and modern questions in the social, political and cultural context of our post-global era in which the *grands récits* are hidden but all the more present and operating.

Since we are convinced that the meaning of life coincides with intensive research intended as a joyful experimentation, even in those fields in which any kind of change and actually any kind of experimentation seem to be out of the question, and, being more than ever aware that the heritage connected to the *grands récits* should be removed from our discourses, the review selected the term *Dada* to indicate a position of structural opening toward the choice of research methods and the use of the language in order to avoid the dogmatic of protocols. This long way has already been undertaken by many scholars such as Paul Feyerabend for instance, and we warmly invite you to join us and proceed with resolution and irony.

In this context, the contributions can be published in one of the languages of the European Union, according to the wish of the authors, after reviewing by native-speaking colleagues. Multilingual reading seems to be spreading in the academic circles of the Continent and this partially allows avoiding translations in *lingua franca* and their inescapable limitations. The authors are free to adopt their own style concerning footnotes and bibliographical references as far as they remain coherent with their own criteria.

The review also has the scope to publish the contributions of young scholars in order to introduce them to the national and international debate on the themes in question.

The Editor
Antonio L. Palmisano

Editoriale

Questo è il numero di dicembre 2011 di *Dada. Rivista di Antropologia post-globale*. Si tratta dell’edizione semestrale, contenente articoli su differenti temi.

Jan M. Broekman tratta questioni di semiotica e filosofia del diritto riferendosi alla figura tardo-mitologica della dea Tiche, la figlia di Zeus alla quale era stato attribuito il potere di decidere, irresponsabilmente, la sorte di ogni singolo mortale. Antonio L. Palmisano discute la ridefinizione dell’antropologia nel contesto dell’analitica dell’esser-ci, e dunque la mutata relazione fra uomo e potere, ovvero tra l’attore sociale e lo Stato post-Euclideo nell’epoca della *tekhne*. Prem K. Khatry analizza la relazione fra magia, religione e terapia in Nepal nel contesto fattuale del processo di medicalizzazione in corso a livello globale. Ronald R. Reminick propone una lettura delle pratiche terapeutiche sciamaniche nel contesto della società post-globale e delle attività di ricerca attualmente ai margini dell’ortodossia della fisica e della medicina. Veronica Boldrin tratta della relazione fra antropologia, etnografia e teatro sulla base delle ricerche da lei effettuate durante la messa in scena di una *pièce* etnografica, *Khush Hal Nameh*, ad opera di una troupe di giovani attori. Nicoletta Velardi analizza la rappresentazione e autorappresentazione fotografica delle società andine nella Cuzco del primo ’900.

Il numero si chiude con una serie di recensioni di monografie e di pubblicazioni ad opera di giovani studiosi che, con ciò, entrano nel processo sociale e politico del “fare cultura” pubblicamente, coraggiosamente disposti alla critica e all’autocritica.

The Editor
Antonio L. Palmisano

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Antonio L. Palmisano

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A GODDESS FOR SEMIOTICS OF LAW AND LEGAL DISCOURSE

Jan M. Broekman *

ABSTRACT

The work of the great American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) becomes more and more appreciated beyond the boundaries of his pragmatism, a philosophical mainstream he founded in the early 20th century. This essay is inspired by five points of interest, all of which focus on law and legal discourse. *Firstly*, one should acknowledge that his proposal pertaining to a general theory of signs, which he called ‘semeiotics’ around 1860, leads to an untraditional and in-depth understanding of legal discourse: in essence, of law as a system of specific meanings and signs. Semiotics in general became a substantial part of his ‘evolutionary cosmology,’ an all-embracing approach to tackle classical and modern philosophical issues. *Secondly*, his anthropological intuition based on semiotics, (concentrated in the formula ‘man is a sign’) became important for our understanding of a human subject’s position in law, as author of a legal discourse as well as an individual subjected to law. *Thirdly*, the tensions between chance and continuity in legal discourse are of focal interest for the creation of legal meaning in law’s practices. Novelty, Peirce suggested in this context, occurs by the grace of chance rather than of continuity and fixed traditions. *Fourthly*, Roberta Kevelson (1931-1998) explored and expanded the field of legal semiotics on the basis of the works of Peirce. In doing so, she established an American tradition of legal semiotics distinct from a European tradition, which related more to linguists, psychologists and philosophers embracing structuralism. *Fifthly*, Tyche, the Ancient Goddess of fate and fortune, is because of Peirce’s references more at home in the US legal semiotic tradition. Her fame and influence reaches beyond law and became supported by recent archeological discoveries, publications and exhibitions, which not only provide information about her background, but also underline her possible influence on modern legal thinking.

FACING TYCHE

Two intertwining features form the basis of today’s semiotics of law, especially in the case of US semiotics. The *first* can be found in the work of the great American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), who developed in the late 1860’s a general theory of signs, called semeiotics, in which he forwarded the view that ‘man is a sign’—an observation immediately relevant in law and legal discourse. The *second* is in the use of the expressions ‘word’, ‘community’ and ‘discourse’.

Peirce’s intriguing aphorism was for him an element of a more encompassing theory called ‘evolutionary cosmology’ in which law seems to be almost naturally incorporated. It supports Peirce’s idea that all knowledge results from a process of inference, that is from presumptions, deductions and conclusions, so that signs are always involved in epistemological questions, as also in issues of legal theory. A basic

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concern in Peirce's philosophy is in plying *chance* together with *continuity*. The togetherness of these two is omnipresent in his thoughts. We cannot live, think and know without continuity, he says, which means that past ideas must be present in every movement of our mind, although in often totally different forms. However, novelty exists by the grace of chance rather than of continuity! The tension between these two took almost the philosopher's entire lifetime, who wrote as early as in 1891: "The next step in the study of cosmology must be to examine the general law of mental action. In doing this, I shall for the time drop my tychism out of view, in order to allow a free and independent expansion to another conception... I mean the idea of continuity." Tyche guided Peirce's fascination with chance and continuity. He looks her in the face when he concludes "...that there is but one law of mind, namely, that ideas tend to spread continuously and to affect certain others which stand to them in a peculiar relation of affectibility. In this spreading they lose intensity, and especially the power of affecting others, but gain generality and become welded with other ideas."¹

A majority of philosophers, linguists, social scientists, and anthropologists on both sides of the Atlantic use and explore the expressions 'word', 'community' and 'discourse' and weigh their consequences. This unites Peirce with those who contributed to 'symbolic interactionism' and others such as Lévi Strauss, Greimas, Kristeva, Lacan, Barthes or Eco —to mention only a few names. Peirce wrote already around 1903 "...it is sufficient to say that there is no element whatever of man's consciousness which has not something corresponding to it in the word... the word or sign, which man uses, is the man himself. For, as the fact that every thought is a sign, taken in conjunction with the fact that life is a train of thought, proves that man is a sign..." He noted circa 1892, "All communication from mind to mind is through continuity of being. A man is capable of having assigned to him a *rôle* in the drama of creation, and so far as he loses himself in that *rôle*... ".² This role only unfolds in a community: "A man has consciousness; a word has not, ...our thought is an index for itself of itself on the ground of a complete identity with itself. But so is any word or indeed any thing, so that this constitutes no difference between the word and the man."

Word and man depend on their community in which they find support for their articulation: "... reality depends on the ultimate decision of the community; so thought is what it is, only by virtue of its addressing a future thought which is in its value as thought identical with it... so that it has only a potential existence, dependent on the future thought of the community."³

Word and community, both understood as signs of man's essence, lead to the contemporary uses of the concept "discourse." A discourse is, as Morris explained

¹ Ch. S. Peirce: (1931-1935, Ed.) *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Pierce* Vols I – VI, Ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, Cambridge Ma, Harvard University Press, and -id.- (1958, Ed.) *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Pierce* Vols VII – VIII, Ed. Arthur W. Burks, Cambridge Ma, Harvard University Press, Vol. VI, 103, 104.

² Ch. S. Peirce: See (1), Vol. V, 314; Vol. VII, 572.

³ Ch. S. Peirce: See (1), Vol. VII, 585, Vol. V, 311.

already in the 30ties of the 20th century⁴ on the one hand a coherent series of articulations through the use of a natural-, and on the other through the use of an artificial, language. Legal articulations are a unique case. Legal discourse is an artificial language discourse made through the management of natural language components. This unique combination of artificiality and naturalness forms a philosophical challenge that semioticians as well as philosophers of law have to face. It is no surprise that the Ancient Greek Goddess is referred to when this powerful combination plays a role in semiotics.

“*Obsessed with fortune is possessed by fate; and obsessed with fate is possessed by fortune*”, the Greek Goddess Tyche tells us with a smile. She knows how fate and fortune are both powerful discourses loaded with a frantic explanatory energy to envision the many courses of events in human life. Our classification of those events, bearing such names as fate or fortune, depends upon the cultural asymptotes we use for their articulation. *Chance*, however, plays a dominant role in our articulations and consequently in all our linguistic achievements —in particular when we evoke reality as a most natural component of our discourses. Without chance, no change, no growth, no newness or understanding by means of an open discourse. Is Fate Growth? We hesitate to admit that and we do not always understand or articulate the issue properly. The same is true for Fortune, although perhaps different. Indeed, difference is in the soul of the Goddess; and schism her source of energy because none of her actions are without destructiveness. That is also the reason for her deification: her schism is too far from articulate discourse to have it function in a direct manner. The outcry for a sign shouts down her incomprehensible schism. “Give us a sign...” is a well-known demand that halts our articulation of the flux of events —be they fateful or fortunate.

TYCHE

Do we have similar feelings of obsession with Fortune as the ancient Greeks had during the IV century B.C. and their entire Hellenistic period? The question evokes another riddle: from the time when the statue of Tyche in Antioch was erected around 300 B.C, another statue was erected approximately 500 years later, in the very distant Dura-Europos. Such considerations led to the 1994 exhibition in the Yale University Art Gallery, organized by Suzan Matheson and her staff, who found support in J.J. Pollitt’s 1986 publication *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, in which Tyche was mentioned as one of the driving forces in Hellenistic public life and thinking.⁵ The exhibition,

⁴ Ch. Morris: *Signs, Language and Behavior*, New York 1955[2], p. 130, and: *Signification and Significance*, Cambridge MIT, 1964, p. 60 f.

⁵Susan B. Matheson [c.s.]: *An Obsession with Fortune: Tyche in Greek and Roman Art*. Yale University Art Gallery, 1994. J.J.Pollitt: *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, Cambridge UP, 1986, -idem-: *An Obsession with Fortune*, in: Yale University Art Gallery, 1994, p. 13 ff. See also: Lisa R. Brody & Gail L. Hoffman: *Dura Europos. Crossroads of Antiquity*. Exhibition at the McMullen Museum of Art, Boston College, 2011. See also: Lucinda Dirven: *The Palmyrenes of Dura-Europos*, Brill, Leiden etc 1999, p. 103.

entitled *An Obsession with Fortune*, shows us how the Greek Goddess and her Roman appearance Fortuna linked occurrences of equivocal fortune to Deity. The same instability in human affairs and courses of history is essentially ours. However, we have no Goddess any longer to blame for inconsistent governance or unfortunate decisions. So we are left to only blame presidents and politicians who we anyway consider as tokens of inconsistency or coins in social commerce.

In other words, the Greeks in the fourth century B.C. deified chance, fate and fortune, instead of entrusting them to the hands of politicians. No wonder that the relations between Tyche and Law seem close. We gain knowledge from the Yale exhibition and its catalogue with regard to many aspects of this relationship, especially to how long it took before the deification of Tyche occurred. The influences of city- and political life in an individual's fortune are important aspects of public life around Tyche. Remarkably enough, all these themes also play a role in the philosophy of Charles Sanders Peirce—not in his *pragmatism*, but in his *semiotics*, the science of signs and meanings. He focuses on how semiotics unveils a coherent process of *meaning-making* in law (*Tuchios* [Gr]=maker)—a theme particularly studied in the legal semiotics of Roberta Kevelson.

Polybios (200-118) is the Greek historian and politician who gave in his *Histories* a famous account of the period between 220 and 146 B.C., a text that inspired Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws* which in its turn stirred the *American Constitution*. He described Tyche as the one “who makes no treaties with this human life of ours, who devises all sorts of new twists to confound our calculations, and who shows her power in completely unexpected ways...”. Polybios based his writing on his experiences with history and the nature of man rather than on the factual features of the Goddess. How much experience, how many unexplainable life occurrences, how much of a lifetime do these words require before they can be written and understood? His lines are on personal experience and on the grasping of life situations in addition to a heightened awareness of an individual's socio-historical dimension and its transfer from one generation to another: in short, the stuff from which history is made. In other words, Polybios displays *a new self-understanding* in the meaning-making of social change in one's life. The character that disturbs it should by definition not be a Deity! And yet?

“Fortune is quite capable of wiping out reasonable expectations with unforeseeable turns of events and if she gives aid to anyone and tips her balance in his favor, she will eventually, as if she regretted the help, tip the scale against him and instantly ruin his successes.” Why does Polybios coin these words about her?⁶ *Anxiety must have been the hallmark of the Hellenic society who created such a Goddess!* Histories of the Macedonian king Perseus provided an example of how a superbly high-rising position ends up in humiliation. Not only individuals, but also entire countries show that pattern: they flourish in one century and are annihilated in the next—Romans provide an example when their empire became destroyed in the end. No wonder that Matheson describes Tyche (long before she became a deity, after

⁶Pollitt, *An Obsession...*, see (4), page 13.

many centuries in which poets and philosophers contemplated her in verses and tractates) as a determinate feature of life encapsulated in a word that stood for chance or fortune. She dates Tyches' divinity to the fourth century B.C. but traces her existence back into earlier centuries where she can be found as a linguistic expression, a water nymph, a cult object —until she calls herself in the fourth century “a divinity (theos) and the director and manager of all things.”⁷

The case of Tyche is not a simple process of name giving; it is a process of *meaning-making* that finds its peak in deification. Where man understands that he is no longer able to keep fate or fortune in his hand, fate and fortune are relocated to other semantic dimensions. For example, Archilocus (680-645) is said to be the first Greek poet who wrote his lyrics using the first-person singular. This style was an integral part of his profiling Greek character, in particular its identity formation. Werner Jaeger refers to the poet because he “encourages his friends to endure misfortune patiently or tells them to leave everything to the gods. *Tyché, Fortune, and Moira, Fate, give man all he has.* The gods often lift up men who lie on the ground in disaster, and often cast down to the earth men who stand firm”. All of these concepts about the power of Tyche occur also in later Greek thought. Jaeger thus suggests that “Archilocus’ religious thought is rooted in the problem of Tyche, and his knowledge of God is knowledge of Tyche.” [...] The Greeks, as they learnt to understand the problem of human freedom, penetrated deeper into the mystery of Tyche.”⁸ This is an important aspect of understanding Tyche with regard to fate and freedom: the aspect of *endurance*. Freedom is not solely the result of individual decisions in life or of social commitments; passivity is equally important in acquiring freedom. Although ‘endurance’ and ‘actively profiling a first-person identity’ seem in contrast, both are of essence for social behavior.

There is another aspect to mention: how can endurance be possible when the complexities of daily life (communication and understanding included) do not allow withdrawal from a powerful personal identity? Tyche bridges the distance between *endurance* and *profile of a self* by means of *signs* that carry her image and are meant to be *in the hand of everyone*. This is why she played a role in even the most remote Hellenistic cities. Pollitt provides archeological and historical data about important public sculptures of Tyche (especially the Tyche of Antioch by Eutychides) and many subsequent images of the Goddess that fit in with a semiotic explanation: her character was devastating, her image omnipresent. “The personification of cities and countries as females wearing ‘city wall’ crowns was a type already established for use on coinage in the fourth century B.C.” Tyche spreads her image in the days of her deification. “It is important to emphasize that while these Tyche figures had an allegorical content that was typical of their age, and that while they probably served the same function that flags and state seals do in our own time, *they were not simply symbols*. [...] the fortune of a city was understood as something very real, even if unknown. [...] figures of Tyche may have taken on a kind of magical quality, like

⁷Susan B. Matheson: *The Goddess Tyche* in: *An Obsession...*, see (4), page 19 ff.

⁸Werner Jaeger: *Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture*. Vol. I, Oxford UP New York 1945, p. 124. (*Italics are mine, JMB*)

good luck charms”. Pollitt adds that miniature figures of Tyche were “probably both amuletic and apotropaic, images both of hope and anxiety”.⁹ Long before her ultimate deification in the fourth century B.C., Tyche shows that a man’s individual fate and fortune are embedded in town and country, and therefore socially engendered beyond his personal power. The presence of her face on the coins of the polis was a sign that man’s fate and fortune remain metaphorically and materially in his own hands—despite the quirks of the Goddess.

CITY FORTUNE

Tyche is not the Goddess of exclusively individual disaster and personal fate. She wears the mural crown to show her guardianship to the cities in the Greek and Roman world and to rein over the fortune of those cities that were for her almost personified organisms. These ties between individual and social structure confirm an individual’s engenderment in social life—a basic theme of even our contemporary understanding of signs and meanings in life. Without bonds to city life, a Greek personality could not unfold. Hence the intensity of Tyche’s presence in times of balanced prosperity as well as in times of discontinuity or fatal blows in the political lives of persons and cities. Tyche was the axis of meaning-making in all circumstances. Had she not proclaimed to be “the director and manager of all things”?

Pieter Broucke describes in the Yale exhibition catalogue how statues representing Tyche were erected all over the Hellenistic regions; this production was at its peak when in the fourth century B.C. Praxiteles sculpted the Tyche of Megara and set the statue up near the temple of Aphrodite¹⁰. But they were, of course, a dwindling minority of signs in comparison with the coins that helped circulate the image of Tyche in the hands of numerous citizens during several Hellenistic centuries; they even survived the spread of Christianity in later ages. Greek coinage thus created a fixed and supportive frame of reference for the behavior of citizens.

Clearer feelings of chaos come to the fore when the political landscape changes. A result is cultural diversity, anonymity and cosmopolitanism. As Broucke states: “Stability and order [...] were replaced by feelings of chaos and insignificance, as well as by the acknowledgement of the constant possibility of a reversal of both personal and communal forces. Within this new Hellenistic world order Fate came to occupy a crucial position. The personification of the source of that uncertainty, Tyche—fate, destiny, or fortune—became an essential and ubiquitous element in Greek culture.” Even in our days, we feel the constancy of possible reversals and agree with what no longer appears as solely an observation of Ancient Art or Classical Archeology, namely that: “the surge in attention given to a city’s Tyche was, thus, characteristic of the uncertain times.”¹¹ This feeling determines modern legal and

⁹Pollitt, *An Obsession...*, see (4), page 14,15. (*Italics are mine, JMB*)

¹⁰Pieter B.F.J.Broucke: *Tyche and the Fortune of Cities in the Greek and Roman World*, in: *An Obsession...*, see (4), page 35-49.

¹¹Idem: in (4), p. 37

political thought and the role of change therein. Coins and their Tyche figures are still a sign that citizens struggle to hold on to their identity by taking fate and/or fortune in their own hands.

TYCHE PERSONAL AND PUBLIC

All Tychai fused personal and public fates and fortunes. Capricious Goddesses determined the flux of life. The numerous coins, which exchanged continuously in the hands of individuals in the Ancient and the Hellenistic world showed the *face* as an indication for the private, and the *mural crown* for the public dimensions of life. That portrait has an important meaning with regard to the general image of man and of Tyche as a deity. One will never encounter a single Tyche solely made for individual issues and another made for exclusively public issues. Lives of individuals and lives of the cities are one life structure, which at a certain moment in history also provides the basis for ideas related to democracy. Inscriptions have been found where Tyche is linked with Eirene and with Demokratia; the three were together (not one of them alone, or one after the other) deified in the fourth century B.C.¹² To enjoy good fortune, one has to be part of a public—there is not a ‘someone’ who can enjoy any fortune without public/city ties. Engendering an identity seems to be at stake: enjoyment of fortune or fate needs a social structure; individual fate and fortune are in essence public and only as public features can they be individual. If the *public* Tyche acquired a personal aspect, then the *personal* Tyche was always public—each city had its own Tyche, and cities bore their names together with their Tyche to show the world their specific features. The Tyche of a city could very well be conflated with the Tyche of the Demos, so that all features of Tyche, good and bad, unify individuals in their immediate social structure. Tyche’s blending with other deities created a force of reconciliation and even integration of diverse societies within a state. A Tyche as *Oikoumene* is therefore possible throughout—a ruler’s city-Tyche can dream of becoming the ruler of the entire inhabited world, as the Ptolemies once did.¹³

Individual fortune is thus anchored in common prosperity. That thought fits into more than one consideration of Jaeger, who in the context of Archilochus’ philosophy and lyrics suggests: “It is a universal conception that there is a ‘rhythm’ in all human life.” Tyche’s divine role is grounded in that fact. Archilochus thus recommends for one to exercise self-control and “to avoid excessive joy or grief, to feel excessive emotions for the happiness or unhappiness that comes from destiny.” Addressing Tyche must awaken that spirit; the rise and fall of human fortune belongs to the ‘rhythm’ of human life itself. ‘Rhythm’ should not be interpreted in terms of ‘flux’ or movements of music and dance, but as a succession of ‘tableaux’ or ‘forms.’ Jaeger underlines: “rhythm then is that which imposes bonds on movement and confines the flux of things”—a concept which Aristotle named *schema*.

¹²Matheson, in (4), p. 19

¹³Amy C. Smith: *Queens and Empresses as Goddesses*, in: (4), p.91

Consider how prosperity and fate, fortune and uncertainty, are deified because they do not have the measure of a human hand. Coins that represent them can be no more than a modest sign of our possession of fate and fortune, and the concept of possession itself may not embrace all dimensions at hand. The same is true for our speech that tries to fathom fortune or measure fate by means of words. Speech is a form of *sympatheia*, which is precious, albeit often completely inappropriate to all of us. Speech is passion and emotion when the doom sent by the gods is envisaged. We speak here about a first form of tragedy. Jaeger remarks: “Without the problem of Tyche or Moira (which had been brought home to the Greeks by the Ionian lyric poets) true tragedy would never have developed; [...] the plot remained first and foremost a description of human suffering, a fuller and nobler expression of the high idea of God’s power over man’s life.”¹⁴ Tyche reigns in function of a high power in life; she shares that function with Law. Everyone who considered the relations between Tyche and Law noticed this double face. Both have their own ideas about ground lines of order in human life, which often differ from daily hopes and experiences. Tyche had nothing but coins as a sign of its inarticulate consciousness of these dimensions. She knew on the other hand, what Law (here we do not refer to Diké who was often thought to be related to Tyche) could not know: that *a moment of chance determines the course of life beyond the grip of law and legal discourse* on that life. Law does not consider *determination through chance* because it does not recognize any such power. An essential difference between Tyche’s discourse and Law’s discourse is the *openness* of the first and the *closedness* of the second. Awareness of Tyche in modernity focuses on such tensions.

PEIRCE’S GODDESS

Try to verify any law of nature and you will find that
the more precise your observations the more certain they will be to
show irregular departures from the law.
Ch. S. Peirce 1893

If Tyche is still a Goddess in our contemporary philosophy, then she is Deity of THE OTHERNESS OF ALL THINGS. This otherness permeates all forms of discourse, and concerns an opposite, a negation, a ground, a contrast, a shadow, an unexpected, a clown, a trickster, an absence, the true and the false and many more. Charles Sanders Peirce, who is called the most original of American philosophers and their greatest logician, incorporated Tyche when he laid the groundwork for his principle of *continuity* (logical as well as ontological), which includes Tyche’s (re)-presentation of Otherness. In her shadow, he unfolded many features that are relevant for the foundations of a philosophy of law and legal discourse¹⁵.

¹⁴Jaeger, see (7), p. 250,251. See also: Olga Taxidou: *Tragedy, Modernity and Mourning*, Edinburg UP 2004

¹⁵Charles Sanders Peirce: *A New List of Categories* in: Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Vol. VII, 287-298; Joseph Brent: *Charles Sanders Peirce. A Life*. Indiana UP, 1993, p. 69.

First, as Peirce's biographer Joseph Brent highlights, there is an essay as early as 1867, which Peirce considers as being a part of "the substance of my central achievement." That substance, as said before, is *not* his *pragmatism*¹⁶ but rather his *tychism* and its antipole, *agapism* or 'evolutionary love'. He called the related principle of continuity *synechism*. *Tychism* and *agapism* were complementary phases of the *synechistic* law of mind, which for him was the same as the law of nature. Their relation to pragmatism is a key for understanding Peirce's philosophy, even more so since *pragmatism* was designed long after these more fundamental conceptions of *tychism*, *agapism* and *synechism*.

Second, the temporary and sudden publicity given to *pragmatism* overlaid Peirce's deep and lasting concern about the unity of ideas—a problem that Tyche exhibits in each of her disturbingly various contradictions. To unravel *the connectedness of things* appeared for Peirce to be the truly philosophical task to complete. He thus considered more than any other Occidental philosopher in the 19th and 20th century how in the Ancient Greek world Tyche became worshipped; for if one cannot take fate and fortune in hand, one should at least exchange coins bearing her image from hand to hand. Those coins are *signs* involved in the creation of *meaning*—an essential element of Peirce's project, which recalls our outcry: "Give us a sign...!"

Thirdly, 'synechism' deals with the interconnectedness of things. Our language/discourse articulates interconnections via the activities of our mind, accompanied with and most often created by *signs*. Peirce claims that signs are neither a reproduction of reality nor a copy of what they signify, instead they are *constructions*, like maps, icons, or plans of action, and therefore do not limit their function to linguistic articulation. His philosophy insists on the emergence of *novelty* as a principle upon which our conceptualizations are based, conceptualizations, which erroneously tend to bring reality to the fore as if 'words for things' exist. Under the heading of the concept 'continuum', Pierce contemplates the requirement that we bring novelty in harmony with already existing identities.¹⁷ He thus unfolds his doctrine of Pure Chance as a factor in the context of *Becoming*, and thus—as Kevelson notices—establishes semiotics as a process of growth of thought.¹⁸ A sign is the fulfillment of Tyche's capacity to master inconsistency by connecting it with consistency; signs can thus be an opposite, a breach, a trickster, a falsification, a fool, an incomprehensible, an unforeseen, or an injunction in the surface of our text, speech or action. That conceptual appearance of *a sign including its very opposite* brings the sign as just a phenomenon under the innumerable phenomena with which we are confronted. A sign makes us only understand its conceptual representation, and *not* the thing it represents, the knowledge of which we can perhaps only approximate. Do not forget that Tyche emphasizes how the real is precisely *not* what is immediately before us, nor what seems predestined and ordered through laws. The

¹⁶ For which Peirce is still known as a companion of William James, and which constitutes an elaborately discussed theme in legal philosophy.

¹⁷ Kelly A. Parker: *The Continuity of Peirce's Thought*, Vanderbilt UP 1998.Ch. 4 & 8.

¹⁸ Ch. S. Peirce: See (1), Vol VI, 47 ff.

real is what emerges in new relational patterns. As a result, one of Tyche's vibrantly modern features is a *pattern philosophy*!¹⁹

Fourthly, what we think we know as real is reality represented by means of linguistic articulation. Reality is thus at every given time incomplete and inaccurate, even when interpreted with a logic capable of prediction. Kevelson comments: "only an inductive mode of inference can advance our knowledge of the world as it is becoming".²⁰ When conceptualizing a sign we enter an *unlimited* process of semiosis, as not only Peirce but later also Eco and Colapietro conclude.²¹ This characterization of semiosis has a far-reaching conclusion for the presence of reality as a concept in our discourses and the role of chance therein. Since there *are* no signs, Peirce suggests, and nothing *is* a sign, everything *can become* a sign such that there are ultimately solely sign functions, and those are only temporarily exercising such a function. *Does only Tyche show us reality; and are reality and chance a double-faced articulation?*

"The real, then, is that which, sooner or later, information and reasoning would finally result in, and which is therefore independent of the vagaries of me and you," Peirce writes. Conceiving the very origin of reality essentially involves the notion of a community, without limits and capable of a never-ending increase of knowledge. Hence Peirce's conclusion: "There is nothing, then, to prevent our knowing outward things as they really are, and it is most likely that we do thus know them in numberless cases, although we can never be absolutely certain of doing so in any special case."²²

We cannot remain steadfast with any doctrine of necessity or of determinacy because of the complex games Tyche plays with us. The combination of steadiness and chance is her major theme. Any moment she may interfere, spurring change, growth, twist and turn, or unforeseen development. Peirce underlines: "Everywhere the main fact is growth and increasing complexity. [...] By thus admitting pure spontaneity of life as a character of the universe [...] I account for all the variety and diversity of the universe, in the only sense in which the really *sui generis* and new can be said to be accounted for. The ordinary view has to admit [...] that variety can spring only from spontaneity, or else shoves it back to the beginning of time and supposes it dead ever since."²³ And he completes on the very same page: "Yet chance is explanatory of change, which is a fact".

Fifthly, this insight leads Peirce to his *evolutionary semiosis*; only that view seems apt to appropriately consider the infinite character of semiosis. It appears in the understanding of the sign under the guidance of Tyche and in the insight that signs are

¹⁹ William Gibson: *Pattern Recognition*. Berkley/Penguin 2005; Daniel C. Dennett: 'Real Patterns', in: *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 88, 1, p. 21f.

²⁰ Roberta Kevelson: *Peirce, Paradox, Praxis*. Mouton de Gruyter 1990, p. 310.

²¹ Umberto Eco: *A Theory of Semiotics*. Bloomington. Indiana UP. 1979, p. 69, 120 ff. See also: Vincent M. Colapietro, *Peirce's Approach to the Self. A Semiotic Perspective on Human Subjectivity*. New York, 1989, p. 35f.

²² Ch. S. Peirce: See (1), Vol V, 315 f.

²³ Ch. S. Peirce: See (1), Vol. VI, 58 f.

only possible in an open-ended, non-finite, complex and evolving process with chance as one of its major components: “I start by defining what I mean with a sign. It is something determined by something else its object and itself influencing some person in such a way that that person becomes thereby meditately influenced or determined in some respect by that Object.” Peirce could do so only after having described in 1901 how anything which determines something else must refer to an object to which itself refers to something else in the same way, that the ‘something else’ must become in turn a sign, and so on. Emphasis is on the last three words: the ‘and so on’. This statement suggests that it is questionable whether consciousness can ever be seen as essential to the understanding of a sign. There is always a determination of a sign of the same object at work of which it is itself a sign! There is virtually an endless series of signs when a sign is understood, and a sign never understood cannot be said to be a sign. As a consequence, not consciousness but the virtually endless series of signs in which consciousness is involved, is essential for understanding a sign. Signs are the outcome of evolutionary processes and are understood in terms of chance. If we do not accept chance, we cannot understand signs! Thus, there exists for Peirce a remarkable tension between chance and design, between novelty and habitual patterning. What is essential in the concept of a sign is also of essence in the entire project of *semiosis*. What about law and legal discourse?

TYCHE IN LAW

Does Tyche fit in *legal* discourse? She might be shy to give an opinion because her role in legal discourse would perhaps be different from the role she plays in general culture or history, even though Diké was her companion deity and both guarded a city’s good fortune. Her other equivalent was Demeter, the Goddess of grief and good harvest, nurturer of mankind who could empathize with grief, having experienced it herself. Those two also relate Tyche to law, so that we can see that she fits in legal discourse under the condition that we understand law as *a system of signs* and that we take distance from law as a *closed discourse* imprisoned in its self-referential character.

Neither the Goddess nor Peirce focused on law and its practices. Their fascination was with nature, history and mankind in general. But Peirce shows clearly that our understanding of the law depends on the relation between propositions of universal and/or of particular character. This is a *semiotic* issue, which has its foundations in Peircean insights. *Legal* laws are *particular* (even when they seem to be general within their own discourse) and make Tyche’s character and Peirce’s plea for ‘coherence together with chance’ important. Kevelson calls that plea a “‘hotbed’ of possibility” of greatest importance for modern law.²⁴ She thus characterizes “the attempt to transform the idea of law from a universal proposition which is indefinite

²⁴ Roberta Kevelson: *The Law as a System of Signs*, N.York 1988; —id.: *Peirce and the Mark of the Gryphon*, N. York 1999; —id.: *Peirce, Paradox, Praxis*, N.York/Berlin 1990. —id.: *Inlaws/Outlaws*, Peter de Lang, Lisse 1977; —id.: *Peirce, Science, Signs*, N.York/Bern 1996.

and vague to a particular proposition which is definite and resolved of vagueness” as a stumbling block²⁵ that Austin and others met when discussing legal positivism and determinism. The voice of Tyche changes our view on the relationship between universality and particularity from *deterministic* to *chance-related*, as Peirce has shown in most of his works.²⁶

Peirce’s thoughts concern a hitherto unwritten study on legal philosophy. Fisch underlined their relevance for the foundations of law and legal discourse: “I argue that Peirce had a much greater and lifelong interest in law and in social philosophy than has hitherto been recognized.” He placed Peirce’s concern with law and legal thinking in a biographical perspective. “Philosophers of law,” Fisch writes, “have often remarked that there were several distinguished lawyers in the Metaphysical Club in which pragmatism was born, and have traced connections between pragmatism and ‘legal realism’; but more recently Roberta Kevelson and others have found relevance to legal reasoning in a much wider range of Peirce’s work on logic.”²⁷ *Legal semiotics*, as prepared in Peircean logic, metaphysics and pragmatism, takes the spirit and the form of such a philosophical endeavor. Peircean thoughts and Tyche’s inspiration profile a legal philosophy in at least the fields of meaning and argument, chance, and the open character of discourse.

We are not used to living with the idea that every discourse must be perceived as a place where meanings are made, ideas grow and novelty occurs. Tyche reigns over every possible discourse—*legal* discourse not the least. Do the three C’s that dominate Civil Law—completeness, coherence and consistency—not leave room for the Goddess?²⁸ Certainly, but those doctrinal features are in essence *rhetorical*. They fortify the narrative that keeps *law as an institution* alive. Tyche has taught us to appreciate habit formation. She does this very effectively with regard to legal argumentation.²⁹ The semiotics of argument in law and legal practice demonstrate how contentions are offered as if they were facts, but once we are clear about how inconsistency creates consistency, incoherence causes coherence, and incompleteness functions as an element of completeness, as Greimas would suggest,³⁰ we understand how arguments are *made* (and not simply represented) within the boundaries of the discourse. When Peirce participated in Harvard’s Metaphysical Club in 1872, Sir Frederick Pollock had just written some lines which were clearly ahead of their time, stating: “Law in the widest sense is a condition or assemblage of conditions under which the evolution of things proceeds...”³¹ James Boyd White offers a recent

²⁵ Kevelson, *Peirce, Paradox, Praxis*, see (18), p. 173.

²⁶ Ch. S. Peirce, See (1): Vol. V, Ch. 5, and Vol. VI, 32, 51f., 63f., 200f., 204, 270, 336.

²⁷ Fisch, See (32), p. 13, 438. The *Metaphysical Club* is a philosophical club with the future Justice O.W.Holmes Jr, the psychologist William James and with Charles Sanders Peirce, established in January 1872 in Cambridge, Mass and dissolved in December 1872. When Peirce arrived at Johns Hopkins University in 1879, he founded a new Club there, which existed six more years.

²⁸ John H. Merryman: *The Civil Law Tradition*, Stanford UP 1985 (2nd Ed.) Ch. 2; Ch. 5.

²⁹ I. A Richards: *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, Oxford UP 1936, Ch. 2.

³⁰ Algirdas J. Greimas & François Rastier: *The Interaction of Semiotic Constraints*, Yale French Studies, Vol. 41, 1968.

³¹ F. Pollock: Law and Command, in: *Law Magazine and Review*, 1872, 1. p. 189 f.

example when he reflects upon how a text named “The Constitution” inspired modern US society to create *a culture of argument*. He concludes how “this is thus in a literal sense a rhetorical constitution: it constitutes a rhetorical community, working by rhetorical processes that it has established but can no longer control. *It establishes a new conversation on a permanent basis.*”³²

Arguments establish law and legal discourse during the process of meaning-making that unfolds whilst determining a truth in an incidental case.³³ But Tyche desires that this meaning-making be a process beyond discursive coercion. That becomes clear when *she shows her whimsical character*, as will become apparent in a Greek and in a modern example. Werner Jaeger tells us an example that circulated in the Ancient Greek world: “In Xenophon’s portrait of Cyrus, [...] Cyrus is a Persian Alexander. Only his fortune, his *tyché*, was different from his Macedonian parallel. The spear, which pierced him, might have killed Alexander. If it had not taken Cyrus’ life, the Hellenistic age would have begun with him, and would have followed a different course. [...] Greek culture, through its intellectual content and its form, always imparts to every other élite something which that élite does not possess, but thereby helps it to develop itself too.”³⁴ Greimas would have constructed one of his squares, showing the play of opposites of meaning and their creative integration. More than two millennia later, Paul Auster introduces Miles, the central figure of his 2010 novel, who is a victim of chance, waiting for his Tyche without knowing that he already met her: “Whenever he thinks about that day now, he imagines how differently things would have turned out if he had been walking on Bobby’s right instead of his left. The shove would have pushed him off the road rather than into the middle of it, and that would have been the end of the story, since there wouldn’t have been a story...”³⁵. However, there is *always* a story, as we know from the lessons Tyche taught us.

“One should beware of believing that the inventive mind operates according to chance.” This sentence of the French Enlightenment philosopher Destutt de Tracy provides Greimas with a motto for his groundbreaking 1968 essay. Do not forget that Tyche was named ‘The constellation Virgo’; she determines how an *order of things* emerges, and encounters us with vision, feeling and spontaneity where human creativity unfolds. She was for that reason a guide for Peirce in the context of understanding his own personal fate as well as the development of his ideas about an evolutionary cosmology, which colored his lifelong interest in philosophy and logic.

³² James Boyd White: *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, Chicago UP 1984, p. 246 f. (*italics* JMB). See also Ch. Perelman: *The Idea of Justice and the Problem of Argument*, London/New York 1963, and Perelman/Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, Notre Dame UP 1969. Notice the proximity to I. Prigogine & I. Stenger: *Order Out Of Chaos*, Glasgow 1984.

³³ Jan M. Broekman & William A. Pencak: *Lawyers Making Meaning. The Roberta Kevelson Seminar on Law and Semiotics at Penn State University’s Dickinson School of Law*, IJSL Vol. 22, Nr. 1, 2009. See there D.J. Brion: *Trial Argumentation: The Creation of Meaning*, p. 23 ff. See also: Paul Van Fleet: Tarski, Peirce and Truth-Correspondences in Law, in: *The Semiotics of Law in Legal Education*, Jan M. Broekman & Francis J. Mootz III [Eds], Springer 2011, Chapter 3.

³⁴ Werner Jaeger, see (7), Vol. III, p. 161.

³⁵ Paul Auster: *Sunset Park*, Henry Holt & Co. 2010.

In *Evolutionary Love*, written in 1893 he suggests that all forms of evolution are tied to Tyche's force, which reigns over a person in his or her social context.³⁶ Thus, Tyche influences and often even determines the development of a human character, because *any self is for itself a sign*. "Every thought, or cognitive representation, is of the nature of a sign. 'Representation' and 'sign' are synonyms. The whole purpose of a sign is that it shall be interpreted in another sign; and its whole purport lies in the special character, which it imparts to that interpretation. When a sign determines an interpretation of itself in another sign, it produces an effect external to itself [...] not in this or that metaphysical sense, but in an indisputable (*read: argumentative, rhetorical*) sense. [...] Thinking is a kind of action, and reasoning is a kind of deliberate action; and to call an argument illogical, or a proposition false, is a special kind of moral judgment, and as such is inapplicable to what we cannot help. This does not deny that what cannot be conceived today may be conceivable tomorrow. But just as long as we cannot help adopting a mode of thought, so long it must be thoroughly accepted as true. Any doubt of it is idle make-believe and irredeemable paper."³⁷ This self-understanding is based on insight into *order* as such, an order that expands itself in the forms of argument and accelerating reasonableness.

The *openness* of a discourse, Tyche teaches legal philosophers, *is not a condition for chance, but is itself the result of chance*. Kevelson has spent much energy in discussing the *open* character of law's discourse in her semiotic interpretation of law. She indicates that any legal argument is in need of a narrative space located between chance and necessity, and Tyche is the most important performer within this space. Peirce would have agreed and repeated how every thought-life of a person is a sign. We know from Fisch that Peirce found in a book on Plato how Socrates defined thought as 'a conversation of the soul with itself' and wrote in the margin: "This is, I think, Plato's greatest contribution to thought."³⁸ He would underline that all thought is by nature dialogic, and thus characterizes all signs, signification and meaning-making. *A thought is like a word is like a sign*: they cannot exist in the isolation of their own autonomous self. Tyche guarantees the Otherness that thoughts, words and signs need to become, for only chance furthers novelty and continuity. It is interesting how Peirce's thoughts fit almost seamlessly to the subject "*Tyche in Law*." Inspired by his philosophy, we conclude with a few keywords to describe her position in legal discourse more precisely.

First, Tyche enables the *openness of discourse*. Kevelson characterizes the field within which the issue is most thoroughly debated, the field of '*autopoiesis*', as "a rather old hybrid of semiotics, bent in an unusual way."³⁹ Its self-reflective character parallels Peirce's dynamics of inquiry—a process that plays a dominant role in his science and thought. Tyche would not accept this singular focus on discourse as 'a self that plays the game of reflection on itself.' If such reflectiveness in law occurs, it does not create closeness by means of doubling itself, but it creates on the contrary

³⁶ Ch. S Peirce: *The Essential Peirce*, Vol.1. N.Houser & Chr. Kloesel (Eds), Indiana UP 1992, p. 362.

³⁷ Ch. S. Peirce, in (1), Vol. VIII, 191. (*My italics + additions. JMB*).

³⁸ Max H. Fisch: *Peirce, Semiotics, and Pragmatism*, Indiana UP, 1986, p. 442.

³⁹ Roberta Kevelson, at (20): *Peirce and the Mark of the Gryphon*, p. 160.

new habits of thought so that reflectiveness can include novelty, obeying the prescriptions of Tyche. She cares that openness shows itself even in reflection, so that chance, spontaneity, irregularity and lawlessness remain constituent elements of law's discourse. A legal philosophy should not consider lawlessness as a deviation or exception but as a regular force of law.

Second, philosophical discussions about (in)determinism are still relevant. Peirce's happy relationship with Tyche shows an intensity that necessitates a contemplation of the issue in *legal* context. For example, Kevelson suggests that what happened in the aftermath of the US Civil War, brought an implicit theory of law to the fore that evolved from *argument*, and in particular from arguments which produced dissent, discontent and conflict. A modern parallel could be discovered in recent developments of European Union Law, where dissent and discontent bring novelty and hitherto unknown legal insights and procedures, for instance via EU *directives*. Tyche asks Europeans to digest her whimsical character features when approaching law.⁴⁰ Kevelson's semiotic insight can become real on both continents: *a People divided can nevertheless be One!* And, not unlike a sign, the One can bring division again, which results in a new One, etc. ad infinitum. This infinity is, again, at home in Peirce's thoughts when he highlights how *Secondness* (the medium between *Firstness* and *Thirdness*) is characterized by creative conflict, which means that law produces sequences of impressively different layers of reality, and does not solely reflect upon them.

Finally, one concludes that *Tyche highlights the dialogic dimensions* of legal relations in society. She was after all a Greek Goddess, and knew by experience how Socrates (in the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist*) mentioned that *all thought is dialogic by nature*. She adds to this context the pivotal importance of the Sign (Peirce noted this as if he was her secretary), concluding that the Self is always a sign for the Self. A first sign in legal practice is with necessity a Self! The semiotic understanding of the Self is the riddle Tyche has left for 21st century lawyers. Solving this riddle seems to be a task of exceptional gravity when chance, dissent and conflict become novel components of law in times of revolution, and the apparent decline of the Nation State.

Tyche brings us back to Peirce in a much deeper and more bewildering sense than we ever thought of. Chance and change are notions awakened by Tyche's whimsical character. Therefore, these can never become stable and fixated elements of a theory! In Peirce's references to Tyche, in particular in the development of his *tychism*, he acquired by no means a final form of his 'evolutionary cosmology'. Again: to have Tyche function in the context of a stable philosophical project seems incompatible with her eccentric nature. Peirce experienced that from the very beginning, and in particular in the long period of his life in Arisbe, where he studied Greek philosophy with great intensity.

⁴⁰ Which could very well be examples of Law's Chaotic Order, suggests Denis J. Brion in: *Chaos-What Judges and Juries Do*, in W.Pencak & J.R.Lindgren: *New Approaches to Semiotics and the Human Sciences*, Peter Lang 1998, p. 33.

All our considerations focused on the question: what can Tyche's position be in a theory or a philosophical project, and is she—given her very nature—able to function in such a framework by any means? Can Peirce's reflections on Kant, on Kantian categories, on Categories as such and on the Triadic nature of ontology and on concepts such as chance or continuity, be considered as building blocks of a system that includes Tyche? The question is the more pressing where she is mirrored in the above-mentioned socio-legal situation of today's society and its political culture. In times of a decline of the nation state, of governance not by governments but by global corporations defending their interests even under the heading of 'human rights' concepts, Tyche's eccentricity catches the eye.

We should not qualify Tyche's spirit negatively. She inspires us to understand the restlessness of life, but gives us not enough power to understand life in terms of restlessness. Hence Peirce's focus on chance, without which no change or surprise can enter the stage of our knowledge and understanding of world history. Is Tyche's deification a way of overcoming the dyadic character that reigns all our knowledge, in particular our entire philosophical understanding of reality? Does her deification contribute to this fundamental change in our approach, described by Peirce in his letters to W. James in which he suggests that he may have found the key to the secret of the universe? "The guess of the secret of the Sphynx", he calls it. Synechism originates here, eventually called tritism: each opposition needs mediation, a "tripling". The process of deification could therefore be characterized as a forwarding of that tritism, a truly transcultural, cosmic principle. Hence Peirce: "...scepticism about the reality of things—provided it be genuine and sincere, and not a sham—is a healthful and growing stage of mental development". Not, that evolutionary cosmology is made possible by discovering the structure of the triadic, not inverse: the triadic notion is *not* coming before, not preceding, the cosmology. That cosmology is fruit of insight into the triadic structure of understanding everything. In law, we mention the modern striving for an interpretation of doctrines and principles in terms of human interpellation and affection. Indeed: the False, the True: Peirce is not interested in features of the *concept* of chance, or in prophecies about its eventual effects, but in the functions of chance in a philosophy focusing on interrelations of things, events, meanings and discourses. It implies Peirce's interest in change as a product of chance, in the foundations and the logics of chance, in growth, and evolution.

We highlight, that the influence of Tyche on Peirce's philosophy is more important than was hitherto noticed, in particular in as far as Tychism is in itself dynamically leading to tritism. Peirce's philosophy is not determined by pragmatism or even pragmaticism but by Tychism, and precisely this feature makes his philosophy fruitful for exploring its affinity with legal thinking – in competition with logics, whilst he fully understands that legal logic is not formal logic.

ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE POST-EUCLIDEAN STATE OR FROM TEXTUAL TO ORAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Antonio Luigi Palmisano *

Between the drawing up of protocols and dialogue

The actual crisis of anthropology is related to its wide public success. Starting from the 1940's the number of professional anthropologists has increased exponentially and so has the number of students in the universities, as well as the number of B.A., M.A., Ph.D. and Masters programmes in anthropology (social, cultural, applied and so on).

Anthropology has prospered. The anthropologies have proliferated and, becoming more specific, anthropology has mushroomed, going on to enhance many other social and non social sciences. But the theoretical debate has come to a halt over the last decades, with only a few, albeit important, exceptions confined to particular schools.

Both the methodologies and the form of expression of the ethnographic report have developed and then become crystallized around actual protocols. Ethnography is now reduced to a drawing up of protocols: even the ethnic identities have been reduced to mere protocols.

* This brief article is the text of the conference I held on June 2, 2008 at the Frobenius-Institut, Frankfurt a. M., Germany, within the series of Jensen Memorial Lectures, 14 April-30 June 2008, on the theme "The End of Anthropology?". The title of my contribution was "Anthropology tomorrow. Between *Protokollaufnahme* and dialogue or from textual to oral anthropology". It is partially available on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isR7C5WHgwg>. I thank the colleagues Adam Kuper, Ulf Hannerz, Signe Howell and Maurice Godelier, who have preceded me in answering the challenging question, and the colleagues John Comaroff, Vincent Crapanzano, Patricia Spyre e Mark Müntzel, who followed, for the strong opportunities for reflection. My gratitude also goes to all those who attended the conference for the questions they asked. I am particularly grateful to Karl-Heinz Kohl and Bernhard Streck for the direct and indirect on-going dialogue on the theme in question and to Jan M. Broekman for the accurate critiques he made to the first draft of this paper. I hope to have been able to give an extensive answer to the comments and critiques also concerning the presence of the notion of *Dasein* to which I refer in an attempt to answer today the question "The End of Anthropology?" in an essay which will be published soon.

Protocolar identities – identities which are reduced to protocols through the specific practice of ethnography in the post-global era – concern both representation and self-representation and produce the fixation and fossilization of the *persona*, that is a subordinate dependence from the institutions of modernity and the limitation of the social actor to a single role, an object role, which becomes *de facto* coercive and potentially mercified.¹

But a critique of the dichotomy Subject/Object, i.e. the key discussion about the notion of *das Fremde* (*Alterität* and/or *Alienität*), and about the relations between *der Wissenschaftler* and *das Irrationale*, speaks for an immanent “non-protocolar” character of anthropology.

Historicisation of anthropology

In its historicisation (Heidegger’s *Geschehen*, *Geschichte*, *Geschick*), as a supreme and conscious expression of the many dialogues in the field between the Anthropologist and the Other, anthropology has today become an *Existenzial*.² This way, anthropology can finally disappear as a positivist science.

Anthropology embraced the theoretical viewpoint of participant observation not only as a research methodology, but as research as such, as a tension, a drive toward the lifeworld, a form of life, a way of life.

This is why we want now to underline Heidegger’s statement:

“Ethnologie setzt selbst schon eine zureichende Analytik des Daseins als Leitfaden voraus”.³

The *Daseinanalysis*, the knowledge pertaining to *Dasein*, is therefore a precondition for ethnology. We are facing now an epistemological question, which is presupposed once we come to ethnology.

What *Dasein* is so critical for anthropologists? What is meant here with *Dasein* is a most obvious and self-evident issue in the eyes of an anthropologist and in anthropological perspective. *Dasein* is “human reality” and as such man’s proper way to be.

Together with Heidegger we look at the literal sense of the *Dasein*: *Da-sein*, being-there, is constitutive to man. Man is only when he has a *there/here*, a horizon thanks to which he can relate to other entities (*Seienden*). Man is only when he has “taken on” a “there” (or “driven out from Paradise”). And he can “take on” a “there”,

¹ On the notion of “protocolar identity”, cf. Palmisano 2010:207-222.

² I still use the term *Existenzial* as a substantive. In juxtaposition to *Existenziell*, an *Existenzial* is the character of existence in its “to be” and in its modes to comprehend this “to be” in contrast to *Kategorial*, the concept *Existenzial* denotes existence in general, so that *Existenziell* articulates the specific comprehension that each existence has of itself.

³ Heidegger, M., *Sein und Zeit*, § 11, pg. 51.

constitute a “there”, only together with the Other, namely another “man”. By the way, we were two when we were driven out from Paradise.

For Heidegger,⁴

“Das Seiende, dessen Analyse zur Aufgabe steht, sind wir je selbst”; (Par. 9)

“Das „Wesen“ dieses Seienden liegt in seinem Zu-sein”; (Par. 9)

“Das „Wesen“ des Daseins, liegt in seiner Existenz”. (Par. 9)

If *Zu-sein* articulates nothing else than “to have to be”, and *Existenz* the *Sein des Daseins*, then we are the *Seiende*. The essence (*das Wesen*) of the *Seiende* consists in our necessary relations to Others (other entities, other *Seiende*), transcending and comprehending oneself in one’s own “being”. This is a kind of transcendence of the (one)self; a transcendence, which can be obtained thanks to the *Mit-sein* relation, and enter or even penetrate into ourselves. This is a kind of relation that the scientist can have with the so-called *Irrationale*:

“Whoever enters in himself, and transcends himself through this penetration, actually rises toward God”.⁵

We come now to the point: the anthropologist is therefore more legitimated than others to define the *Dasein*. First of all, the *Da* represents the theatre/stage of his/our action as researcher. Then, the *Da* is object of his/our research but also methodological constituent of his/our researching: *Mit-sein*. The object, in fact, is the *Da* and not the tribe alone: the so-called object is the researcher’s own *Da* and the tribe’s (the group’s, the community’s and so on) *Da*, namely the *Da* as contemporaneously lived and experienced by both. Fieldwork is construction or experience of a single and common *Da*: this is *Mit-sein*. Finally, the *Da* constitutes the identity of the anthropologist as researcher.

Fieldwork can be understood as *Offenbarung* of *Da-sein*, and *Feld-forschen* is the expressive activity of the anthropologist’s *Da-sein*. The *Sein* is *das unbestimmte Unmittelbare* for the anthropologist – as it was for Hegel;⁶ but the *Dasein* of the anthropologist allows *das unbestimmte Unmittelbare* to become *das bestimmte (Un)mittelbare*.

The *Da-sein* encompasses a contingent dimension. The anthropologist on the field (who co-builds *In-sein* and *Mit-sein*) has the experience of a post-global world,⁷

⁴ Heidegger, M., *Sein und Zeit* §. 9 *Das Thema der Analytik des Daseins. Erstes Kapitel, Die Exposition der Aufgabe einer vorbereitenden Analyse des Daseins. Erster Teil, Die Interpretation des Daseins auf die Zeitlichkeit und die Explikation der Zeit als des transzendentalen Horizontes der Frage nach dem Sein.*

⁵ Hugo de S. Victore, *De vanitate mundi*, 2.

⁶ Hegel, F., *Wissenschaft der Logik*, 1812, 1831; cf. Erster Teil. Die Objektive Logik, Erstes Buch, Die Kehre vom Sein, Erster Abschnitt.

⁷ Palmisano, A. L. 2006.

where the *grands récits*⁸ have not actually disappeared but are hidden; namely the anthropologist has the experience of a world in which, and for which we continue to “perform” *grands récits*. In other terms, when we anthropologists look at the contemporary world, we observe that the *Dasein* should actually be characterized as a *post-global world*, which means: the order of the world is shaped by the order of the financial markets (stock-markets, *Kapitalmarkt*). The first characteristic of our *Dasein* is in fact that it is anchored in *grands récits*, which remain hidden (articulated in words as signs and symbols, such as race, natural selection – survival of the fittest –, technical and scientific self-deification), although we are dealing with and determined by them. Now we are facing a new order, the order of the financial markets, which exploits everyday life. And the order of the *grands récits* seems to coincide with the order of the financial markets – although this often escapes our attention:

“Toutefois, tout comportement herméneutique (H.G. Gadamer) engage une historicité du comprendre tissée de préjugés et, en l’occurrence, d’un ‘inconscient ethnologique’.”⁹

Martin Heidegger manifests in *Sein und Zeit* a participant observation, which is “rural”.¹⁰ He speaks with the peasants in order to find an answer to the question: “What is philosophy”? but his question must be understood in a telluric sense, as pertaining to the anchorage of the *Dasein* in the *Sein*, which considers the bonds of a philosopher to life. This can be compared to fieldwork so that the following consideration can help us understand Heidegger’s ethnological approach:

“La philosophie de Heidegger à la fois éclaire et réhabilite l’être au monde du primitif.”¹¹

The *être au monde du primitif* is a specific *Dasein*: the world of thought that includes an a-conceptual thought. Heidegger actually tried to work in terms of a-conceptual thought, and he considered that he could do so thanks to his “rural” experience. But the question becomes, even for us, the question raised by Leenhard:

“[Et si] ce qu’on était convenu d’appeler mentalité primitive n’était qu’un aspect universel de la mentalité humaine?”.¹²

⁸ Cfr. Lyotard, J.-F. 1979.

⁹ “Each hermeneutical behavior (Gadamer) activates, that is implies, a historicity of comprehension woven with prejudice and, when necessary, with an ‘inconscient ethnologique’.” (Ouattara, Bourahima 2000, pg. 80).

¹⁰ Cf. Heidegger’s situation in his Todtnauberg home (already built in 1922), a kind of refuge where he lived between 1955 and 1973.

¹¹ Dufrenne, M. 1966, pg. 138.

¹² Leenhardt, M. 1949, pg. 41.

So anthropology has become a *telluric* philosophy, a philosophy, which regains a-conceptual thought patterns and is anchored in the territory. Anthropology actually does so through the praxis of fieldwork. But does it manage to articulate this attitude? And how?

The end of anthropology as *tekhne*

We live in our post-global era. In our era, the only things that become obsolete are those that do not have a market. This is why anthropology became anthropology of development or an applied anthropology. This is also the reason why anthropology has reduced itself to a continuous multiplication and proliferation of anthropologies, as if it were the result of a basic market strategy, a diversification of the product for the market for specific investors.¹³ Anthropologists run the risk of imprisoning anthropology in the sciences and maybe, tomorrow, reducing it further and relegating it as *tekhne*, a self-certified *tekhne*.

This is what I have defined as “Atlantic” anthropology, which is an anthropology worthy of the strength of Atlas and of the mythical labour of Heracles.

Eurystheus assigned an eleventh labour to Heracles: he had to fetch golden apples from the Hesperides Garden. It was an extremely difficult task, which required cunning rather than courage and strength. Ladon, an enormous snake, supervised the garden continuously and no one knew exactly where the garden was. Heracles began his extenuating research. During his long search he met Nereus who advised him never to gather the golden apples personally but to leave this work to Atlas. He was actually the father of the Hesperides and had taken care of the garden for a long time, until he was condemned by Zeus to carry the celestial globe or more precisely the celestial axe, forever on his shoulders. When Heracles met him, Atlas was suffering and moaning because of the burden, dreaming even of a short respite. So he immediately accepted Heracles’s proposal to carry the fantastic burden while he would go and fetch the golden apples picked by his daughter from the Garden.

But Atlas was afraid of Ladon, so Heracles had to kill him first with his arrows. And so he did. When Atlas came back after having experienced the joy of freedom, he asked Heracles to bring the three apples to Eurystheus, promising that he would come back in a few months. The answer of Heracles was both immediate and cunning: he agreed and asked Atlas to hold the globe just a moment, only the time to put a pad on his head. Atlas was deceived and laid the apples on the ground to resume his burden but Heracles picked up the apples and left with an ironical farewell. And since then Atlas suffers for his burden and complains continuously about his destiny.

¹³ Talking about shares, Warren Buffett, the financier who “thrives in the storm” and is often compared to the mythical banker J. P. Morgan, the saviour of US economy in 1907, said: “Our favourite holding period is forever. Our strategy goes against the dogma of diversification and many know-all will say that we risk too much. But we don’t agree. Wide diversification is only required when investors do not understand what they are doing”.

Anthropology has condemned itself to bear Atlas's complaints and therefore to share his destiny.

In *Schwanengesang*, „Der Atlas“ (text of Heinrich Heine, from *Die Heimkehr*, 1823-1824), Franz Schubert (1797-1828) let us relive Atlas's tragedy:¹⁴

*Ich unglückseliger Atlas! Eine Welt,
die ganze Welt der Schmerzen muss ich tragen.
Ich trage Unerträgliches, und brechen
Will das Herz im Leibe.
Du stolzes Herz, du hast es ja gewollt!
Du wolltest glücklich sein, unendlich glücklich,
Oder unendlich elend, stolzes Herz,
Und jetzt bist du elend!*

Anthropology, considered in the past as a social science, was appointed to carry policies of “development” – in post-modern and post-global perspectives – and the policies of *Unterordnung* of “*das Fremde*” on its shoulders and to legitimize them.

Description and justification supported each other and ultimately coincided. When we are very descriptives we end up delivering a justification and to legitimize, we risk being judges and passing judgement.

Anthropologists were told, and they also told themselves, that “development” was a noble and ethic mission. And these judgements of the anthropologists are *de facto* written down in expertise and ethnographical monographs.

This is “the Atlas complex”: to be sentenced and to present the sentence as an honour, as something unique and even as a performance, an identity and unity instituting performance. Many actually shared this view, unaware of the moral and intellectual wretchedness to which they were destined.

Anthropology has become subservient to the *tekhne* of development. But this exploitation of anthropology as *tekhne* clashes with its being an *Existential*.

From this potential – anthropology as *Existential* and the anthropologists as its scholars-adepts – we have proceeded to dissolve the potential, to solve ourselves in an instrument – charitable, with the best of intentions – that is to the cancellation of the anthropological potential.

Anthropology has been “awarded” a sentence: “to save the world”. And in such an epic context it is no wonder that applied anthropology should allow us an essay in applied mythology.

Years ago, in a short but meaningful paper Peter Worsley stated:

¹⁴ “I, a most wretched Atlas, the huge world,/ The whole huge world of sorrow I must carry./ Yea, the unbearable must bear, though meanwhile/ My heart break in my bosom./ Then haughty heart, thyself hast willed it thus,/ Thou wouldst be happy, infinitely happy,/ Or infinitely wretched, haughty heart!/ And lo! now art thou wretched!”. (Translation by Emma Lazarus)

“Two years’ work with the Commission on the Study of Peace of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) has convinced me that there is a widespread receptivity to any ideas that anthropologists are able to contribute to the analysis of the major international conflicts and especially of the threat of nuclear warfare.”¹⁵

The arms race, according to Worsley, can be interpreted as conflicts of interest and in a deeper sense of our “images of the Other”, based on stereotypes which are similar to those found by the anthropologists in their analysis of inter-ethnical relations. What for instance has been studied by witchcraft anthropology is relevant in the studies of the relations between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. The study of war making and peace making in state and a-cephalous societies

“points out to mechanisms – of mediation, confidence building, alternatives to war – which have their analogues in superpower or other kinds of international hostility.”¹⁶

To design a type of anthropology of the nuclear era and to avoid disaster, Worsley makes a proposal in eight points, in which he shows among other things the need

“To establish in every university and college a course on the anthropology of peace and war (with special reference to global nuclear hostilities).”¹⁷

In this program, there is also space for Third World countries:

“Because of their cultural distance they can provide more detached perspectives and act as cultural mediators and brokers”.¹⁸

The perspective of the “Other” is thus fixed in its objectivation function within the huge and Atlantic duty of modern anthropology.

This is applied anthropology, applied to the utmost degree: Atlantic anthropology *stricto sensu*. What is here at work if not the positivist paradigm in anthropology? Anthropology is still affected by this paradigm, a paradigm for which the whole world is object, but a positivist anthropology has neither the notion of the *Da* nor of the *Dasein*, and it cannot even know with whom this *Dasein* should be shared.

Here is “Atlantic” anthropology, namely anthropology of development and applied anthropology! With it, in the best case – in the case of unaware ideological exploitation –, anthropology passed from *eros* to *agape*, more or less in the name of

¹⁵ Worsley, P. 1986:282-284.

¹⁶ Worsley, P. 1986:281.

¹⁷ Worsley, P. 1986:284.

¹⁸ Worsley, P. 1986:284.

caritas.¹⁹ And anthropology has reduced itself to this kind of anthropology much more than we are prepared to recognize. We could thus agree with the assumption that the era of this anthropology is at its end, but also that it is the beginning of the era of the anthropologists. They, the anthropologists, are the “living texts” and not their writings!

For an anthropologist – within the *ethnologie appliquée*, a *mediator and political delegate of society* (this terminology is in use among the “developmentalists”) –²⁰ the enemy, the adversary, the *Gegner* has been, up to now, the State.²¹

In fact, *Gegner* is whoever does not share or is against and does constitute in that manner the experience of the *Mit-sein*. That is: *Gegner* is whoever does not share the contemporary character of the *Dasein* and intends to transcend it, constituting himself as a new *Seiende*, a new body, configured in corporations such as *transnational holdings* and *multinational corporations*. The *transnational holdings* do not share the *Da-sein* because they only intend the *Über-sein*: in other terms, *das Wesen dieser Seienden* liegt in ihren *Zu-sein* which is only understood as *Über-sein*, arrogance, prevarication and violence.

The *Gegner* is often configured as States, but we do not ignore that States represent a minimal *Mit-sein*, actually for the processes of choice – more or less democratic – that are implicit and continuous in them.

Concerning the relationships between States and anthropologists, there is an interesting exchange of letters between Malinowski, who was teaching at the London Schools of Economics at that time, and his student Audrey Richards, who was doing fieldwork in the 30’s among the Bemba of present day north eastern Zambia.

In her letter to Malinowski, Richards complains about the continuous check on her work by the District Commissioner who paid her a visit once every two weeks. In his answer, Malinowski advises her to put someone on watch at the border of the village. He should have warned her of the imminent arrival of the District Commissioner’s car as soon as he saw it, and so Richards would have had time to leave the village “to do research” in some unspecified place in the neighbourhood.

Malinowski concluded then with the following comment concerning the relationships between anthropologists and State power and agencies: “Our English is completely different...”²²

Up to now we have dealt with *Gesellschaften ohne Staat*.²³ Starting from tomorrow, a challenging book title could be: *societies without transnational holdings*.

In fact, the central instance today – in a post-global world and time – is not the State any more but the *transnational holdings*. This can be the *Gegner* in another

¹⁹ This post-global society is anyway characterised by a peremptory passage from *eros* to *agape*: the ideology of *caritas* is profoundly inscribed in our language.

²⁰ Cf. Guille-Escuret, G. 1990:101-103.

²¹ Cf. Kramer, F. und Sigrist, Christian (Hrsg.) 1978.

²² Cf. Malinowski, B. (and others) 1938.

²³ Cf. Kramer, F. und Sigrist, Christian (Hrsg.) 1978.

time, in our time, obviously for the anthropologist, who considers himself a champion of the *Dasein*. The legitimate monopoly on the use of sanctions – mainly economical – has been *de facto* delegated to them for the constitution of the present centralized order, represented by the financial markets (stock markets and *Kapitalmarkt*): it is at the same time a centralized order and a social life permeating order.

Today, the *transnational holdings* represent the *Gegner* of the anthropologist, *mediator and political delegate of society*. They hide very well under their disguise; (cf. post-global era) and they represent the *Gegner* actually within the process of social and dialogical construction of the world performed by social actors and civil society.²⁴

In other terms, we are now facing a new not easily detectable Leviathan, which I call “the post-Euclidean State”, in lethal competition with the former. This *Gegner* has its seat, locates, in cyberspace rather than in an Euclidean space. But the effects of its activities ravage the Euclidean space and violently colonise the world-of-life, our world, our *Da-sein*, more than any other Leviathan or Behemoth have ever done before.

So the anecdote of Malinowski’s suggestions to Richards and his statement on the different language spoken by anthropologists could be seen as old stuff, if we like, but that structure of relations is still the same; the only difference is that the officers of the State have been replaced by the representatives of the post-Euclidean State and that they do not come to pay visit but, as consequence of the colonisation of everyday life, are there all the time.

Here and now is our *Dasein*. What we have done here is a short analysis of the *Dasein* which is certainly not sufficient. The question of the nature of *Mitsein* in cyberspace still remains. It is a very plain outline, but nevertheless a beginning: to recognize the places and the time of the post-global era represents a minimal outline of the analysis of the *Dasein*.

And this is why there is a big gap between the scientific ability of anthropology and the social use (institutional and private) of anthropology and ethnography. Many anthropologists have been complaining about this for a long time²⁵.

The anthropologists have been driven out, chased away from Paradise, from the Garden of Eden, but what kind of forbidden fruit have they eaten? The fruit of the tree of life?

Anthropological observations, analysis and interpretation are not welcome as participants in the hottest debates of the post-global era.²⁶ After the anthropologist’s speech, is there anything left to say for the others? The others can only say that they

²⁴ And here, I do not understand dialogue and dialogical anthropology as in the ‘80s, namely I do not understand it as an “on-going dialogue” or as a conversation which is supposed to be at the heart of the anthropological project.

²⁵ Cf. Guille-Escuret, G. 1990:98-112.

²⁶ Cf. Guille-Escuret, G. 1990:98-104.

are not interested, namely that it isn't in their interest. The anthropologists have perhaps understood too much, too clearly, too quickly; and there is even a "disenchantment", *Entzauberung*, of the teachers of this discipline.

Fieldwork and dialogue: toward another grammar

The essence of anthropology is in fieldwork. Ethics is immanent to this discipline: participant observation is not an instrument to obtain "facts", which are more probable, useful, precise, reliable "data", but is a vision of the world, a choice, an ethical choice. It is a way to interpret interpersonal relations. It is a praxis, an attempt to create, to ordinate the world – *Herstellen* and *Gestell* are still the terms which could be correctly employed.

In this attempt, participant observation is related to art. It is a joined action in order to realize a superlative analysis. It is a testimony (*μάρτυς, μάρτυρος*) of the possibility to conceive relations that are not intended in terms of *Unterordnung* and *Überordnung*.

The *Aufhebung* (dissolving) of the Subject/Object dichotomy in the research does not cancel the subject in the chaos of the being-there, *Da-sein*, but promotes the constitution of the subjects, of unique subjects exclusively, as social actors in a co-constructed, dialogical world.

And this: "how the research is done" thus becomes a political and an ethical action, creating the basis for a new political theology. The objectivation of the Other (*das Seiende* par excellence) in the eyes of the ethnographer (sometimes even as a pure linguistic and grammatical form) risks being opened and continuing to open toward the possibilities of an a-moral and in-moral action. The objectivation, the "construction" (*Gestell*), constitutes the "desertification of the world", *die Verwüstung der Erde*.²⁷ reification desertifies the world.²⁸

How might we express the essence (*das Wesen*) of anthropology? Participant observation needs adequate expressiveness if it really should be revolutionary, experience (*Erlebnis*) and ethics. It can be understood as the expression of the *Dasein* of the anthropologist in interrelations with the *Dasein* of the Other: to be communicated and also expressed as such.

When Malinowski discusses the theme of myth interpretation and methodology of anthropology, he clarifies the privileged relationship that the anthropologist has with the "text":

"For the anthropologist – one and only among the many participants in the mythological contest – has the unique advantage of being able to step back behind the savage whenever he feels that his theories become involved and the flow of his argumentative eloquence runs dry".²⁹

²⁷ Heidegger, M. 1954, pp. 71-73.

²⁸ Cf. Löwith, K. 1953, pg. 9.

²⁹ Malinowski, B. 1926, pg. 17.

In fact, Malinowski formulates this reflection in an even more drastic manner:

“The anthropologist has the mythmaker at his elbow. Not only can he take down as full a text as exists, with all its variations, and control it over and over; he has also a host of authentic commentators to draw upon; still more he has the fullness of life itself from which the myth has been born.”³⁰

To have the *fullness of life* at his disposal is more important for the anthropologist than to have informants, text or research topics.

How could we then consider anthropology in its capacity to establish relations that found and build reality? “Also as art” would be an answer, perhaps *above all* as art:

“Anthropology is the science of the sense of humour. It can be thus defined without too much pretension or facetiousness. For to see ourselves as others see us is but the reverse and the counterpart of the gift to see others as they really are and as they want to be. And this is the *métier* of the anthropologist. He has to break down the barriers of race and of cultural diversity; he has to find the human being in the savage; he has to discover the primitive in the highly sophisticated Westerner of to-day, and, perhaps, to see that the animal, and the divine as well, are to be found everywhere in man.”³¹

This was reconfirmed in the introduction to Julius Lips’s work, where Malinowski concludes:

“If anthropology be defined as the art and craft in the sense of humour, then the present book is one of the first contributions to real anthropology –first in rank and first in priority of time.”³²

Is anthropology a science or is it an art? Does it have to remain in the realm of writing or could it reoccupy a place in the world of orality? Is there the possibility of rescuing anthropology from being theorized as *tekhnē*? Can one take anthropology away from the “responsibility and guilt” ascribed to it by the “Atlantic” anthropology?

“Anthropologists are scientists...”. So we were taught, starting with the ‘60s. But of what kind of *scientists* are we talking about?

Anthropology at least is “the most scientific of the humanities, the most humanistic of the sciences”.³³ And again, “(Clifford Geertz 1988 and James Clifford 1988)³⁴ conceive that anthropologists are first and foremost writers...”³⁵

³⁰ Malinowski, B. 1926, pg. 17.

³¹ Malinowski, B. 1937.

³² Malinowski, B. 1937.

³³ Wolf, E.R. 1964.

³⁴ Geertz, C. 1988; Clifford, J. 1988.

³⁵ Carrithers, M. 1990:264.

Anthropologists write but they are not *ipso facto Schriftsteller*. Writing is the expression of binary thought, of logical-speculative thought, of conceptual thought. There are the limits of grammar, the limits of syntax subject-predicate-object, SPO; although one should consider that there are SOP grammars, which practice a major transitivity in the action and a minor delineation of the dichotomy actor/acted.³⁶

And so we are now facing the main obstacle of anthropology: the problem of the *text*. When we write a text, we fix thoughts. It means that we also found and fix the object: and the text is fixated through the fixation of the object. The text is constituted by objects, which have not solely syntactic properties. A biographical or autobiographical footnote as addition cannot in itself de-objectivise and facilitate dialogue.

But if we practice the anthropology of the anthropologists – these are the new texts for us – we constitute living texts, witnesses of the ethnographic experience, texts that, as such, are not fixed texts. The fixated text belongs to what is in contraposition to the “fullness of life”.³⁷ We deal in fact with commenting social actors not with mere informants. Anthropology has “the fullness of life” to not be wasted.

Writing is a binary achievement: it gives up the dialogical complexity of Being, of to be. Maybe it even denies it.

The dialogical complexity is a situational and contractual complexity, mediated and mediatory, negotiated and negotiatory. This is why the term “dialogical” has nothing to do with the meaning given by “a dialogical anthropology”, popular in the late 80’s, an anthropology placing “on-going dialogue (conversation), at the heart of the anthropological project”.³⁸

Instead, anthropologists are [Schriften]teller, Erzähler, narrators pertaining to an “Other” thinking – an analogical or a-conceptual thinking as process of recuperation: *Herstellen* and *Gestell* once again at the centre of the anthropological activity.

Anthropologists are story-tellers: tellers of the society of Others in their own home, tellers of their own society in somebody else’s home, in an Other’s home.

The dimension of the ethnographic account is more face-to-face and personal and less public and impersonal. It is a way of transferring difference, diversity, alterity, and *Alienität* to relatives, friends, acquaintances, colleagues and students.

So does writing ethnography mean: to tell stories? And does this story-telling follow rules like in all other stories? These are legitimate anthropological questions.

When we write the ethnographic text, we dictate: we are answering specific rules (the Subject/Object relationship). In fact, if we produce the text, we arrange and create a world in terms of objects.

³⁶ This could be our interpretation of Fritz Kramer when he writes “Ethnologie der *passiones*”. Cf. Kramer, F. 1984.

³⁷ Cf. Malinowski , B. 1926:17.

³⁸ Cf. De Boeck, F. 2003:361.

When I face my ethnographic text I notice that:

I	describe	the Other
<u>subject</u>	<u>predicate</u>	<u>object</u>

This structure is narrative and objectifying: actor-acted/active-passive. If we syntactically stop the Other, the Other is objectified. When we face reification processes, we find that the Other is not a co-actor any more. But even when we “listen” to the “text”, the Other is objectified. We can state that the text comments on itself.³⁹ In fact, we produce the text anyway: through our writing down the entire oral tale we establish Subject/Object.

This might lead to create new grammars, new syntax; that is new languages. “Science” is by now, in the post-global world, inscribed in the language: SPO instead of SOP, for instance.

Are we left only with self-ethnography? Are we only left with Nels Anderson’s kind of self-ethnography?

In his ethnography, working on “Hobohemia” – and while working on Hobohemia he was constructing it – Anderson does not only *describe* the areas between West Madison and Jefferson Park of Chicago in the 20’s but, above all, he conducts an analytical discussion of the migratory movements taking place within the United States, the *hobos*’ extraneity to modernity, their social maladjustment, their social and cultural lack of homogeneity.⁴⁰ In other terms, he describes himself in action within a world, which is incredibly evocative. He does this thanks to a great and unique research; a research that Anderson himself has defined as “a research about myself”, a research in which Subject and Object do not appear as dichotomies, categories which should be accepted for the sake of scientific knowledge.

It is interesting to read Latin SOP ethnographies, for example – cf. authors from Julius Caesar to Tacitus –: both Subject/Object have a major commonality and the Other results less foreign, less *Fremde* although he is an ennemy. In other ethnographies – cf. Arab authors from Abu al Hassan al Mas’udi (Xth century) to Abu al Abbas al Maqrizi (XVth century) – there is often an attempt to share and to elaborate kinship. The use of the dual form (Greek, Arabic) allows a powerful and different understanding of the Other. The construction of the object is felt very lightly in nominal sentences: the object seems to be almost absent because the verb, in its usual form, is missing.⁴¹

³⁹ Cf. for instance the Hamar of Ethiopia and Ivo Strecker. (Strecker, I. 1979)

⁴⁰ Anderson, N. 1923.

⁴¹ Cf. Wittgenstein on the relation between language and the world. (Wittgenstein, L. 1953)

My analysis as an anthropologist starts from the *Da-sein*. Grammar forces me to produce objects: to be aware of this helps more to constitute and establish communications than to create order and objects:

“Ich fürchte, wir werden Gott nicht los, weil wir noch an die Grammatik glauben.”⁴²

In being aware of all this, we may be able to move towards an anthropology of dialogue (and not of conversation).⁴³ But I evolve towards *dialogy* and not towards *dialectic*.

Dialogy is a process of co-building reality within which the dichotomy Subject/Object cancels itself as a contradiction: it does not mean that the Subject or the Object cancels itself but it means that the Subject and the Object are overcome by the dual process of a construction of the world that is performed together with the Other – acknowledgement of *Mit-sein*.

The great contribution of anthropology to the world is an oral contribution. During my fieldwork among the Gurage of Ethiopia I often travelled from Addis Ababa to Woreka, the country home of my adoptive family.⁴⁴ I usually told them some days before that I would come for a visit. After a day of travel by car it was pleasant to find that everything was ready and welcoming in the hut where I lived. My co-mates often (but not always) gave a party when I arrived and organized a big dinner with friends and neighbours.

Once I was deeply surprised by what was awaiting me: in my hut, which was more than 15 meters in diameter and was furnished with a thick *zigba* wood floor covered with ensete straw mats, I found more than 20 young men waiting for me. And they had been waiting for more than a day. They came from neighbouring villages and had walked for hours in order to listen to me. They had come to hear about the cooperatives of Emilia Romagna, an Italian region. I was very much surprised by their request for an unscheduled “conference”, but I met their expectations and talked for a long, long time. A debate which went on late into the following night. The day after, I asked my age mates why they had organized this meeting and the answer was convincing: “You know that we have many forms of associations: *equb*, *maher*, *iddir* and so on, but we want to know more... This is very important for us, small village dwellers, and our young people should definitely begin to think about and face the world...”

The anthropologist on the field is often requested to do self-ethnography in order to discover the infinite possibilities of the being-there, of the *Da-sein*. What is anthropology if not a dialogue, an interactive construction of a new political and existential program?

During that night the history of the Gurage was recapitulated in a few words: from slaves to masters. The awareness of the adults most representative of the *t’ib*

⁴² Nietzsche, F. (1888-1889) 1977, II 960 (5).

⁴³ Cf. for instance questionnaires, interviews and tricky questions.

⁴⁴ Cf. Palmisano, A. L. 2008.

was expressed in a single sentence: “Now we can go into politics”. The conversation was about the possibility of being able to manage new social networks, to articulate new forms of distribution: and not new forms of production. The discussion was about possible forms of power which were identified through dialogic activity. And this can be realized by transcending the Subject/Object dichotomy, creating duality and remaining firmly anchored to the oral performance but surely not through the struggle in the written form.

Some years later, I had a discussion with University colleagues about similar topics: “According to Jaynes, Western consciousness was born with the end of archaic Greece, when the two cerebral hemispheres connected and from a “compartmental” mind we went on to the “connected” mind...” This is what a colleague metaphorically said,⁴⁵ concerning the question I raised about the relation between Subject and Object, that is the question concerning the “author”. Was Homer an author? Do we deal in the Iliad and Odyssey with self-evolving poems? Two questions that have not yet received full answers... “Today we witness a return to origins. Any text is a collective emergency. The author dissolves in the text, dissolves as subject, he is a *maieuta*.⁴⁶” This is how the colleague proceeded.

I consider, however, that the dissolving of the author does not imply the dissolving of the Subject, and that the dissolving of the Subject does not mean a dissolution of the Object, the construction of the object-(*gegenständlich*) world.

According to the classical world the Gods themselves “give the voices” while we are confined to story telling. The present day use of the web could possibly represent a new way to “be in touch with the voices”. This is the recasting of “oracular modality”. With it we renounce synthesis and “completeness”. But we admit that the world is not fenced and that we do not get involved in building fences. And the colleague concluded as following: “I can gather voices and write notes. For me this is the only way to do science. But I sometimes need at least one “emergency subject”. After centuries, we, science philosophers are starting to take voices again”.

Unfortunately there are still many anthropologists who intend to remain with objectivity and do not accept dialogy.⁴⁶

As for the priest, the psychoanalyst, the diplomat, the peasant, the artist (singer, painter, sculptor, tattooer and *piercer*...), the great contribution of anthropology to the world is an oral contribution. To ask a “native” about an institution, about a ritual, means to discuss and concord a possible vision of this institution, of this ritual: a vision that helps the Other (the ethnographer this time) to understand his world (the native’s world) and vice versa. But even in this process it would be good to adopt the “other” perspective. In the eyes of the Other, the Other is the ethnographer.

Is this a process of social construction of reality, of oral construction of this institution, of this ritual? Is it *Vorstellung*, representation of objects, *Herstellung*, production of objects, and *Gestell*, a “construction” of objects?

⁴⁵ Conversation with Gianluca Bocchi, December 2009, University of Bergamo.

⁴⁶ Cf. Sperber, D. 1985.

This is in essence the construction of a meta-institution or a meta-ritual: the construction of an icon, a useful icon for a situational comprehension; it is the construction of an icon for the expression, some day of a collective, dual experience, *Erfahrung*, (“native”-anthropologists) of this institution, of this ritual; it is an *Erfahrung* conjugated in the dual form. In this way it is not a non-mediated construction of an immediate reality, but the construction of an icon that allows the expression of the *Erfahrung* in order to become *Erlebnis* for two or more *personae*: meta-institution, meta-ritual. Institution and ritual are not de facto *an sich*: they are for the actor (“native”) and for the actors (“native” and ethnographer). Ultimately they are for all the actors. They are only thanks to the actors, to all the social actors and to their endless interpretations. This is *Auslegung*, explication, and *Interpretation*, interpretation.

There is obviously a draft (a plot) in this explication and interpretation process – we used to call it “structure” once, “process” then, and “set of symbols”, later; after having removed the castrating weight of being a simple function. But the emotions aroused and arising in myself, in ourselves, by the single, unique and multiplied interpretations – shared, sometimes deeply shared – actually allow me and allow us original and unique knowledge, that is the knowledge and the comprehension of this “institution”, of that “ritual”.

We know that knowledge is politely represented to us as “being impersonal and objective”.⁴⁷ But the question “related to Clifford’s statement of the dialogic “nature” of anthropological knowledge (its essentially interpersonal and intersubjective character): what is the character of anthropological evidence if it is not scientific?”,⁴⁸ is a misleading question.

And the statement concerning ethnography: “The resulting description is actually what the ethnographer selected from what he understood of what his informants told him of what they understood”⁴⁹, is a misleading statement.

Ethnography is in this statement a *one-way process* leading from the informants to the ethnographer. It is like a sort of custom gate for information: red light-green light. Information is here considered as goods and anthropologists as custom officers. This is a brilliant example of ethnography as drawing up of protocols.

This concept of ethnography as one-way process suggests that the “informant” is passive and the anthropologist active so that the “informant” is Object. This process is not dialogic: it is only a mirror image – specular as in any mirror – and positivist thinking, an overwhelming positivist vision: Subject/Object dichotomy, actor/acted upon dichotomy. Finally both of them are acted upon: the one by the spirit of positivism, the other by the spirit of innocence, *Unschuld*.

We know that ethnography is rather a process of reciprocal information and formation, a mutual training: it is a construction of the “facts”, it is a construction of

⁴⁷ Clifford, J. 1988.

⁴⁸ Cf. Carrithers, M. 1990, pg. 263.

⁴⁹ Cf. Sperber, D. 1985:14-15.

the “data”. This construction is private and public at the same time, when facing the transcendence of the “We”, i.e. when facing “my” society, in the perspective of each actor – “native” and ethnographer.

The tacit construction of the “data” implies co-responsibility and complicity in the construction and its consequences: that qualifies as error and sin – ultimately as guilt. The public construction of the “data” implies consensus; that is worth: merit. In this hidden theology of anthropology we are actually dealing with a continuous and complete deception, in which both the anthropologist and the native, the Other, are victims.

Here are the “facts”, the so-called “data”, which were not “facts” until we made them *together* into facts.

Today many consider, and I share their opinion, that the so-called “facts” become facts during the period of fieldwork.⁵⁰ It means that there are no “data”, but that data are created, *hergestellt*, by the researcher together with the informant:

“When we perceive our environment, it is we who invent it.”⁵¹

Everything is “selected”,⁵² so that we face a continuous construction. This is difficult to accept: nothing is “given” and everything is “taken”.

The construction of this “whole” (taken), does not belong to the ethnographer but is a complex, unanimous process. This construction comes with language, and is also independent of the ethnographer’s will and awareness. This is however what no one agrees to admit, otherwise everyone would risk feeling his own presence decreased and not being an actor any more.

In fact, if we are not subject-actor we feel object-acted upon; but since no one agrees to this, what can we do if according to this logic *tertium non datur*? What can we do? Maybe the predicate? This seems rather a messianic prerogative: Jesus Christ is the *Verbum*. And such aspirations are not open to everyone. Obviously everyone intends to fulfil the role of the Subject – in such a framework –, and everyone intends to solve the question of the *Da-sein* in the following terms: as being subject facing the Being and being-there. But the question is definitely more complex.

We face a unanimous construction, which is also independent of our own intentions. Above all, we find ourselves in a situation, which is remarkably articulated and decidedly unforeseeable, just as life itself is: “Life is infinitely beyond all sciences”.⁵³ And so life cannot be described in terms of Subject and Object, in terms of SPO. Life can thus be described in some form of its being-there, of its *ens*, of its *Seiende* or *Da-seiende*, life can be described through art. I am sometimes inclined to recuperate anthropology to art, or at least some kind of anthropology as art in order to recognize and fully respect its being an *Existential*.

⁵⁰ Cf. Paul Feyerabend, Heinz von Foerster, Ernst von Glaeserfeld, Humberto R. Maturana and Francisco J. Varela etc.

⁵¹ Von Foerster, H. 1973:35-46.

⁵² Including being driven out from Paradise.

⁵³ Cf. Bakunin, M. 1882.

Conclusions

We move in juxtaposition to an anthropology conceived as a *tekhne*. Anthropology today contrasts “positivist” anthropology. The authenticity, *Eigentlichkeit*, of the anthropologist underlines that his relation to the world reappears in “telluric” terms.⁵⁴

In Carl Schmitt’s *Theorie des Partisanen*, there is already an important reclaim of the “telluric” in his reflection on when and how much we are bound to the earth, to the *Da*, to this *Da*.⁵⁵ We do not have anything besides the *Da*, and when we recognize the *Da* we reflect on the *Sein* to become human. Here is a “telluric philosophy”, which we call anthropology, a philosophy of the *Da(-sein)* and not of the *Sein*. The question if there could ever be a *Sein* without a *Da-sein* is perpetual.

When we notice the *Da* we encounter man. Do not unfasten him from the *Da*, otherwise we would have something else, but certainly not Existence. Unfastened from the *Da*, “man” could perhaps be better but surely “other” (different) and certainly not the man we know of. It is true that *being* is the foundation of Western philosophy but it is on this *Da* that we should dwell today. The existence is the being of the *Da-sein*, that is the existence is the being of the being-there: we cannot disregard the *hic et nunc*, the here and now.

To reflect upon anthropology means to buy anthropology back from the process of technique, which has transformed culture into a “super-organic” object. Anthropology is a telluric philosophy, a philosophy of the *Da*. But this *Da* is not my home, is not our home. It approximates an anthropology intended as “telluric philosophy”, which moves *de facto* toward metaphysics, but not toward the metaphysic of the subject. It rather proceeds beyond the metaphysics of the subject. As Hugo de Sancto Victore indicated: “*perfectus vero cui mundus totus exsilium est*”. And this exile is fundamental, because the *here*, the entire world, is exile.

Our analysis of the *Da-sein* cannot disregard the telluric and it can therefore not deny our “being in exile”. Without *Da-sein*, we are not even in this condition, which means that we are not even in existence.

The ethnographer and the informant, the immigrant and the native become co-author not only of the ethnography but above all of the world. This concerns precisely a dialogic construction even if the tendency of the Western social actor is rather to be dialectic than dialogic.

An example of what I call dialogy can be offered by a conversation of this kind, according to the criteria of nilo-hamitic oratory:

“Ego: – I have come from Addis Ababa today and I have brought with me three kittens to dispose of...

Alter: – You are coming from Addis Ababa and you want to dispose of them? And they are so cute...

⁵⁴ Even if the translation of the term *Eigentlichkeit* is mistaken and it has anyway to be contextualized in the post-global era.

⁵⁵ Schmitt, C. 1963.

Ego: – They are very cute, and I don't want them any more...

Alter: – You don't want them any more? They would keep you company...

Ego: – They do keep me company, even if I must say that solitude worries me..."

In this example of dialogic conversation the sentence of the first speaker is taken almost fully and revised by the second speaker. The sentence of the second speaker is taken and revised by the first speaker and so on until new themes or maybe unexpected solutions appear. Here is dialogy.

In order to build a dialogue we need to create a different language. The construction of such a different language "will also help us" to free this anthropology from its Atlantic verdict. And this language can be elaborated, together with the reflection about anthropology, as an *Existential*: the *Existential* is a character, in the same sense as anthropology is a character. We cannot speak of character in terms of science or non-science. This is fundamental. In other words, if anthropology is a character then the "scientific" and positivist discourse about anthropology cannot interest me. I am instead interested in reflecting about anthropology as a character, as something that characterizes existence in its being: ethnographic dialogic practice. And this could benefit all but the post-Euclidean State. But as a first step we have to redeem anthropology by considering the possibility of a dialogue among subjects, and to overcome the Subject/Object dichotomy. How can we overcome it? We might envision the construction of a multiplicity of subjects in the absence of objects. The "there" of "being-there" is political par excellence. It means that we are not exploitable, which is not the case when we accept Atlantic anthropology and become pure instruments.

We suggest an anthropology intended as telluric philosophy, a step that entails a revolution in the vision of an *eskaton*: a new era.

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The Nepalese Traditional Concepts of Illness and Treatment

Prem K. Khatry, Ph.D.*

Shamanism is as exotic as dentistry
Mircea Eliade

Introduction

The indigenous system of healing reaches back to time immemorial. It requires a long and complex apprenticeship. This indigenous system of diagnosis, treatment, and healing has evolved in a process of trial-and-error, empirical observation, and experimental procedures over the millennia, and is an on-going process, not dissimilar to modern medicine. Indigenous diagnosis and treatment use the natural resources at their disposal as well as the attitudes, values, beliefs, and ritual in their healing technology.

The traditional Nepali concept of disease does not include the germ theory. The Nepalese see illness as external to the body, caused by malevolent powers that make an unwelcome entry into the body which disturbs the normal balance creating a host of sicknesses. The person suffering does not know for sure what the ailment is all about and how soon it could be done away with. Because the sickness has come from an external source, through external agents, the solution to problems must be found in the cosmic system, in the indigenous cosmology that controls the breadth of our movement and our relationship with the cosmic order.

It is believed that the essence of the body has been captured by some power causing disease, destruction, and often, death. It is the healer who will try to release the soul or balance the system and make it function normally.

Limitation of the study

In the context of Nepali culture, the expression “traditional healing” may include several methods that are applied by experts to cure the patients. They may include: (a) *janne/dhami/jhankri*, traditional *tantric* shamanic healers; (b) *vaidya/jyotishi/ayurvedic* astrologist; (c) local priest-experts; (d) simple users of herbs and powders.

For the purpose of this article, though, the writer will focus on the first category with some references to the rest.

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Basic Principles

The perspective of this paper is the theory of the Veda, more specifically the Atharva Veda and its *tantra*. Atharva was the name of a seer of early times.

The spiritual healing system rests on the following major theoretical premises:

- Theory of Cosmic Unity: A healer has his own cosmos in which man is a part of the great system;
- Human vulnerability: Man is a weak being; he has to surrender to the striking force, he has to follow what the experts recommend;
- Human destiny: A way to reconcile with the loss; accepting it as a result of what has been done unknowingly, previously;
- Recognition of the Unseen Power: Veneration of the Power of the unseen;
- God-Human relation: Man speaks for God, God helps him with cure.

In the final analysis healing rests on the principle that balancing the influence of the unseen with the seen world is essential to maintain order against chaos that may lead to human sickness and other problems including losses of all kinds and dimensions.

Commenting on the role of shamanism in Nepali culture Marie Norman mentions:

“To a village Nepali whose reality includes evil spirits and hungry ghosts which attack and cause illness, the concept of germs and bacteria very likely seems as far-fetched as the opposite to us (Westerners – writer). If you consider it, does a view of Illness based on the behavior of ghosts sound any more improbable than one based on tiny invisible evil bugs that attack the body and fight tiny battles with tiny invisible good bugs? In many ways the first explanation for diseases is easier to believe.”

Here, perhaps the writer is not trying to prove or persuade that illness is actually caused by evil spirits. What she is trying to say is that, logically, belief in the evil spirits’ power to cause illness has the same strength as the belief that it is the bacteria that cause illness.

Expert Order

In Nepal, like in many other countries, the traditional healers or practitioners can be grouped in three or even four categories. They range from experts on stars and planets, herbs and exotic texts, general practitioners and those who have the blessing of divine spirits and carry one or more of them “on their back” as they say. The following are the main categories, most popular and available in all regions of the country:

- Sophisticated order – the astrologer, priest who uses Sanskrit texts, uses some mantras for the purpose of pacifying the evil and warding off their effects on the person under treatment;
- Shamanic order – the *tantric* shaman who uses the oral tradition; a system in collaboration with divine power;
- Elders, novice – third order at the most local level with simple techniques for quick relief until real treatment begins.

Methods adopted by a Nepali healer

Diagnostic orders;
Soliciting the help of deities possessed by the healer.

a. Primary level

Phukphak - jharne	– blowing of breath into the body;
puja	– worship of deities;
bali	– small sacrifice of animals;
jantar mantar	– wearing healing amulets.

Miscellaneous methods depending on local cultural traditions.

b. Secondary level

<i>Chinta basne</i>	– use the tantric cosmos for special possession effect;
Referral cases	– supposing the case is beyond the capacity of the healer.

Agents of problems

- a. *Lagu*, unseen mobile agents affecting health; b. *bayu-batas*, bad air carrying evil power which have adverse effects on human body; c. *bhut-pret*, spirits such as ghosts; d. *masan*, spirits dwelling in cremation areas; e. *grahadasha*, problems related to and caused by stars and planets; f. *boksi*; g. other local, stray agents that keep making their rounds in human settlements, key movement zones

These agents range from general unseen forces to death and *pitri* related forces, angered gods, planets stars and finally human beings with jealousy, envy or other forms of enemy. Their ranges of power as well as focus vary from case to case.

Why is traditional healing popular?

In traditional societies like in Nepal traditional healing practices form part of folk beliefs, tradition and wisdom. They also indicate the fact that before any form of classic religion, ancestor worship and magic formed the major faiths of the people. In

more recent times when regular modern health facilities came, they did not reach the rural areas. Therefore, the village healer is still a resource with the inherited skill, wisdom and popularity. In brief, the reason for the existence of the traditional healing practices can be summed up, as follows:

- the healer and the patient are on the same wave length;
- free treatment and follow up support;
- lack of better alternative in villages;
- the agreement of both the parties to do away with the problem;
- trust in supernatural forces in situations/culture where formal education, scientific outlook is lacking.

Where is the traditional healing more prevalent?

In modern times, health facilities are being put in place. The nation's oldest modern medical facility, the Bir Hospital, for example, is more than a century old. Modern medical facilities are available in the regions but not in the remotest areas.

That is, traditional health services exist:

- in the western hilly regions of Nepal where development is lacking;
- in all the communities which possess traditional, conservative culture;
- in many tribal groups such as Tamang, Danuwar, and others where health facilities are lacking and shaman is a powerful person with high ranking prestige and power in the society.

Healers and Development

Development planners now realize that there are no adequate health facilities in village Nepal. Therefore, inclusion of healers and midwives in the context of change and development was thought essential given the traditional context of Nepali culture. Thus, recent changes have given new roles to these traditional experts in healing. Also, NGOs and doctors are now approaching them for help because they command respect among the people. That is, these experts can be used for the development activities at the local level.

A brief introduction to few prominent healers and their style of work is presented here.

Ratna Kaji Bajracharya, Bungmati, Kathmandu

Ratna Kaji Bajracharya, now 70, comes from a family of Buddhist priests and astrologers. He is thus traditionally trained and qualified to practice astrology, herbs, *mantra* and other forms of spiritual healing practices in one package. But in more recent times Ratna thought that his package was not sufficient so he has learnt to march in tune with the times. Now he proudly hangs a stethoscope over his leaning shoulder, makes crude ayurvedic liquids and even checks blood pressure and

heartbeats. With ashes, a small *vajra*, a broom and a horoscope of the patient spread in front of his small table, he hums some Buddhist chants and treats the patient in style. He also offers *puja* to various deities. The new medical ornaments make RK's tool of trade more effective and influential. The ever-grinning RK is a well modified personality compared to ten years ago.

Ratna Kumari (RK), a female healer

Now aged about 45, Kumari was a popular healer in Bhaktapur area when this writer met her about 15 years ago. She received her clients in a three story building at Sallaghari, Bhaktapur. Her financial condition has improved so much that she has moved to a five billion rupee house nearby and uses the whole ground-floor for her services. Fifteen years ago she was a beautiful dame in her early thirties. She used her charms and power to attract her followers who were predominantly young school boys and college-age youths of semi urban and rural areas. With time and with the increase of urban-related psychological problems among young and old she claimed to change her human form into (lowly) animals when required during divining congregation and to attain extra power to heal even more effectively. At times she becomes unconscious for weeks and does not take any food or drink. These supernatural feats have elevated her position well above other healers in the eyes of her devotees, who have now named her *shaktimata*. Her spiritual journey from RK to Srijana devi to *shaktimata* has been economically lucrative, socially prestigious and spiritually powerful. She has been able to expand her network to regions outside Kathmandu.

Unlike RK the male from Bungmati, she is rather famous among females with *boksi* (witch) traits. For those who have other physical ailments, she has blessed water, herbal powder and other down-to-earth ingredients. She accepts no other assistant than her husband, with whom she claims not to have physical relation. Since she has risen in her spiritual ladder, he manages the highly portable dispensary in front of her altar and the royal seat. They have raised three kids together, all of them now grown up to be college students. The success story of RK's progress is the story of a beautiful young lady healer, who has improved her status, prestige and income to a very high level at the expense of the desperate people's faith, young volunteers' efforts, using her attractive style as well as her personality. She appears and lives in her moderate shrine-like residence with the power always on the rise. RK's charming face is not accessible to her devotees as she remains veiled while in trance. She will bless upstairs with her *darshan* on certain days of the week, those who can afford to put big money bills on her altar. RK thus works as a consulting healer also, her consultation fee growing to be more than a MD.

RK of Bhaktapur differs sharply in terms of style, chain of followers, shows and pomp, and the flow of incoming cash and the kind scattered around the healing seat, the family coterie, and above all the location (one is in a rural setting south of the main city of Patan, whereas the other is right on the highway). Her age and femininity also play important pull factor for the crowd, which is willing to pay small amount even to enter the holy compound. Three days a week it seems to become a

mini *mela* (fair) at a pilgrimage site. And, with the *shaktimata*, the living divine healer, residing there in person, this place is a pilgrimage for thousands who feel to suffer from one kind of problem or the other and therefore flock there to seek and find a cure that works and lasts. Her base is thus always secure, the superstructure she is always ready to create, manipulate and maintain at their expense.

The Cinta ceremony

Cinta is the most common feature of the traditional tantric healing in rural Nepal. This phenomenon refers to the special ceremony organized and officiated by one special category of healer – commonly known as *dhami* and *jhankri* – in order to bring the disease-causing evil spirit – be it witch or other spirit – to justice in the presence of the sick person and thus taking the power out of the victim's body.

Cinta is a very dramatic performance where the performer is the main healer, often assisted by his assistant novice. Depending on the skill and fame of the healer, the *mandap* prepared for the purpose may look like a ritual worship place prepared for marriage, initiation or other form of an elaborate *puja* with a big fire in the middle of the yard, and a comfortable moving and dancing space for the performer.

After invoking the deities of his choice, the *dhami* goes into trance. Trance is actually the heart and soul of the *Cinta* ceremony. Once the *dhami* goes deeper and deeper into the cause of suffering, he is in a state of unconsciousness. He comes out and goes back in – all night – repetitively. He takes deep breaths while in trance, shows fighter type energy, thwarts the evil forces to their proper sphere, and coerces them to stay clear out of the victim's body; the sooner, the better, he warns. There is often a duet to be heard in the process – *dhami* questioning and the victim responding in the language (some people claim even in the voice) of the human agent. This is more so in the *boksi* cases. Normally *boksis* do not accept the charges but once overpowered by the expert, they are forced to confess. In the hand of the powerful healer they must leave the victim forever, honouring the power of the healer and leaving the patient to the mercy of the healer. The ultimate goal is: The victim must walk free from all sorts of symptoms and problems caused by the black magic spell cast by the *boksi*. The duet that often takes place during the ceremony is very interesting and worth noting. The *dhami* or *jhankri* keeps forcing the *boksi* to confess and leave the victim. She does not accept the charges but may continue giving reasons for preying on the individual. There are jealousies, personal conflicts, clashes and other issues involved in the attack on the victim by the *boksi*. For other types of attacks, the *dhami* may organize animal sacrifice to appease the divine and demonic forces and restore the health of the patient. In all types of situations, the *cinta* is a hectic, complicated and time consuming ritual organized and understood by experts only.

In the villages, the *cinta* ceremony often takes the shape of a fortune telling gathering. During the trance in progress, people from the audience may ask some questions of their choice and seek advice/answers from him. The queries may range

from marriage date, property loss, or other forms of problems faced by the inquirer. The *dhami* on his part tries to respond to the queries put forward by the audience that has made his performance of the night more attractive and meaningful. He pays them off by offering answers to all their queries.

Even when the healer is not in a state of trance, he still practices healing business/duties. That is, he carries the spirit who has blessed him with the power, and this power sits, as they say in Nepal, “on the back” of the experts. The physical touch involved in healing has thus power to heal. In fact, the healer is a double personality – one, the self, real normal human being, then the god, who alights from the back and comes to his side and assists him during the healing process.

Problems of modern facilities

The range of Nepali spiritual healers is complex, wide and multi-faceted. From the *dhami* communities of Mahakali, Karnali and Seti zones, the Amchi and Ghyabre of Gandaki, the Guruba and Ojha of Tarai, the Deuba and Deuma of Kathmandu Valley, the Bijuwa and the Fedangma of Kirat pradesh, to the priest-astrologers spread all over the hills, and the Lamas of the north, these experts function as spiritual paramedics in all cultures and regions of Nepal. Since the access to our allopathic medical system is geographically and materially limited, the request for and the role of these spiritual paramedics is obvious. Until recently, the ratio of an MBBS doctor and the population was 1:12,000 against the *dhami/janne* population of 1:70 individuals. This data itself proves the inability of the state health machinery to address the health problem of the people. To make the matter even worse, normally no MBBS doctors are willing to serve outside Kathmandu, including Nuwakot or Dhulikhel. The government has not developed scientific and human criteria to attract the doctors to the countryside and improve the poor health condition of the people. Therefore, the map of Nepal is still full of traditional experts who carry the burden as healers with their traditional medical kits and use it uninterruptedly almost for free. Time has put a challenge before them; those who have seen and felt this have managed to modify their package and impress the clientèle without losing their faces and their limited benefits.

The government medical agencies and NGOs have now recognized their role in the rural areas and therefore tapped them as valuable resources in launching awareness related activities. There are examples showing that even with such limited exposure to the new times, they have begun to adapt their style in order to walk in tune with the times. Those who have not been reached by those agencies, have remained unaware of the changing situation and still exert pressure on the people and often play with the life of their clients. There are also those who have been associated with curious researchers from abroad, cooperated with them and have managed to try their luck in the West. A few such experts are reported to have been flourishing in Germany and other countries as rare representative “showpieces” of Nepal marching

in the medieval ages. It is one important way of demonstrating that traditional healing is an important part of Nepali culture that resists change.

Role of the Media

The media is now bringing many *bokshi* cases to light. People are still beating them up, force-feeding them with human excreta and banning them from the villages. Even in city/urban areas, this is taking place on an almost regular basis. Few of them manage to save their life. No one protects them or rehabilitates them after the aggression. Even educated people are often reported to have taken part in humiliating the *bokshis*. If this is the case, we will have to wait long before the *bokshi* mentality is erased from average Nepali's mind and attitude.

There are thousands of NGOs at work in Nepal; the soil of this country seems to be very fertile for their prosperity. A large percentage of them are believed to be working to bring about desired social change in the countryside, among the poor, illiterate, the deprived and the marginalized. This is so sweet and appealing to hear. But the fact is that a large number of these so-called rural based organizations never see the target people, hang around in the city and establish what they call in their language "partners", the CBO (Community Based Organization) to fill in the gap. Where are the awareness campaigns that these organizations are claiming to carry out in their reports? Where are the CBOs and NGOs when a *bokshi* is beaten to death right under their nose? What happens to the social awareness campaigns that are prepared, "implemented" and paid for by the national and international donor agencies? These are vital questions which we should face as we enter the third millennium and are busy working on "millennium development goals" (MDGs). If the society is not ready to abandon old and worn-out practices it is almost impossible to carry the bag of change with our own recipes.

Thanks to the media the *bokshi* and other cases depicting the worst level of social evils and practices are now coming gradually to light. People are still beating up the so-called *bokshi*, force-feeding them with human excreta, and banishing them from their own families, villages and world, while there are no scientific methods to prove or disprove that one is a *bokshi*. Very few are bold enough to come out to save their life and protect their human rights or to rehabilitate them after the aggression.

Conclusion

The healer is the only available recognized healing resource in village Nepal. He is therefore bound to say yes to the clients' calls and requests of all nature and dimensions – ranging from delivery and barrenness to pneumonia and bronchitis, including malarial fever and dysentery to name only a few common malaises. The list can be much longer during some seasons of the year. In all the cases, soul-loss is the obvious cause of diseases. That is, the invading spirit takes hold of the client's soul, weakens the immunity power gradually, renders it unable to function normally

and makes the victim sick. Restoring the strength of the soul, cleansing it from its wrong association and energizing it further to hold the body well is the challenge of the healer who has taken the case in his/her hands. The *chinta* and other rituals are organized by the healers in the healing process. The entire paraphernalia, the attacks on the invader show of the healer's power and prestige in the community, to other fellow-healers and to the public.

The soul-centred healing processes are meaningful. According to the *shamanic* cosmology, the soul is the central power of the body. After some external attacks on the body the soul becomes weaker and cannot handle the situation: the body becomes weak and unable to function normally in the absence of a strong soul. The soul, the body engine, has to be kept in good condition. After all, tracking the lost or weakening soul and bringing it back to the proper order in the body is what the healer is supposed to do. Once he does it, he is triumphant and enjoys satisfaction in what he/she does as an act of compassion, duty and unity with the supreme power, the ultimate healer, be it Shiva, Kali or other forms of divinity.

Are the healing methods discussed in this article still prevalent, popular and effective in Nepal? If so, why? These queries are relevant in this context. In village Nepal, these experts carry on with whatever knowledge and technique they have, mainly because:

- a. There is no alternative healing system;
- b. There is virtually no access to modern health facilities in the villages of Nepal that one could turn to in the hour of need; even if there is, it is not adequate, dependable and easily available;
- c. There are no well-trained health workers in rural areas;
- d. There is much trust in the divine power that heals;
- e. There is also trust in the two diametrically opposite forces – the benevolent and the destructive;
- f. The world of the spirits – both good and bad – is constructed by the believers as a concrete world that can be traversed by *tantric* healers.

During the last years, the government and private agencies working in the rural areas have been working with the healers in order to: a) create awareness among the people on several health related issues such as family planning, disease control, b) use their clout to take the modern health package to the rural mass, c) reduce the mortality rate, especially in water-borne diseases, delivery and other seasonal diseases, and d) gradually motivate the people to move toward the more scientific, modern medical system instead of the traditional *tantric* healing that does not have reliable and demonstrable scientific base.

Traditional healing is not just a rural phenomenon. In urban areas like Kathmandu also, there are plenty of practitioners who deal with the problems of all sorts. Observations have shown that in Kathmandu people visit Kumaris and such experts as *deo-ma*, *gubhaju*, astrologers and priests, Buddhist and Bon Lama priests and other experts to try their luck in issues such as property loss, diseases, friendship

and marriage at risk, family conflict, and of course, the evil-eyed *bokshi*. On the part of the experts, it is their duty to satisfy their clients using all the means they have to find, create and maintain a balance in their life experience. In the rural cultural and social context, a healer is rated on the basis of the satisfaction he/she can provide to the visiting clients.

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LANDSCAPES OF THE MIND

IT ISN'T JUST IN YOUR HEAD

Ronald A. Reminick *

It is believed by most that time passes. In actual fact it stays where it is

Dogon

The eyes only see what the mind is prepared to comprehend

Henri Bergson

The influence the senses have in men overpowered the thought to the degree that the walls of time and space have come to look solid, real, and insurmountable... yet time and space are but inverse measures of the power of the mind. Man is capable of abolishing them both

Ralph Waldo Emerson

A Definition of Mind. People's common conceptions of the mind most often locate it in the head, with connections to the heart. They think of it as a consciousness that reasons, thinks, feels, wills, perceives and judges internal and external states of being. It includes intellect or understanding and appreciating; opinion, viewpoints, sentiment, inclination, intention, and desire. It includes attention and intention, and conceptualizations of spirituality would also be a valid inclusion.

Brain and Mind. Some random points about brain and mind:

The brain weighs three pounds and consists of 60% fat.¹

Every heart beat provides 25% of your blood and oxygen to the brain.²

The brain consists of 1.1 trillion cells, including 100 billion neurons.³

A typical neuron fires 5-50 times per second. Within a few seconds quadrillions of signals will travel throughout the brain. Each signal is a bit of information and the totality of that information is what we may call Mind.⁴

The number of combinations of 100 billion neurons firing or not firing is 10 to the millionth power, or 10 followed by a million zeros. This is the number of the possible states of the brain/mind. The number of atoms in the universe is estimated to be 10 to the 80th power.

^{*} Cleveland State University - Center for Healing Across Cultures.

¹ Paul Nussbaum, *Your Brain Health Lifestyle*. Word Association Publishers, 2007.

² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

³ Rick Hanson, *Buddha's Brain*. New Harbinger Publications, 2009, p. 6.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7. The next 5 points refer to Hanson, p. 7.

The brain is a stimulus and response system to the organism of the body. The stimulus and response system reaches out into the world of nature and culture and the electromagnetic fields of the universe.

The brain is the primary, but not the only, generator and shaper of the mind.

There are 100 trillion living cells in the human body each of which generates an electric field, all of which create a super-conductive electro-chemical field that transmits and receives energy and communicative intelligence throughout and beyond the body.

The mind/brain has the ability to generate molecules of emotion.

The separate concepts “body” and “mind” is a false dichotomy.

There exists a distribution of cellular intelligence throughout the human body.

An example of cellular memory: In her book, *Change of Heart*, the author, Claire Sylvia, received a heart from a man killed in a motorcycle accident. Shortly after her transplant she took a great liking for motorcycles and beer!⁵

There are four general levels of mind: the unconscious, subconscious, conscious, and super-conscious mind.

We have evolved the ability to download an unimaginable number of behaviors, beliefs, emotional states, and predispositions into our memory at the levels of the unconscious, subconscious, and conscious states.

The conscious mind processes 40 environmental stimuli per second.

The subconscious mind processes 20,000,000 environmental stimuli/second which is 500,000 times greater than the conscious mind.

Certain state of heightened consciousness enable us to experience information from the unconscious, which has a more expansive perspective of reality since it is not filtered by the cortex.

As evidenced by psychic phenomena such as telepathy, precognition, and clairvoyance, as well as accessing information via dreams and out-of-body experiences, provides evidence that mentation and consciousness exists outside of the brain/body.

The super-conscious is the spirit energy, the quantum physics of mentation.

Barriers to Consciousness: The Ego-Mechanisms of Defense. Psychoanalysis has provided us with a dimension of the mind, mechanisms that shield the conscious mind from emotional pain or distress. These are termed the *ego-mechanisms of defense*. There are processes that we can postulate are lawful principles of the mind/body. The process starts with deprivation which causes the experience of frustration which inevitably leads to a level of hostility which results in a disposition to aggression at which point the individual makes a conscious or unconscious decision how to express the experience. These psychological processes limit the level of consciousness an individual may actualize and, although protecting the individual from emotional pain, create disruptions in the harmony and equanimity of the mind. Within the framework of the theory of psychoanalysis the mechanism of *repression* is

⁵ Claire Sylvia, *Change of Heart*. Little Brown, 1997.

the primary process that mobilizes the other ego-defense mechanisms. Repression is the shunting of an experience into the realm of the unconscious. Once the impulse pattern of the experience is rendered unconscious other ego-defense mechanisms can come into play.

Denial is a common ego-defense mechanism that may come into play when one experiences a stressful, objectionable, distasteful, or an anxiety-producing situation. A common example is when a husband hears his wife's complaints or angry expressions of a situation the husband may be involved in and the husband dismisses her discomfort as a "female thing" rather than seriously listening to her complaint and empathically understanding the rift in their relationship.

Displacement is the ego-defense mechanism whereby an act of aggression is directed against a target that was not the source of one's frustration. An example is a man who is publically humiliated by his boss but cannot act on his boss's abuse; he goes home where wife complains he didn't take out the garbage and he inappropriately releases his rage upon her; and she then inappropriately screams at her kid who just came into the house without taking off his shoes. The individuals in this situation may not have been aware of the level of rage that had built up and so acted impulsively, serving their own ego needs without concern for the target of their rage, which, of course, disrupts the harmony and love of the relationship.

Another ego-defense mechanism that is generated by deprivation leading to frustration and hostility is *involution*. Involution is, for our purposes here, anger turned inward. In this state the person may not be aware of the process operating. If there is no feasible way to express the frustration and anger, the angry mind will turn it inward and process it there. In this case turning anger inward may be directed in toward the self or turning the anger against one's own group, as in shame of one's ethnic identity or intra-group violence, especially when the source of the deprivation or frustration lies outside the group. This anger turned inward has two routes of expression: the emotional pathway is recognized as depression while the psychosomatic route manifests in physical ailments commonly connected to stress responses. These physical manifestations normally include symptoms such as headaches or migraines, heart palpitations, stomach or esophageal hyperacidity — leading to ulcers, gastroenteritis, colitis, or outbreaks of anxiety. It can also include periods of sadness, insomnia, feeling "slowed down", decreased sexual vitality, periods of sadness, self-destructive acts, or suicidal ideation. There is a tendency for females to experience depression and males to manifest psychosomatic symptoms, although this difference can change with the change in cultural conditions, as in the masculinization of women. Bottled up anger can fester in the body/mind and virtually "eat one up".

The *reaction-formation* defends against a repressed unacceptable impulse and converts it into its opposite. An example: a young man feels, often unconsciously, he hasn't lived up to the masculine ideals of his culture and feels effeminate. The emotional reaction is fear of this taboo impulse. To react against this impulse he will over-react and play the machismo role expressing hyper-masculinity.

Fixation is a response, often experienced in one's developing years, that prevents the individual further emotional growth. Failure of continued growth and development may occur as a result of a severely traumatic experience or pattern of traumatic experiences, such as harsh punishment, severe injury as in a crippling car accident, early childhood sexual abuse, or extremely painful initiation ceremonies such as unanaesthetized clitoridectomy and infibulation practised in certain indigenous cultures of Africa. Associated with the intrapersonal repression and fixation is the social aspect that we identify as *identity foreclosure* where an individual, still in the stage of development and maturation, has no proper role models to identify with and continue in the maturation process; where an individual is entirely dependent on the peer group for identification and sustenance for role-modeling. Gang membership is one such example, pathological cult groups, another. What is critical to recognize is that it is the emotional level of development of that person's identity that will be foreclosed. It is sometimes heard that men about to marry are dragged out of their adolescence kicking and screaming into the adulthood of responsibility and commitment!

Opening the mind depends on one having awareness of and control over those events that trigger the ego-defense mechanisms and that create distortions of perception, convolutions of cognition, and anger-driven behavior in relationships. Opening the mind creates a broader horizon of consciousness, a deeper awareness, and an empathic sensitivity to others and the environment within which one lives. And, very importantly, an opened mind can channel potentially destructive impulses into creative efforts that benefit the self, the community, and the environment within which one lives. How we do this is discussed in the next chapter.

The Structural Levels of the Mind. I like to think of the mind in terms of several levels of functioning —here we enumerate five: The *conscious*, the *subconscious*, the *unconscious*, and the *deep mind* of cellular intelligence; and beyond this is the *super-mind* or *super-consciousness*.

The conscious mind needs little elaboration. It is our momentary awareness of what we are perceiving, thinking, feeling and doing.

The subconscious mind is that realm that is easily retrievable into the conscious mind with the proper cues, such as "Did you smell something burning?" or "I wonder how your dog is right now" or when asked "What did you eat for breakfast yesterday?". The unconscious mind stores material, both cognitive and emotional, not easily retrievable. It might be memory traces from birth or infancy, or painful experiences that one wishes not to remember, or the myriad of situations, events, and relationships that are too numerous to easily remember or remember at all.

I consider "deep mind" as the totality of life-energy structures, processes, and functions that we are not aware of but contribute to our life-experience at any moment in time. Structures within a living cell communicate with each other and regulate life-giving functions; configurations of cells are integrated and communicate within organs to maintain organic functioning, and the super-regulatory organ, the brain, communicates with the organismic structures of the body; all inform us that

this communication, this intra-organismic integration and response, this maintenance of intra-organismic balance, is manifest as intelligence, cellular intelligence. When we get a cut in the skin the surrounding cells get the message and know what to do to heal the wound. That is a mode of adaptation resulting from the signals, the messages that are conveyed by the injured cells.

I do not want to stop here in articulating our conception of mind.

Here I introduce the *biophotonic energy of the mind*.⁶ Biophotons are the smallest physical units of light. They are stored in and utilized by all the biological organisms on this planet. The food we eat, especially raw foods, most importantly, vegetables, transport these transporters of the sun's energy, viz., biophotons, into our cells. These biophotons contain important information that controls the vital processes that order and regulate cellular functioning, keep us alive, energized, promoting vitality and well-being.

Every living organism emits biophotons defined as low-level luminescence, normally with wavelengths of 200 and 800 nanometers. It is believed, from the scientists doing the work in Germany, that the higher the luminescence emission the greater its vitality and the greater the potential for the transfer of that energy to the organism consuming it.

The biophotonic emissions of the body come from the vibrations of our DNA. The DNA within each of our cells vibrates at a frequency of several billion hertz. This vibration is created through the coil-like contractions of the DNA, occurring several billion times per second. With each contraction it emits one biophoton. It is believed that all the biophotons emitted from an organism communicate with each other in a highly structured light field surrounding the body. This light field regulates the activity of the metabolic enzymes. This phenomenon borders on the mystical: Each cell's DNA vibrates at several billion hertz, several billion times per second, multiplied by one hundred trillion living cells with the human body. It manifests an intelligence the likes of which we have yet to fully understand and appreciate.

The *super-conscious mind* is a concept not well understood nor accepted by a great proportion of scientists. Astrophysicists speak of the "grid" of the universe; lines of energy that influence astronomical bodies and living creatures. The artist Alex Grey paints these lines of energy in his works of human beings. My animal communicator friends, Agnes Thomas and Barbara Borkowski, speak of "axiotonal lines of the universe" through which "intelligence" is conveyed. Agnes Thomas has correctly read the mind of my Himalayan cat through a telephone conversation with the cat. Agnes spoke of a white animal: the cat didn't know whether it was a cat or a dog. It was a dog; my wife's shitzu. And Agnes knew Buddy was called "Kitty Kat" and she told me the cat did not like to be called that. The cat was healed of a psychological trauma after this communication. There are many now, including members of the Institute for Noetic Sciences, many of whom are noted scientists, who claim our universal connection. It is a notion that, if anything, should provide for us a vehicle for the cognitive and emotional connection of us all.

⁶ DrMercola.com "Why People Really Get Sick".

The instinctual predisposition to alter the mind's consciousness

Ritual, therapeutic methodologies and botanical technologies. I maintain that there is a natural predisposition to alter one's state of consciousness and condition of one's mind. We can conceive changing states of mind on a continuum from very mundane and ordinary to exciting to extremes of ecstasy and orgasmic love to terror, shock, and dissociation. Deep sleep and dreaming are states of mind. Commensality with good friends and a fine meal creates a certain state of mind. Being moved by a powerful drama or meeting someone you missed and hadn't seen for some time are other states of mind. Falling in love or experiencing betrayal are powerful states of mind. An encounter with a threat, physical or psychological, generates a strong endocrine response and the attending emotional state of mind.

Altered states of consciousness can be accidental and involuntary, as with surprise or finding a great *entrée* on a menu you didn't expect. Or, altered states can be voluntary where one prepares one's self for an altered experience. This can be with the aid of psychotropic substances such as cannabis, or the alkyloid, *qat*, strychnine, peyote, lysergic acid, or *ayahuasca*. Or, it can be with a voluntary preparation engendered by directed thought, chanting, song, drumming, dance, postures, controlled breathing, isolation, meditation, or any combination of these. It appears that the practice of a variety of meditation modalities has far-reaching therapeutic effects on a person and the group.

The Yoga Mind. In the yoga *sutras*, Patanjali states that the yoga mind is the cessation of the busy-ness and fluctuations and free-flying imagery of the normal mind. It is, essentially, the cessation of the continuous flow of thought, of the fluctuations of consciousness. The yoga instructor, Karen Allgire, contrasts *citta-vrttis*, the incessant mental activity, with *narodha*, restraint, control, and stilling of the mind's activities, which can then lead us into a deep, inner peace.⁷ With meditative practice, this experienced moment of inner peace will gradually infuse the rest of one's life and allow one to live one's own life in a clearer, more balanced way, not influenced or polluted by toxic thoughts and feelings or prejudicial notions that distort the existential reality. As Karen Allgire points out, Patanjali's sutra, the five states of mind, the *citta-vrttis*, that disturb our perception and inhibit deep inner peace are: *viparyaya* or the illusion of misperception; *vikalpa* or delusion, fantasy, or thoughts based on illusion that do not have their basis in reality; *nidra*, or sleep, dreamless or dreaming, that does not correspond to existential reality; *smrtih*, or memory, which is a source of knowledge and discrimination, but may also keep one in a state of nostalgia or regret, which is not a state of existential reality, or in a state of mistaken or distorted past realities. The state of *pramana* is that of correct perception and accurate understanding of reality. This state of consciousness allows us to encounter a person, place, object, statement, scent, or action without preconception, stereotype, prejudice, association with a past event, or wrongful teaching.

⁷ Karen Allgire, "The Five Vrttis: Fluctuations of Consciousness". *Balanced Living Magazine*, Winter, 2010.

I present an example, a demonstration of the contrast with *pramana*:

Once upon a time I owned an eighteen-foot, 160 pound Burmese python. It was quite docile and my children played with it for years, under the supervision of their father. Mr. Burmese Python made many trips to daycare centers, public schools, and a few college classes. He would be carried in a large red leather trunk, put on the table with a few moments of introduction and commentary. The presenter's children, at one point aged 8 and 10 were attending. When the trunk was opened Mr. Burmese Python would raise his head, extend himself, something like a cobra, and proceed to cascade out of the trunk on to the table and flow onto the floor. It was always a rather spectacular sight. My two boys would then pet it, sit on it, and play. Then the other kids would join in. The teachers, on the other hand, would back off with their backs pressed to the wall (wondering why they invited me in the first place) in shock. Then the point was made: The children had no preconception, no learned fear, no pre-judging of the situation. They saw there was no danger and were free to enjoy this creature of nature. The teachers, on the other hand, had learned about snakes and were conditioned by their preconceptions and their pre-judgements, their prejudice, and were therefore, fearful. The point was made, how preconceiving something, pre-judging something, without the confirmation of existential experience, can produce unnecessary fear and wrongful behavior in people ignorant of the reality they encounter. The state of narodha could have allowed them to enjoy, learn, and appreciate the phenomenon before them.

Yoga *asanas* or postures, yoga breathing, and the yoga state of mind all bring the gift of mindfulness to the practitioner. It brings deep relaxation to the person allowing us to be quiet yet aware, calm yet attentive, slowed down to perceive deeply into one's core; to gain insight into who one really is; it allows us to be fully in the moment and to appreciate the life within our experience.

Meditation Medicine. As Western medical practitioners begin to understand the mind's role in health and disease, there has been more interest in the use of meditation in medicine and psychotherapy. In fact, the field of psychoneuroimmunology has found that the immune system is not static in its performance. Research in this field has shown that it is greatly influenced by our neurology, and that we are now discovering the relationship between thoughts, emotions and health. We are also learning of the positive effects of meditation in healing a variety of afflictions caused by stress.⁸

Meditative practices are increasingly offered in medical clinics and hospitals as a tool for improving health and quality of life, as is the case with Kabat-Zinn's "Stress Reduction and Relaxation Center" in Massachusetts. Meditation has been used as the primary therapy for treating certain diseases; as an additional therapy in a comprehensive treatment plan; and as a means of improving the quality of life of

⁸ Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness*. New York, NY: Dell Publishing.

people with debilitating or chronic pain, those with terminal illnesses, such as cancer, or those suffering from AIDS.⁹

In Kabat-Zinn's stress center, patients reported that during meditation, chronic pain was 40-50% less severe. This phenomenon is more fully discussed in Austin's book where he talks of the ways in which the body deals with pain. He reviews a study where a Yogi lay on a bed of nails while meditating. The investigator attempted this and could not tolerate the discomfort. When they both used naloxone to counter any opioid effects (pain relievers such as acetaminophen or morphine), their toleration levels did not decrease, but with meditation it did. This showed that there is some non-opioid effect that occurs during meditation.¹⁰ While it has not been fully explained or explored as to where in the mind this occurs, or how or why, it is sufficient to infer that meditation helps relieve or cancel the pain response.

Another research example is a study by Barnes.¹¹ Forty-five African American adolescents that were having behavior issues in school were divided into 2 groups. In the experimental group they practised 15-minute sessions of Transcendental Meditation at home and at school. The control group had that time filled with the basic "health class" material. The students' number of rule infractions, absentee periods, suspension days due to behavioral issues, all significantly decreased in the experimental group compared to an increase in the control group. Research in schools has also found that meditation may be helpful for teachers.¹² Winzelberg was concerned about the high burnout rates and stress levels found in teachers. Their stress symptoms included emotional and behavioral pathology and gastronomic distress. He constructed an experiment to see if meditation would be an effective way to ease this problem. The researchers instructed teachers in the techniques of relaxation response and guided them through the meditation process involving mantras, slowing down one's actions, and one-pointed attention. It was found that the teachers in the experimental group were able to effectively reduce their stress symptoms.

An illustrative case study is demonstrated by David Shannahoff-Khalsa involving a 20-year-old college woman.¹³ She began working with the David during her university's Spring Break of 2001, in hopes of reducing her social anxiety, academic stress, body dysmorphic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and depression. The patient said that she really felt she was struggling in life and yet after the first session her BDD& OCD both disappeared for the duration of the day.

⁹ Austin, J. H. (1998) *Zen and the Brain*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

¹⁰ Barnes, V. (2003). "Impact of stress reduction on negative school behavior in adolescents." *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*, Vol. 1, No. 1.

¹¹ Barnes, V. (2003). "Impact of stress reduction on negative school behavior in adolescents." *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*, Vol. 1, No. 1.

¹² Winzelberg, A., Luskin, F. (1999). "The effect of meditation training in stress levels in secondary school teachers." *Stress Medicine* 15, 69-77.

¹³ Shannahoff-Khalsa, D. (2003). "Kundalini Yoga Meditation Techniques for the Treatment of Obsessive-Compulsive & OC Spectrum Disorders". *Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention* Vol. 3, 369-382 Retrieved December 10, 2006 from: <http://journals.ohiolink.edu:20080/local-cgi/send-pdf/061110135835479516.pdf>

Despite that astounding progress, after spring break, class resumed and she ceased her meditation and, consequently, relapsed into her former symptomatology. As her pathology progressed she would spend 2 hours each day in front of the mirror, convinced the right side of her face was distorted. A psychiatrist prescribed Prozac, but it only deepened the issues she was having by making her anxious and depressed. She developed new symptoms of smoking and self-mutilation. In some cases when she cut her arms, she needed several stitches because of the deep lacerations. Her parents also noticed that she was beginning to show symptoms of anorexia. She would eat only 1 meal per day and was rapidly losing weight. In 2002 she was hospitalized and then taken back to her therapist, David. After meeting with him again, she replaced her medication with yoga. As a result, like the previous meditation therapy, her condition immediately improved. She was able to quit smoking and stop the self-mutilation, and her appetite returned. With continued practice she has been able to maintain a greater state of peace and general strength that has continued up to the day of the article's publication. The above case demonstrates how emotionally-based symptoms can be alleviated.

In this second case, an immune-deficiency disease, dermatomyositis, was treated with meditation.¹⁴ Dermatomyositis is a muscle disease that is characterized by a rash, muscle weakness, with the possibility of dysphagia (problems with swallowing). Eventually, people that suffer from this have a loss of strength, including difficulty getting up from a seated position, lifting objects, climbing stairs. Treatment usually consists of prescribing a steroid drug, often-times accompanied by immunosuppressants and physical therapy to preserve muscle function. However in the case study conducted by Collins and Dunn, the only treatments used were meditation and visual imagery. During the course of observation progress with skin conditions were affected by stress, but strength was not. After meditation, the rash lessened and pain diminished. By the end of the 294-day observation period, she had healed her symptoms on her own. It is important to note that the mortality rate for dermatomyositis is roughly 61% if left untreated, and the odds for "spontaneous recoveries" are rare. This shows that therapies that reinforce the mind-body connection are useful for treating this condition, and may be useful for treating others as well.

Lastly, in Afari's twin study of chronic fatigue syndrome¹⁵ "twins with CFS were more likely to use homeopathy, mega-vitamins, herbal therapies, biofeedback, relaxation/meditation, guided imagery, massage therapy, energy healing, religious healing by others, and self-help groups than their non-CFS counterparts." This study showed that the majority of the control and experimental research groups found these

¹⁴ Collins, Michael P., Dunn, Lucia F. (2005) "The Effects of Meditation and Visual Imagery on an Immune System Disorder: Dermatomyositis." *Journal of Alternative & Complementary Medicine, Vol. 11 Issue 2*, p275 Retrieved on December 10, 2006, from:

<http://proxy.ulib.csuohio.edu:2050/login?url=http://search.epnet.com/login.aspx?direct=true>

¹⁵ Afari, N., Eisenberg, D. (2000). "Use of alternative treatments by chronic fatigue syndrome discordant twins." *Integrative Medicine Vol. 2, No. 2*, 97-103.

techniques to be helpful, with 81% for those suffering from CFS, and 71% for those without.

The Shamanic Mind and State of Consciousness. Shamanic practitioners derive information while in deep trance. This information is generally about diagnosis, treatment of afflictions, divining future events, or finding solutions to the problems people bring to them. Although anthropologists often use the terms trance and ecstasy interchangeably, Tedlock prefers to differentiate between the two.¹⁶ According to Barbara Tedlock trance is a “hyperlucid state of sensory overstimulation triggered by music, noises and odors”. The experiences of trance states are often forgotten after one emerges into normalcy. In contrast, ecstasy is a state of sensory deprivation, withdrawing from the immediately perceivable world via fasting, total silence, meditation in complete darkness. Tedlock asserts that ecstatic experiences are not only remembered, they can be revisited over and over again. Examples of the latter include dreaming, tuning in to the body’s vital energy or chi flows, or altered states produced by psychedelic drugs. Powerful ways of bringing on trance states include drumming —repetitive, long-lasting, constant beats with concerted focus, and, chanting repeatedly with constancy brings many practitioners into the trance state. In Tedlock’s experience of shamanic performances, her own and of other shamans, “participants may stamp their feet to one rhythm, clap their hands to a second rhythm, and sing syllables to yet a third”.

Many anthropologists have seen how music that urges dancing profoundly alters the structure of one’s consciousness, changing how one experiences both space and time. “Musically driven movements enable shamans and their clients to enter into spiritual worlds filled with culturally appropriate cosmic imagery”. Participants will often dance to exhaustion, feeling exhilarated, ecstatic, renewed, joyful, and euphoric. Intense dancing leads to hyperventilation, increases the production of adrenaline, causes a sharp decrease in blood glucose stimulating the brain to mobilize the opiate-like endorphins that surge through the body creating wonderful feelings of coursing energy rising up from the belly in waves creating an emotional expansiveness.

The many forms of constant, rhythmic percussion, such as with drums, rattles, or gongs, produce the phenomenon of *entrainment*. Entrainment occurs when the asynchronous patterns of brain waves come in to harmonic resonance. Normally, in the waking state, one hemisphere of the brain dominates the other in an asynchronous pattern. Normally, the right hemisphere generates alpha waves, vibrating at seven to fourteen cycles per second. The left hemisphere generates beta waves vibrating at fourteen to twenty-one cycles per second. As neurophysiological research has shown, rhythmic sounds can alter brain wave patterns, produce entrainment, and induce the state of trance. Researchers of the brain call this process “sonic driving” which can produce visual patterns of color and movement and full-blown hallucination.

A common practice producing an altered state of consciousness is the use of entheogens, meaning “god generated within”,¹⁷ plants or plant products that produce

¹⁶ Barbara Tedlock, *The Woman in the Shaman’s Body*. Bantom Books, 2005, pp. 80-82.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 145.

an hallucinogenic state of mind. There are over two hundred plants that shamans and healers, as well as others, use to induce an altered state of consciousness, a change in mind. The more commonly known entheogens used for healing, shamanic ritual and other spiritual purposes, include cannabis and peyote. And, a commonly used hallucinogenic is fly agaric, a mushroom used at least since the bronze age by peoples of Siberia, as evidenced in their ancient rock art, North India, among the Greeks, Scandinavians, and Saami nomads of Lapland; commonly found in the birch, fir, and pine forests of North Asia; and the birch, pine, and cedar forests of North America. Lewis Carroll may have had fly agaric in mind when he wrote “Alice in Wonderland” since she shrinks eating one side of the mushroom and stretches eating the other side. We can also include psilocybin mushrooms, San Pedro cactus, and tobacco as commonly used entheogens among healers and shamans to alter one’s state of consciousness. Lastly, we note the use of a plant called *qat* (Arabic) or *ch’at* (Amharic) the leaves of which are chewed by peoples of Islamic East Africa, including Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia, and many peoples of the Middle East. It is a mild alkaloid that allows one to remain awake all night, dampen the appetite, and provide boosts in energy reserves often used in ritual contexts. Here, we will not include those hallucinogens that are used for recreational activities.

A more extreme altered state of consciousness requires the careful guidance of an experienced shaman, an *ayahuasquero*, who prepares the client, sometimes for several months before the ritual, for the ayahuasca experience. The chemicals in this Peruvian vine, mixed with other highly potent entheogens, create some of the most powerful and colorful and dramatic experiences known to the human condition. It can transform a person; catapult them into exotic space; often finding freedom from the issues that held them back from insight into one’s self, happiness, and potentiality. It is also a very powerful purgative and the participants become cleansed through violent bouts of diarrhea and vomiting. I quote from an interview with an educated, middle-aged woman, a yoga instructor, who travelled to Peru and engaged in the ritual of *ayahuasca*:

So we walked through the day, terrified; agreeing that this is good; and we’re not being flippant about this; and came to sunset and entered this amazing sacred hut in the valley. And there were no windows, just a round candle-lit hut. And then this wizened old man walks in with his grandchild, about 8; his skin is leather; wrinkles and wrinkles and wrinkles; the beauty of this human being; his eyes! And he went around the room and looked each of us in the eyes; and his grandchild sat waiting for him. She carried the bucket of the brew. Alberto said, last night the brew was from the new part of the bark and not very strong. This is ancient and it will taste different, it will smell different, it will go down different. And you are required to drink a whole glass. I looked at John across the room. Looked here and there; Jim wasn’t doing it... Alberto repeated, “If you consider this a drug experience, you will miss out. Especially you old druggies, you will miss out. So when the experience begins to get really intense, maybe in a half hour, and the ride begins, with the psychedelic experience; you will have to stay focused. Those of you with a yoga background you

will fare well, because of your breathing. Do not let go of your breathing! I said, I'm golden, I got the tools. Let 'er go!

The shaman went first. Then Alberto took the drink. Then next was me. He blessed me, and by the time we got almost around to the person sitting on the other side of the room to me, I started feeling it. Tingling in my fingers and my toes, my eyesight started to be weird, blurry, and I said I guess its time to close my eyes. And I began to trip out. I was so nauseous I knew I was gonna puke on my own body! How disgusting was that! I remembered to b r e a t h e; and the vomit would get up to my throat and I would exhale and made it go down. And each time I breathed I would root myself. I was sitting in lotus; I can't sit comfortably in lotus more than 15 minutes, so I knew I wasn't gonna be in lotus for very long, but I didn't know how I was sitting because the ride, where I was sitting, was so intense that the lights and stream of lights... I couldn't hold on to anything. I was being dragged and nauseous; dragged from one light stream to another and I just kept breathing. I just kept saying to myself, breathe, breathe. Occasionally I heard Alberto's voice. The shaman walked around, rattling leaves, not even dry leaves; and rattled and chanted in front of us. And that kept me focused. It could have been the first hour, I dropped into another place. When the shaman stood in front of me, I heard him say—now he didn't speak any English—I heard him say, "State your intention!" Loud. He was in front of me. "My intention for healing is to heal every misperception in this lifetime and every other lifetime and having gotten that I want to go to the source of my beginning and once I've gotten that I want to be with God. And I said it over and over and over again. [56:25] At that point I was so sick I said "I better open my eyes to see where the door is, because if I have to go out of here to throw up or have diarrhoea I want to know where the door is! I gotta know where I am!". I opened my eyes and what I saw were these huge scorpions walking around the room. And I said: "Not safe out there!". Closed my eyes.

If I threw up it was going on my lap. I don't know what those things are, but I ain't goin'!". I then proceeded to... [we take a break] So I closed my eyes again and the scorpions went away. I started to travel into different realms and different life beings and different forms of life. At one point I was in, what looked like a rocket ship. The beings in the rocket ship, and I was one, big heads, bald heads and they didn't look human. I was—everything was fast! Just fast! Like I was soaring through realms of existence; going through and through and through; streaks and streams of light; there was—the light was me; I was light energy. I went in to the earth, into rock formations; I was experiencing on a tactful, sensation level; other realms of existence; a blade of grass, I could taste it—on a cellular level! And I was—at that point I was going so fast and I remember, shoo! I wish I could control this! Slow down! But I couldn't. And that went on—I don't know how long that went on. It could've been a long time; it could've been minutes. I was in a timeless realm! And then after that bouncing through all of these realms, occasionally I would hear the shaman, the rattle, and I would hear him say, "State your intention!".

Even in this stream I could state my intention; and I could breathe, so I knew I was in control of the situation... I felt safe; I was scared, but I felt safe. And all of a sudden things started to slow down enough for me to say, "Huh, I could ride this wave! Ok! This is ok. I must be in a different phase now. And, in front of me was this enormous man, like from the Arabian Nights; with these flowing skirts wrapped around him and a big turban. He was a beautiful, beautiful black man. And in his hand he was carrying a book. And it was so heavy—and he's a huge being, but it weighs a lot. And the book opens up in front of me. And you know in those old movies the pages flow and they are going that fast; and I know that every page is a lifetime and every single page is a misperception of that lifetime! And I am in ecstasy, because it is I who am about to receive everything I came for! I'm going to heal every misperception from every lifetime as a human personality. And it's awesome, it's awesome. And I don't even have to focus on a single page because it's going so fast! But every once in awhile I see a page and I get hooked into it. One lifetime I was a dancing girl in India. And I'm wearing these amazing colors and I'm twirling like a whirling dervish and I have bangles on my ankles and my wrists and I'm twirling in ecstasy; and at that moment the shaman's in front of me, rattling; "State your intention!". I got off the path. "My intention is to... every lifetime, heal every misperception, and having done that I want to be with God. So now I'm in the misperception phase and I say this 3 times. I focus on... every time he brings me back. That was amazing; I have no idea how long that was.

After that was over I again shoot out of a canon; not a rocket ship; I shoot out of a canon and I am physically experiencing every life form one after another. Starting at that beginning part—and I couldn't control it. But from the moment of my inception as a life form on the planet; I'm experiencing every life form from the tiniest speck of soil, amoebas in water; growing and growing into these various life forms—evolution. And then I'm aware that I can be present in the room at the same time. So I'm plugging into other people's journeys too! I'm like—Alberto is outside. There is a jaguar! And the jaguar is my power animal! And he becomes Jaguar and he is out there in the jungle and he is roaring and roaring. And then at one point I hear him; he's sitting next to me; the shaman he's asking for direction in his brain pathways. In Spanish—and I understand enough Spanish to know what he's doing; and I say to myself : "Oh my he's done this so much he's carving new pathways in his brain! Ginny, be present; be aware! This is your first carving here! So I'm back in my journey and the shaman says, "State your intention... don't get lost". I get back into my journey. I'm at the place where I state my intention: "I want to be with God!" I've gone to the source of my beginning; I want to be with God. [What did you mean by carving new pathways?] To carve new pathways in the brain for new knowledge.

So now I'm going to be with God. All of a sudden I again get shot out of a canon. But I'm not an "I"! I'm not a body! I'm not anything! I do have my breath and now I'm like a giant amoebic —what do call those things—you make a fire—and I can

experience the universe as this---[deeeeep inhalation, deeeeep exhalation with arms going away from the body and her arms going toward her body]—it is me! it's around me! it's the only thing that exists; and then if I could say that a smile comes over my being; it wasn't a physical smile because I wasn't a physical being; the awareness in that moment [sobbing] I was God! I was---[I say: “Experiencing the breath of the life force of the universe”]--and there was nothing else! And I was there! So there wasn't any thought, there wasn't anything. And the next thing that I remember was coming back into my physical body and I was sitting in lotus for however long that was.

I don't sit in lotus; I don't sit in lotus for long periods. My legs opened up; my eyes were closed; I positioned myself near the wall of the building because I didn't know if I was going to pass out or not. I said to myself, at least you won't pass out on the floor if you're leaning against the wall. I set myself up so I wouldn't fall. So I leaned back and my hands went to my abdomen and my hands were way out! I was 9 months pregnant! And I just—I was sobbing, just sobbing and all of a sudden I was in labor! I said, “Oh my god! I'm having a baby!” and I went through labor completely. I birthed a baby! And at the end of this birth I took this deep, deep sigh and said, “Oh my god! I birthed myself!”. And my friend was sitting next to me, staring at me. And she said: “I've been with you for the last 2 hours of your journey! Mine was over 2 hours ago. [1:12:08] “You just birthed yourself!! I witnessed your entire birth!”. [We are both crying] And then I looked around the room—the shaman was gone. Alberto was gone! There were only 4 people in the room. Everybody was gone! And we were done.

An intense altered state of consciousness, a powerful state of mind, is quite evident in the sexual act of love; an experience that can transport one into a transformative space. Neurological researchers have demonstrated a strong connection between sexuality and trance. It appears that women have a greater capacity to experience a greater intensity than men.¹⁸ The electrical connections across the hemispheres of a woman's brain contribute to their heightened experience. This is because there is a greater number and higher density of neurons in a woman's brain. The *corpus callosum*, the organ that connects and coordinates the hemispheres of the brain, has a greater equality of connection between the two hemispheres and is larger in women than in men. Furthermore, the *anterior commissure*, a neural pathway connecting the two hemispheres of the brain, is larger and denser in women. And, the band of fibers connecting the thalami of the two hemispheres, the *massa intermedia*, is found more often in women than in men. This provides a woman with a potential for intense orgasms that propel her into an altered state of consciousness culminating in an ecstasy that appears to be similar to indigenous individuals who have been possessed by spirits. This capacity provides women with extraordinary skills in shamanic practice. In fact, Barbara Tedlock points out that the word for orgasm is the same as the word for trance in many languages!

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 89.

It is this great capacity of the human mind, the capacity to access a wide range of experiences from a number of body, and specifically brain sources, that give us our potential for experiencing spirit and achieving spirituality. These higher levels of consciousness do not arise from our normal everyday routine experiences. They come from a special learning and a discipline that trains and entrains the mind to emerge into higher levels of consciousness and knowing. This realm of knowledge and consciousness is necessary for the healthful survival of culture, society, and the individuals who are a part of that society. It is normally the elders of traditional society, men and women who have experienced the joys and excitements, the sadness and tragedy, the challenges and tribulations of life, who are the teachers for the younger members of a community. In modern urban societies, the culture of science and technology, corporate business and media advertising, has taken over the governance of the culture and the programming of uncritical individual minds. The wisdom of our teachers has been eclipsed by the culture of capitalism, materialism, individualism, and narcissism and has led to a whole host of ills —medical, nutritional, psychological, economic, and political— ills that crept into the space left vacant in the absence of the traditional wisdom of the elders who lived connected to Mother Earth, valued the quality of intimacy in relationships, and knew how to experience joy in everyday life.

It is my hope that higher levels of consciousness will be experienced by greater numbers of people around the world; a level of mind that reaches a critical mass of a population that not only enables the individual, but whole populations, to experience a greater peace of mind, lessen the possibility of afflictions, and heighten the possibility of teaching the knowledge to a younger generation.

Khush Hal Nameh: dal teatro all’emozione etnografica

Veronica Boldrin

Scuola, teatro e etnografia

La comprensione dell’Altro sembra oggi spesso ostacolata dai *grands récits* contemporanei. Il sapere speculativo col suo riduzionismo cognitivo ha spesso la meglio nella prospettiva di un insegnamento finalizzato alla “performatività”.¹ La proposta di introdurre materie antropologiche presso gli istituti di istruzione scolastica superiore non va letta come mera risposta ad un semplice accrescimento di curiosità nei confronti della disciplina, bensì come un’esigenza dinnanzi a quelli che sono i nuovi interrogativi e le nuove urgenze in ambienti che presentano sempre più frequentemente una configurazione multiculturale. Nel vivo proprio di questo dibattito, appare l’iniziativa avviata all’interno del laboratorio teatrale scolastico del liceo classico “Calamo” di Ostuni (BR): nel corso dell’estate 2011 la compagnia teatrale studentesca, sotto la guida del regista Alessandro Fiorella, ha presentato al pubblico *Khush Hal Nameh*, la recente *pièce* etnografica di Ariane Baghaï.

L’evento ha destato l’attenzione del Laboratorio di Antropologia Visuale dell’Università degli Studi di Trieste, per conto del quale ho dunque intrapreso delle ricerche sulle connivenze tra antropologia e teatro.² Assistendo ad alcune delle fasi di prova dello spettacolo, ho avuto modo di esaminare da vicino quelli che sono i processi di rappresentazione e di immedesimazione, ovvero processi di “costruzione di identità altre”, e particolari dinamiche di gruppo.

Per l’istituto scolastico il laboratorio teatrale non è solo una pluriennale tradizione, ma, come ha sottolineato Annunziata Ferrara, dirigente dell’I.I.S.S. “Pepe-Calamo”, si tratta di “una priorità”, un tassello irrinunciabile dell’offerta formativa, da promuovere anche in un periodo in cui le difficoltà finanziarie di certo non mancano. Inoltre, l’iniziativa si inserisce entro un progetto volto a far affrontare agli studenti temi inerenti i concetti di “identità” ed “alterità”. Mariella Cupertino, coordinatrice del progetto, non ha dubbi nell’affermare che “il dramma etnografico che diventa teatro” sia stato uno strumento particolarmente formativo nel percorso dei

¹ Lyotard J-F., *La condizione postmoderna. Rapporto sul sapere*, Feltrinelli, 1985 (1979), p. 87 e ss.

² Ho condotto ricerca presso il laboratorio teatrale dell’istituto scolastico d’istruzione superiore “Calamo” di Ostuni (BR) dal 14 al 18 marzo 2011. Durante queste giornate ho incontrato Annunziata Ferrara, preside dell’istituto, Mariella Cupertino, docente e coordinatrice del progetto, il regista Alessandro Fiorella, la drammaturga Ariane Baghaï e il gruppo degli studenti-attori. Nel raccogliere le loro testimonianze così come nell’osservare le prove della messinscena ho effettuato numerose riprese video: “appunti visuali” che si sono rivelati particolarmente utili nella stesura di questo *paper*.

suoi studenti e ne ha caldeggiato l'impiego anche da parte anche di altri docenti, in quanto “momento molto forte di lettura”, che comporta “osservazione, selezione, struttura e comunicazione intenzionale”. Come ha tenuto ancora a mettere in rilievo la preside, indiscussa sostenitrice e promotrice del progetto, questo approccio alternativo rispetto alla didattica convenzionale favorisce l’acquisizione di ulteriori competenze oltre a quelle rigorosamente cognitive. È l’occasione di “servirsi di nuovi linguaggi e acquisire competenze non-cognitive, che pertanto sono molto importanti nella fase adolescenziale e contribuiscono ad una presa di coscienza del sé e quindi alla costruzione della propria identità.”

In ultima istanza, il laboratorio teatrale ha giocato un importante ruolo di mediazione nel rapporto tra ragazzi e istituzione “Scuola”. Proprio come nota Eugenio Barba:

“Il *training* [teatrale] insegna a prendere posizione, sia come comportamento extra-quotidiano sulla scena, sia nei confronti della professione, del gruppo con cui si lavora, del contesto sociale in cui si è immersi: nei confronti di ciò che si accetta e di ciò che si rifiuta.”³

Quindi il laboratorio può essere inteso anche come luogo dove ragionare sulle relazioni sociali e politiche, ed eventualmente rimettere in discussione il proprio e gli altrui ruoli.

Ma vediamo come poter lavorare su un testo come quello di Baghaï si sia rivelato per gli studenti un’opportunità di confrontarsi con una realtà altra, sviluppando tutta una serie di abilità trasversali.

Khush Hal Nameh, ovvero “La vicenda di Khush Hal”, proietta attori e spettatori direttamente all’interno della società afghana rivelandone l’intrinseca dinamicità e svelando i sogni e le angosce più intimi dei suoi membri, attori sociali impegnati incessantemente nella costruzione del loro mondo sociale.⁴

Protagonisti dell’etnodramma sono i componenti di una famiglia afghana di etnia Pashtun. La narrazione drammatica ha inizio con il monologo dell’anziano padre che ritrova due dei suoi figli, separati durante la guerra onde evitare di perderli insieme. Nelle sue orazioni, allo sconforto per lo stato in cui versa il suo paese l’anziano uomo contrappone la gratitudine e la gioia di rivedere i figli superstiti. L’incontro con i due giovani uomini non risulta tuttavia facile: essi hanno ricevuto educazioni molto differenti e hanno pertanto maturato concezioni della vita addirittura antitetiche. Il primogenito Khush Hal, formatosi nelle confraternite sufì, è diventato un mistico musulmano e guarda con rispetto alle istituzioni e tradizioni Pashtun che il padre metaforicamente incarna. Esaltazione e fanatismo emergono invece dai discorsi del figlio cadetto, Barham, invasato da idee talebane, islamiche estremiste e filo-arabe: contesta l’autorità paterna e decanta l’avvento di un “nuovo mondo” in cui “[...] l’umanità intera / Sarà prostrata e sottomessa/ Pronta a seguire

³ Cfr. Barba E., *La canoa di carta. Trattato di antropologia teatrale*, il Mulino, Bologna, 1993, p. 167.

⁴ Cfr. Palmisano A.L., “Afghanistan: dal great game al great play?” in *Limes*, n.3, maggio 2007, pp. 163-168.

con rigore / Tutti i pilastri della fede.”⁵ Avvertito il fervore del figlio come un potenziale rischio per l’ordine e la pace, il padre intima a Barham di allontanarsi.

Frustrato per la sanzione, Barham escogita allora un inganno per estromettere il fratello maggiore e quindi assumere alla morte del padre il ruolo di “Signore del *qala*”.⁶ Khush Hal si vede così ingiustamente accusato di aver ucciso l’amico Omeyd, che, in realtà, è stato aiutato ad intraprendere di nascosto un lungo viaggio verso l’Occidente, dove forse riuscirà a guadagnare i soldi necessari per sposare Kharo, la sorella di Barham. Dinanzi al sospetto che grava su di lui, Khush Hal non ha alternativa: solo ritrovando l’amico emigrato potrà comprovare la propria innocenza. Per Khush Hal è “Tempo di migrare/ Tempo di esilio / E solitudine.”⁷

Nel secondo atto, alle scene dell’avventuroso ed estenuante viaggio di Khush Hal si alternano quelle della vita nel *qala*, dove le donne vivono come prigionieri tormentate dalle frequenti manifestazioni d’ira di Barham.

La trama “si svolge” su diversi piani della realtà. Infatti alcune scene ci portano in dimensioni “altre”, quelle degli stati di coscienza modificati. Si tratta delle scene in cui, stanco e disperato nel suo viaggiare senza meta, Khush Hal mangia il “pane del corvo” (epiteto che indica un fungo allucinogeno usato dai mistici) ed entra in *trance*.

Sullo sfondo delle vicende familiari si delinea un Afghanistan martoriato da ventitré anni di ininterrotta guerra civile, uno scenario dipinto di “polvere e dolore”⁸, in cui si odono i “lamenti sommessi di bimbi senza madri”⁹ e si intravvedono “colonne di sfollati”¹⁰, “carovane silenziose che lasciano la loro scia di morti senza preghiere e senza tombe”¹¹.

Un testo che non può essere letto e recitato in modo asettico, ma che prevede una presa di coscienza di quello che è il contesto politico, culturale e religioso. Come ha asserito Cupertino, il teatro etnografico prevede un esercizio di profonda analisi della realtà: “E se sul piano della narrativa recuperano la fiaba, il mito, la tragedia e l’epica, sul piano antropologico i ragazzi si confrontano con le dinamiche che da sempre animano la vita dell’uomo: la guerra fraticida, il mito di fondazione, l’amore in tutte le sue forme, la *pietas* contrapposta alla spietatezza, l’animismo dei cori che sono la coscienza, il tema del viaggio ...”

⁵ Cfr. Baghaï A., “Khush Hal Nameh” in *Etnodrammi. Tre incursioni nella drammaturgia etnografica*, Pensa editore, Lecce, 2008, p. 185.

⁶ Il *qala* è la realtà architettonica che rappresenta l’identità di un gruppo locale e di un gruppo di discendenza: ha pianta quadrata o rettangolare ed è caratterizzato da invalicabili mura con agli angoli delle torrette di guardia. Le sue dimensioni sono un indice del prestigio e del benessere del clan. Palmisano A.L., “On informal justice in Afghanistan” in Palmisano A.L. e Picco G. (a cura di), *Afghanistan. How much of the past in the new future*, Quaderni di *I Futuribili*, I.S.I.G, Gorizia, 2007, pp. 37-76.

⁷ Cfr. Baghaï A. 2008, p. 202.

⁸ Ivi pp. 174-175.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

Nei panni dell'Altro. Note dal laboratorio

Durante il cosiddetto “processo di prova”¹² lo studente-attore si misura con i processi di *framing* (inquadramento) e di *keying* (cioè di trasformazione della realtà in materiale da *performance*).¹³ La partecipazione di questi giovani studenti, di età compresa tra i 13 e i 19 anni, al laboratorio teatrale scolastico si è rivelata particolarmente significativa nel loro percorso formativo. Il laboratorio ha rappresentato poi uno spazio intersoggettivo in cui tessere e potenziare una rete di relazioni e legami. In questa indagine ci ha interessato cogliere quella che è stata la “struttura dell’esperienza” dei ragazzi coinvolti nell’attività e in particolare come il “mettersi nei panni di” abbia contribuito ad una “comprensione di”, tenendo bene a mente che tali strutture e processi presentano una inscindibile triplicità, essendo contemporaneamente conoscitivi, volitivi ed affettivi.¹⁴

Le considerazioni che seguono sono frutto di osservazioni effettuate durante alcune giornate di prova nel mese di marzo e dell’incontro “diretto” con alcuni dei protagonisti di questa esperienza (la coordinatrice del progetto, il regista, l’autrice ed alcuni “attori”). Gli studenti che hanno voluto cooperare in questa ricerca ripercorrendo la loro esperienza e rilasciando le loro impressioni sono stati: Roberta (l’Aquila), Ettore (l’Uccello), Silvia (la clandestina), Donatello (il Gufo), Adriano (Khush Hal), Martina (Kharo), Ilaria (La madre), Francesca (il Corvo I), Domenico (il Corvo II), Marco Antonio (Omeyd) e Antonio (Barham). Questi ragazzi sono stati “intervistati” a gruppi, in modo da smorzare eventuali timidezze o imbarazzi dovuti anche all’impiego di mezzi di registrazione multimediali. I colloqui hanno ben presto assunto un carattere informale e compartecipato. Ampio spazio è stato concesso alla narrazione di aneddoti e ricordi. Tutto ciò ha facilitato una certa genuinità ed elasticità nel ripercorrere le tappe dell’iniziativa. Non sono state sottoposte ai ragazzi domande precise, ma si è piuttosto chiesto loro di elaborare liberamente delle considerazioni a partire da alcuni suggerimenti, a cui si sono presto aggiunte riflessioni e valide argomentazioni sorte in modo del tutto spontaneo. I quesiti posti ai ragazzi riguardavano temi molteplici: cosa ha significato l’esperienza del teatro (e in particolare “questo tipo” di teatro)? Qual è stato il rapporto con il regista? Com’è stato relazionarsi agli altri all’interno e all’“esterno” del laboratorio teatrale? Ci sono state eventuali empatie o difficoltà nell’interpretare il personaggio? Come sono cambiate la lettura e la percezione dei fatti connessi all’Afghanistan in seguito a questo “confronto drammaturgico”?

“L’esperienza del teatro è iniziata come un gioco”, ha esordito Silvia “e ora non ne posso più fare a meno”. Le motivazioni che hanno spinto i ragazzi a prendere parte al laboratorio sono state soprattutto la curiosità, nata dopo aver assistito ad altri spettacoli o animata da altri ragazzi (compagni di classe o “amici più grandi”) già

¹² Schechner R., *La teoria della performance 1970-1983*, Bulzoni editore, Roma, 1984; Schechner R., *Magnitudini della performance*, Bulzoni editore, Roma, 1999.

¹³ Goffman E., *Frame Analysis. L’organizzazione dell’esperienza*, Armando Editore, 2001, pp. 85-86.

¹⁴ Cfr. Turner V., *Dal rito al teatro*, il Mulino, Bologna, 1986, *passim*.

membri del gruppo teatrale, e la voglia di “mettersi in gioco e socializzare con gli altri”. In alcuni casi si è trattata anche di una sfida alla timidezza. Sicuramente i successi riscossi dagli spettacoli degli anni passati sono stati motivo di attrazione per nuove adesioni al corso e di incoraggiamento ed emozione per coloro che già ne facevano parte. La partecipazione al laboratorio è stata descritta dai ragazzi come un’attività impegnativa e “non priva di ostacoli”. Erano richiesti “impegno e dedizione”: i “sacrifici” non sono mancati. Eppure conversando con questo gruppo, appare immediatamente chiaro che il “fare parte”, o meglio l’“essere parte” del gruppo teatrale sia stato soprattutto motivo di grande orgoglio così che oggi si registra nell’intera compagnia un generale entusiasmo.

Questo sentimento di “appartenenza” risulta evidente nel momento in cui i ragazzi concordano nel sottolineare l’importanza dei momenti di collettività nella recitazione. Persino coloro che in questa occasione hanno rivestito ruoli da protagonista riconoscono come il “fare parte di un coro”, anche alla luce di loro precedenti esperienze teatrali, sia stato molto formativo. Parimenti chi ha ricoperto ruoli marginali o corali ha comunque percepito la propria importanza nel complesso dello spettacolo.

La *pièce* prevede dei momenti di coralità molto forti. Si pensi alla scena in cui i mercanti maltrattano e si fanno scherno di Khush Hal scambiato per un *qalandar*,¹⁵ oppure al gruppo tumultuoso dei clandestini che si dirige verso il porto, trascinando con sé gli esausti. Far parte di un coro comporta una massima attenzione nel recitato e una maggiore disciplina nei movimenti. Ne consegue un diverso approccio alle dimensioni spaziali e temporali, ma soprattutto è il coordinamento con i compagni di scena che deve essere impeccabile. Domenico ha riepilogato così tutte queste argomentazioni: “La bellezza del teatro che facciamo noi non sta nell’avere una parte importante, quanto nel realizzarsi con gli altri.” Sulla scena i componenti di un coro instaurano una *action-set coalition*,¹⁶ per cui si attivano processi di fiducia reciproca. La consapevolezza di perseguire l’obiettivo comune della riuscita dello spettacolo riesce addirittura a far scavalcare eventuali antipatie e dissonanze quotidiane. Si potrebbe affermare che tensione e soddisfazione sono i due estremi di un *continuum* entro cui si colloca l’esperienza di ognuno di questi ragazzi nel recitare e nel veder recitare i compagni. Una voce fuori dal coro risulta in questo senso Donatello che rivendica il proprio bisogno di visibilità: “Faccio teatro per passione. Per me l’importante è avere una parte che sia un nome: non essere nel gruppo.”

Questo “spirito collettivo” ha pertanto effetti anche su quello che è lo stato emotivo dei giovani *performer* nel momento in cui calcano la scena. Martina parla infatti di una sensazione di energia, un coinvolgimento che raramente si riuscirebbe a rintracciare al di fuori del laboratorio: “Quell’energia la ritrovo solo quando recitiamo. Insieme.” Anche Adriano dà risalto a questo particolare slancio emotivo:

¹⁵ Il *qalandar* è un mistico dell’ordine della *Qalandariyat* che abbandona tutto e tutti e si mette a vagabondare. In termini spregiativi è sinonimo di “bevitore di vino”. Cfr. Baghaï A. 2008 p. 218.

¹⁶ Cfr. Boissevain J., *Friends of Friends. Networks, Manipulators and Coalitions*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, England, 1974, p. 186 e ss.

“È difficile tradurre in parole le immagini di questa esperienza. Si tratta della cosa che più mi piace fare; nei miei momenti peggiori, mi riempie completamente. Quando recito non sono mai distratto.”

Ma se il laboratorio è un momento di aggregazione e confronto che genera una forte coesione al suo interno e livella i contrasti, il rapporto con il mondo esterno non si è dimostrato però privo di inconvenienti: “Non tutti apprezzano il teatro, alcuni lo trovano superfluo. Non colgono le emozioni forti dell’attività.” Alcuni ragazzi hanno accusato qualche incomprensione e poca sensibilità nei confronti dell’iniziativa teatrale da parte di qualche docente e di certi loro coetanei. La forte identificazione col gruppo la si può altrettanto desumere anche dal senso di responsabilizzazione di cui alcuni si sentono investiti. C’è chi ha sostenuto di sentirsi responsabile nel trasmettere l’importanza e il valore culturale di questa attività e chi ha affermato di aver il dovere di essere d’esempio nei confronti dei più giovani che si avvicinano per la prima volta al corso di teatro.

Entriamo ora nel vivo dell’esperienza e andiamo a scoprire com’è stato rapportarsi con una realtà tanto diversa e lontana e come infine questi ragazzi l’abbiano “interiorizzata”. In questi anni l’Afghanistan è entrato prepotentemente nelle nostre case attraverso la televisione o i giornali. Nella mente dell’occidentale si è affermato spesso come sinonimo di barbarie, anomia, regno dei talebani e della negazione dell’identità delle donne che come “torrette blu”¹⁷ s’aggirano per strade polverose, ingabbiate nel loro *burq’ā*. Indossare le vesti, le maschere di questa realtà ha portato i ragazzi a non accontentarsi delle banalizzazioni e dei luoghi comuni mediatici.

L’assegnazione delle parti ha seguito una procedura particolare. I ragazzi, presa visione del copione, hanno concordato tra di loro e con il regista la distribuzione dei ruoli. Ognuno ha indicato il personaggio o i personaggi che preferiva, dopodiché sono seguite delle improvvisazioni per confermare o meno la scelta. È stato chiesto ai ragazzi di cercare di spiegare il rapporto con il personaggio interpretato, dai motivi che li hanno condotti alla scelta ai problemi drammaturgici e psicologici sopravvenuti nell’interpretarlo.

Da queste discussioni è emerso che alcuni hanno provato un’immediata simpatia col personaggio, ad esempio Adriano, che durante l’intervista ha continuato ininterrottamente a sgranare il rosario di Khush Hal: “Ho letto il copione la prima volta e Khush Hal è stato subito il mio personaggio preferito. [...] Alle improvvisazioni nessun altro l’aveva scelto.” “È perché sapevamo tutti che era il suo!”, lo interrompe Francesca, e da un angolo si sente sussurrare Ariane Baghai: “Me lo immaginavo proprio così!”

Anche Ilaria, che interpreta la Madre, ha affermato di sentire il personaggio calzante alla propria personalità: “Si tratta di una donna che ha dei momenti di

¹⁷ Cfr. Baghai A. “The language of the veil”, in Picco G. e Palmisano A.L. 2007, p. 204.

fragilità, più che comprensibili date le circostanze in cui vive; ma d'altra parte emana un grande coraggio e forza di volontà.”

Non tutti hanno però provato un'istintiva sintonia con la propria parte e il primo approccio è stato a volte problematico. Discrepanze caratteriali, ma soprattutto questioni di alterità socio-culturale sono state le cause principali del disagio di trovarsi “nei panni dell’Altro”.

Martina, che sulla scena è Kharo, si è scontrata con i vincoli e le limitazioni che ogni giovane donna afghana vive. Interpretare questo personaggio è stato in principio faticoso: “Non sapevo come interpretare questa parte che è quella di una ragazza che potrebbe essere come me ma ha un mondo completamente differente di fronte a sé.” Difficoltà iniziali che si sono manifestate soprattutto sul piano emotivo. Martina ha riferito di aver lavorato molto sugli stati d'animo vissuti da una ragazza che deve sottostare a regole sociali rigide e al volere del padre o del fratello, dei quali può avere timore, e che non può esprimere apertamente la propria opinione. Eppure, per Martina, Kharo è un personaggio che conserva una innata vivacità. La rigidità delle norme sociali o l’immobilità delle gerarchie non hanno spento la sua volontà di essere attiva nel costruire la propria posizione e reinterpretare il proprio ruolo. Emozioni che la giovane interprete ha sentito come sue. Nel momento in cui Kharo infine taccia Barham di follia, Martina ha confidato di aver provato lei stessa un senso di liberazione, “come se potesse finalmente esprimere la sua opinione!”

Un certo senso di inadeguatezza è stato talvolta accusato anche da Marco Antonio nell’interpretare la “tragedia” di Omeyd, giovane uomo afghano che intraprende un lungo viaggio della speranza. La partenza, il distacco, la fuga di nascosto, il carcere, la scoperta che Khush Hal ha abbandonato tutti per venire a cercarlo … scene molto forti in cui il sentimento che prevale è la disperazione. Parla di “un’esperienza forte” pure Antonio, l’interprete di Barham, nel descrivere il processo che l’ha portato ad immedesimarsi nel personaggio e viverne le emozioni. Barham sfida l’autorità paterna, perché in essa egli vede il simbolo del potere. Alla morte del padre ne assume la carica e crede di aver raggiunto il suo obiettivo, però a questo punto emerge tutta la sua debolezza e l’incapacità di reggere tale ruolo, cerca di mostrarsi sicuro e risoluto, aggredendo la madre e recludendo le donne del *qala*, ma alla fine impazzisce. Questo ruolo si è rivelato pertanto come l’occasione per riflettere su quelle che sono due costanti dell’animo umano, la cattiveria e il senso di frustrazione, ma anche per osservare dall’interno i rapporti di potere nella famiglia afghana.

Dal quadro che è emerso in queste conversazioni, sembra che recitare l’Altro abbia permesso ai ragazzi di trascendere i propri modelli di riferimento per comprendere quelle che sono le dinamiche sociali della società afghana e pertanto di attenuarne la percezione di alterità. Comportarsi come l’Altro li ha portati a rimettere in discussione il proprio sé. Dopotutto come rileva Richard Schechner: “In termini soggettivi recuperare un comportamento significa che io mi comporto come se fossi

un altro, ma questo altro può anche essere me in un'altra condizione esistenziale.”¹⁸ In altre parole, questa esperienza ha portato i ragazzi a ripensare la propria identità anche in relazione alle circostanze in cui quotidianamente agiscono, insomma a riscoprirsi essi stessi attori sociali.

La narrazione, ovvero il concatenarsi dei vari *frame* che la *pièce* analizza, è condotta da un gruppo di uccelli. Si noti che il sottotitolo di *Khush Hal Nameh* è appunto “Fra le nostre ali”. Entriamo così nel colto repertorio simbolico afgano di cui l'autrice si è avvalsa. La dimensione spirituale e culturale nel dramma è particolarmente significativa e l'intero testo è preziosamente intarsiato di rimandi alla mistica (a Nuruddin Isfarayini, Faridoddin ‘Attar, Jelal ed Din Rumi... giusto per citare qualche nome). Gli uccelli in questione sono gli stessi del *Si-morgh* menzionati dal mistico Faridoddin ‘Attar nel suo *Mantiq al-Tayr*. Essi intervengono nelle vicende umane, fornendo consigli o invitando alla riflessione i personaggi e svelano al pubblico tutto un universo simbolico ed allegorico.

I ragazzi che hanno indossato le maschere piumate degli uccelli si sono quindi accostati a quello che è l'universo di simboli e significati di una cultura diversa e hanno avuto modo di considerare la valenza che essi assumono nel dato contesto: “Gli uccelli in quei luoghi non sono solo animali, ma amici, compagni e guide.”

Ad esempio, inizialmente il corvo sembra una figura malefica: egli suggerisce l'inganno a Barham e annuncia l'esilio a Khush Hal. Però proprio durante il disperato vagare di Khush Hal, egli si rivela una guida spirituale, che lo sprona a continuare e ad “uscire dalla ragione” per affrontare il viaggio attraverso altri piani della coscienza. “Leggendo il copione un po' mi sono spaventata: è pieno di sottigliezze, parole e collegamenti che tu riesci a trovare dopo molte letture o un'interpretazione tua.” Capelli corvini e occhi di ghiaccio, Francesca ha raccontato la complessità e la duplicità del personaggio del corvo che “condivide” con Domenico.

Il regista Alessandro Fiorella ha esortato i ragazzi a pensare agli uccelli come guide, come elemento di contatto tra cielo e terra, tra dimensione spirituale e dimensione terrena.

Nel lavoro di mediazione, Fiorella, che nella quotidianità riveste il ruolo del docente, ha disegnato una nuova identità nel suo relazionarsi ai ragazzi, che l'hanno descritto come un “maestro di vita”, alle volte amico e confidente. All'interno del laboratorio si è trovato a comunicare le chiavi di lettura di un testo non facile e nel frattempo è stato in grado di esigere disciplina ed impegno da parte dei ragazzi, così come di accendere in loro l'entusiasmo.

L'emozione etnografica

Il regista è stato sempre attento ad ascoltare consigli e suggerimenti, affinché lo spettacolo fosse il risultato di un lavoro di partecipazione. Infatti ogni dettaglio della *pièce* è stato curato dai ragazzi, che si sono visti impegnati nella realizzazione di

¹⁸ Cfr. Schechner R. 1984, p. 216.

scenografie, costumi e materiale di scena, oltre che nella scelta e nell'esecuzione del repertorio musicale. Per quanto riguarda la musica si noterà che sono state "scartate" le musiche afgane o comunque del Centro Asia, preferendo alcuni canti territoriali o altri motivi che rimandassero all'Afghanistan per analogia. La musica in questo spettacolo gioca un ruolo di mediazione, come ha constatato Ariane Baghaï nel vedere il suo etnodramma prendere forma: "La musica ti apre il cuore, e poi ricevi il testo."

Sono molte le scene dalla forte carica emozionale che costellano questo spettacolo. Si pensi ad esempio ai momenti in cui la natura stessa prende magicamente la parola in un ininterrotto gioco di metafore e allusioni. Così il mare diventa la danza di seduenti e minacciose onde che travolgono Khush Hal, che di lì a poco si ritroverà in un bosco di armoniosi cipressi: una visione onirica che tuttavia si dissolve in una nube dorata e il giovane afgano si scopre all'improvviso nel bel mezzo di una capitale occidentale con i suoi bagliori, i suoi *business men*, le sue prostitute e la gente immersa nel giornale che passa "sorda", frettolosa ed indifferente...

Ci viene raccontato così l'incontro violento di due realtà. La connotazione spirituale del testo è fortissima e raggiunge il suo apice nelle ultime battute di Khush Hal, recitate in carcere quando scopre che dopo aver cercato in lungo e in largo Omeyd, questi è proprio il suo compagno di cella:

"È ora di pregare
Per uscire vivo da questo mondo
Ringrazia il cielo!
Tutto il resto non importa
Sono le nostre illusioni
Come prigione e libertà
Viviamo già in una gabbia
Dal primo giorno su questa terra
Il nostro cuore incatenato
Alla muraglia del nostro corpo."¹⁹

Il messaggio che la *pièce* vuole infine comunicare è molto forte: Khush Hal, sbattuto in prigione, esorta Omeyd a riflettere circa l'illusorietà dell'esistenza e del tempo. La *pièce* stessa è quindi un invito a sfatare i *grands récits* e affrontare lo "sconosciuto", ad incontrare l'alterità e l'Altro.

Proprio come ha sottolineato Fiorella far recitare ai ragazzi questo testo ha significato offrir loro "le chiavi del successo", non del "successo economico, ma quello della scoperta", insegnar loro a costruire anche con "mattoni che non conoscono". Il laboratorio teatrale, in quanto spazio ludico-liminale in cui si pratica l'elaborazione dell'esperienza, la decodifica dell'agire umano e sociale in una sua

¹⁹ Cfr. Baghaï A. 2008, p. 248.

rappresentazione e dove la sperimentazione di nuove competenze espressive diventa un imperativo è infatti il luogo idoneo per studiare i processi di “edificazione” della realtà sociale.

Mettere in scena un etnodramma non significa solo recitare l’Altro, ma implica “diventare” ed “essere” l’Altro almeno per un certo intervallo spazio-temporale. Insomma, sentire, soffrire e gioire, tremare e vibrare con l’Altro. Questo appare nitidamente dai resoconti dei ragazzi: Antonio si è sentito veramente costernato per i biasimi paterni, Ilaria ha conosciuto la rassegnazione di una madre afghana e Martina ha tremato per gli attacchi d’ira di Barham... Il loro “mettersi nei panni di” è stato forse qualcosa di più, da queste descrizioni sembra si sia trattato quasi di un “entrare nella pelle di”. La compiutezza del teatro etnografico sta appunto nel far vivere (o rivivere) un momento politico-esistenziale, ossia nel maturare una conoscenza esperienziale del contesto e provare “il vivido sentimento di cosa significhi muoversi ed agire come se si fosse l’altro”,²⁰ oltre al fatto che mettendoci nei panni degli altri “impariamo qualcosa su noi stessi.”²¹

Per descrivere il trasporto in cui si viene inevitabilmente trascinati basterà riportare brevemente la scena conclusiva di una giornata di prove nella palestra dell’edificio scolastico. I ragazzi, tanto quelli che si apprestano ad entrare in scena che quelli che hanno già portato a termine la propria parte, si sono radunati tutti attorno al centro della sala dove si esegue l’azione. Adriano-Khush Hal ha pronunciato il suo invito a Marco-Omeyd a guardare al di là di quella che gli pare la realtà. File ordinate di ragazzi entrano allora in scena portando delle ombrelle nere con le estremità ribaltate, che al momento stabilito iniziano, tutti all’unisono, a far roteare. Dai “cappelli rovesciati” delle ombrelle scende, ricoprendo l’intera scena, una pioggia di coriandoli bianchi e rossi. Sullo sfondo si innalza la minuta Roberta sbattendo le sue ali d’Aquila. Le voci dolcissime di un coro pian piano scemano. Qualche secondo di silenzio, un quadro immobile con al centro Omeyd e Khush Hal nell’atto di tendersi una mano e poi lo scoppio di un applauso. Lo “spettacolo” è finito e ora gli attori possono “riassumere” la loro identità, i ragazzi rimasti sulla scena si abbracciano e scherzano tra di loro con ancora in cuore in gola. Come hanno detto essi stessi: “La tensione non abbandona mai lo spettacolo: è costante e continua.”

La gestualità è forte, i ritmi decisi e le coreografie coinvolgenti. Anche assistendo a solo delle prove è impossibile non venir rapiti dalla trama, dai colori e dalle musiche. Tutto il resto passa in secondo piano: le scarpe da ginnastica e i jeans che spuntano sotto costumi improvvisati scompaiono, l’immaginazione completa le scenografie montate parzialmente. Quella a cui si assiste è un’etnografia tutta di sensazioni, sfumature e giochi. Un’etnografia che è qualcosa di più che semplice teatro: è emozione etnografica.

²⁰ Cfr. Schechner R. 1999, p.48.

²¹ Cfr. Turner V. 1986, p.165.

Khush Hal Nameh: framing Afghanistan

La ribellione di Barham scatena il “dramma sociale”²² che fa emergere tutta una serie di problematiche relative alla configurazione sociale afgana. La *pièce* incornicia (*frame*) così alcune situazioni specifiche di questa società e le analizza considerando i linguaggi simbolici propri del contesto culturale centro-asiatico.

Innanzitutto, la *pièce* segna una rottura con le semplificazioni mediatiche e gli stereotipi cui troppo spesso questa parte di mondo è associata. Attraverso il testo di Baghaï, la terra degli Afghani appare in tutta la sua complessità multietnica e multiconfessionale. Popolato da diverse etnie, come gli Hazara o i Pashtun, l’Afghanistan vede al suo interno la coesistenza di diversi Islam. Infatti a fianco di quello ortodosso troviamo diverse forme di eterodossia. L’ordine sociale ha per fulcro il principio di sangue. Si tratta di una società tribale segmentaria. Il lignaggio (*qworaneh*) segue il principio di discendenza patrilineare.

I tre pilastri su cui si basa la cultura pashtun sono la terra (*zamin*), le donne (*zan*) e l’oro (*zar*, in quanto *measure of the debt*). Difatti “la relazione fra lignaggi e terra è proprio il fulcro della struttura e dell’organizzazione sociale, e l’equilibrio sociale e politico è raggiunto per tale complessa alchimia: la relazione fra donne, terra e denaro.”²³ Fragili equilibri vengono costantemente ottenuti grazie alla combinazione di questi tre elementi.

Tutto questo viene messo in luce dalla vicenda di Omeyd. Come molti giovani afgani, Omeyd decide di emigrare nella speranza di ottenere i soldi necessari per poter combinare il matrimonio con Kharo e “mandare avanti la famiglia”; ma soprattutto per scongiurare l’*estrema ratio* della “vendita” della terra. L’acquisizione di terre (nel senso di *possessio*, dato che l’*imperium* resta prerogativa del lignaggio) avviene soprattutto mediante alleanze matrimoniali, che sono vere e proprie alleanze politiche. Vige la consuetudine del matrimonio fra cugini patrilineari paralleli e in ogni caso resta preferibile l’unione endogamica, che evita la frammentazione dei possedimenti e garantisce la pace fra i clan. Di conseguenza si assiste ad alleanze matrimoniali pianificate con grande anticipo rispetto alla data dell’evento. I costi di un matrimonio sono molto elevati: il clan (*kheil*) del ragazzo è tenuto a versare un indennizzo economico al clan della promessa sposa per compensare la privazione della ragazza. Inoltre solo dopo che i bilanci del clan sono stati pareggiati, il figlio cadetto ottiene il permesso di potersi a sua volta sposare e quindi intraprendere una carriera politica e sociale. Perciò i giovani mariti subiscono diverse pressioni affinché reintegrino il prima possibile la cifra spesa. Motivo per cui alcuni si inseriscono nel traffico di oppio, altri diventano mercenari o, come Omeyd, emigrano in stati dove i salari sono più alti rispetto a quelli afgani.

²² Turner V., *Antropologia della performance*, il Mulino, Bologna 1993, pp. 93-94 e pp. 148-149; Turner V. 1986, pp. 31-33 e pp. 131-137.

²³ Cfr. Palmisano A.L., “Problematica della donna afgana nella struttura della famiglia tradizionale” in *Heliopolis*, n. 2, 2006, p. 41; Palmisano A.L., *Gender and Tuberculosis in Afghanistan*, Pensa editore, Lecce, 2005; Palmisano A.L. 2007.

Ovviamente tutte queste dinamiche hanno delle conseguenze dirette sulla posizione della donna entro il gioco di ruoli della società afghana.²⁴ I personaggi di Kharo e della madre, così come il coro delle donne, mettono a fuoco la condizione femminile e quelli che sono gli ambiti e i compiti della donna. Siglata l'unione matrimoniale, la giovane sposa si trasferisce presso il *qala* del marito: la patrivotrilocalità è prescrittiva e lo spazio in cui la donna si può muovere quotidianamente si risolve totalmente nell'ambiente domestico. Un “mondo interno”. Dopotutto la donna affronta anche i rarissimi contatti con l'esterno “chiuso” nel *chadri* (quello che nel linguaggio internazionale è noto come *burq'a*).²⁵ Pertanto la presenza della nuova arrivata nel *qala* è ancora occasione di tensioni e conflittualità. I rapporti con la suocera sono aspri e l'uomo di riferimento costituisce agli occhi della donna l'unica fonte di affetto e protezione. Proprio come esprimono le parole della Madre, pronunciate con grande consapevolezza, di fronte ai violenti sfoghi di Barham nei confronti della sorella:

“Siamo murate vive:
Nella tomba prima del tempo
Non è niente di nuovo
Figlia mia.
[...]
La nostra vita è sempre stata
Senza vista
Gli alti muri del *qala*
Sono il nostro orizzonte ...
È il volto dell'uomo,
Del marito o del figlio,
Del fratello o del padre,
La nostra unica finestra sul mondo.”²⁶

Tuttavia la *pièce* rileva come sotto questa apparente impotenza arda invece una grande forza e capacità d'azione. Nient'affatto oggetti passivi, le donne afghane, ci fa intendere Ariane Baghaï, sono più che mai partecipi alla costruzione del loro mondo sociale.

Le vicende legate al presunto omicidio compiuto da Khush Hal propongono delle considerazioni circa il rapporto tra giustizia formale e giustizia informale. Il personaggio del Padre, nelle sue dotte allocuzioni, allude spesso al ruolo della *Jirga*, cioè l'assemblea di saggi (*moslihin risafedan*, letteralmente “di barbe bianche”) a cui

²⁴ Un gioco che riprende in parte la terminologia del gioco degli scacchi: la donna promessa in sposa è detta *palai* (pedone), la neo-sposa *suara* (cavalllo) e solo più tardi potrà dirsi *mirokha* (moglie). Cfr. Palmisano A.L. 2005; Palmisano A.L. 2006.

²⁵ Sull'argomento si veda Baghaï A., “The language of the veil” in Picco G. e Palmisano A.L. 2007, pp. 203-220.

²⁶ Cfr. Baghaï A. 2008, pp. 223-224.

la comunità locale riconosce piena autorità e legittima la capacità di fornire risoluzioni, spesso realizzate con rapidità ed efficienza.²⁷

Dall’etnografia teatralizzata al teatro etnografico

Tutte queste vicende vengono analizzate criticamente nel momento in cui sono inscenate. Alcuni antropologi e registi teatrali²⁸ hanno visto nel ricorso alla messinscena teatrale un utile strumento per lo studio delle azioni umane e sociali. Nei suoi corsi di antropologia Victor Turner elaborò una didattica dinamica: i dati etnografici venivano riformulati in sceneggiature teatrali e quindi interpretati. Nell’impossibilità di attuare una vera e propria indagine sul terreno per familiarizzare gli studenti con la prospettiva dell’attore sociale non ci poteva essere migliore strategia che quella di fargli “performare” l’etnografia studiata.

La *performing ethnography* turneriana costituisce un invito a comprendere l’attore sociale in quanto soggetto, in quanto “persona”,²⁹ a dispetto di quello che accade in molte monografie, dove la vita sociale viene “disidratata” e ridotta a modelli meccanicistici di interazione. Dopotutto “non c’è che recitare la parte di un membro di un’altra cultura in una situazione di crisi caratteristica di quella cultura per rendersi conto dell’inautenticità dei resoconti fatti solitamente dagli occidentali e per sollevare problemi non affrontati o non risolti nella letteratura etnografica.”³⁰ Questo approccio permette quindi di demitizzare stereotipi o anacronismi.

Chiunque abbia condotto ricerca sul campo si trova d’altronde di fronte al problema del comunicare le informazioni acquisite sul terreno, ovvero al dilemma di come renderle comprensibili alla società d’appartenenza senza tuttavia incorrere in deformazioni rappresentative. Ariane Baghaï ha individuato nella *pièce* teatrale la formula per riportare le sue osservazioni. Senza processi intermedi, le etnografie di Baghaï sono direttamente “teatro” e intendono condurre tanto gli attori che gli spettatori a contatto con realtà diverse. Se scrivere un etnodramma ha significato entrare nella società in cui si svolgono le vicende, nel momento in cui viene messo in scena si consente questo ”accesso” anche agli altri. Nel teatro etnografico i membri di società Altre che rivivono sulla scena riottengono un volto e un corpo, sicché il pubblico li recepisce come persone “reali”, animate da sentimenti ed emozioni.

Il sodalizio tra antropologia e teatro mira appunto a superare i modelli cognitivi che comportano inevitabilmente una liofilizzazione della vita sociale, per proporne una rappresentazione più “viva”, fruibile attraverso livelli più sofisticati

²⁷ Picco G. e Palmisano A.L. 2007, p. 47 e ss.

²⁸ Cfr. Turner V. 1986; Turner V. 1993; Schechner R. 1984; Schechner R. 1999; Barba E. 1993; Taviani F. (a cura di), *Il libro dell’Odin: il teatro-laboratorio di Eugenio Barba*, Feltrinelli, Milano, 1978.

²⁹ Si veda Palmisano A.L., “La rappresentazione come forma narrativa del diritto nell’epoca post-globale”, in *Identità delle comunità Indigene del Centro America, Messico e Caraibi: aspetti culturali e antropologici*, Atti del Convegno, Quaderni IILA, 2008, pp. 195-205.

³⁰ Cfr. Turner V. 1986, p. 177.

della coscienza, ovvero oltrepassando i linguaggi speculativi senza pertanto perdere di vista l'obiettivo ultimo della rappresentazione: la comprensione dell'Altro.

Fotografía y Cultura en el Cuzco de principios del siglo XX

Nicoletta Velardi

Introducción

El propósito de este artículo es de proponer un alternativo, determinado modo de dialogar con la historia y la cultura Andina utilizando las imágenes fotográficas – producidas en y por la historia – de la Fototeca Andina como material etnográfico. A través del análisis de las fotografías, se pretende reconstruir una visión subjetiva de la cultura e historia Andina a través de la representación en imágenes de sus sujetos sociales. Lo que se propone es una metodología alternativa para acercarse al conocimiento histórico y cultural de la sociedad cuzqueña de principios del siglo XX, partiendo desde la fotografía para llegar a la cultura y historia, y desde la cultura y la historia para comprender mejor la fotografía. Se podría decir que lo que se propone es una análisis ‘cíclica’, que utiliza la historia y cultura para comprender la fotografía, y viceversa.

Se puede definir a la fotografía como etnográfica cuando la misma se utiliza para el registro y la comprensión de las culturas, por su calidad como manifestación de subjetividades, culturas e historias, como expresión tangible de una cultura, que encierra una comunicación significativa. Es importante subrayar el hecho de que “la duplicidad mimética de la fotografía puede convertirse en un prisma a través del cual examinar las cuestiones de cultura e identidad propia, así como la conciencia histórica”. (C.Pinney 2003:2) Por lo tanto a través de la fotografía, considerada como cuento leal y reflexivo de las experiencias personales y representativas del despliegue de experiencias concretas de vida – sensuales, comprometidas, mediadas, significativas y materiales – de los actores involucrados en la construcción de las mismas, uno se puede acercar a analizar y comprender la experiencia histórica y cultural subjetiva de la sociedad cuzqueña.

Al ser utilizadas como material etnográfico, las fotografías, por haber sido producidas en condiciones históricas y culturales concretas, demandan que la especificidad histórica y cultural de su constitución pase a ser decisiva en cualquier análisis de las mismas. Por lo tanto, la especificidad histórica y cultural del periodo 1900-1940 del Perú en general y del Cuzco en particular es el marco en el cual se desarrolla esta línea analítica propuesta. Esta línea analítica inevitablemente privilegia la atención a unos u otros aspectos de la realidad socio-cultural e histórica cuzqueña. La misma selección de fotografías actúa como filtro para la información, ya que la fotografía se vuelve el mismo ‘referente ideológico’, además de ser el referente visual, desde el cual parte y termina el análisis propuesto. Lo que se pretende hacer es proponer una narrativa de subjetividades e intersubjetividades. Eso

es posible también gracias al reconocimiento de que la fotografía puede ser considerada como momento particular en el que se puede descubrir el acontecimiento histórico en su total, porque la fotografía, en general, representa evidencia material de la conexión con lo que ahora es ‘pasado’ y representa historias sobre las conexiones a través del tiempo, afirmando la existencia y el significado del pasado en el presente. La fotografía representa una historia alternativa, oral, subjetiva, relacionada con el sonido y el gesto, y es una representante activa de las complejas y cambiantes relaciones sociales en las cuales y a través de las cuales es inactuada, experimentada, creada e imbuida con significado e intención.

El proceso de comprensión de una fotografía significa reconocer que desde el momento de su creación, la fotografía significará algo, sin embargo, tal sentido se estratifica por debajo de otros significados. Las fotografías, con un examen minucioso del contexto y un análisis profundo de sus ‘otros significados’, se pueden leer como textos generales que revelan ‘historias ocultas’. Según Bourdieu, una comprensión adecuada de una fotografía significa “descifrar el excedente de significado que le traiciona por ser parte de la simbología de una época, una clase o grupo artístico (P.Bourdieu 1965:7)”. Este es el caso de las fotografías analizadas. La metáfora de “mirar más allá de” lo que es retratado en la fotografía – para revelar esas ‘historias ocultas’ – sugiere una complejidad de las posiciones de perspectiva o de una multiplicidad de capas que dota las fotografías de una complejidad enormemente mayor que la que se le accredita generalmente. (C.Pinney 2003:4/5). La fotografía deja de ser unívoco, plano, e incontestable rastro indicial de lo que fue, y se convierte en un artefacto con una textura compleja (ocultando muchas diferentes profundidades), invitando al espectador a asumir muchos posibles puntos de soporte diferentes, tanto espaciales como temporales, con respecto a ella (C.Pinney 2003:4/5).

Con el fin de entender mejor la construcción del significado de las fotografías y el papel de la cultura en su creación, podría ser útil utilizar a Barthes, especialmente su distinción entre la ‘denotación’ y ‘connotación’ de la imagen. La ‘denotación’ de una fotografía es lo que vemos, lo que puede describirse como lo que simplemente hay en la imagen, mientras que su ‘connotación’ es el significado cultural inmediato derivado de lo que se ve, pero que en realidad no está en la imagen (R. Barthes, 1982 c.in D. Bate 2009). Siguiendo siempre Barthes, podríamos decir que el significado dado de la fotografía, lo que está ahí (la denotación), oculta el significado (simbólico) construido (la connotación), que depende del conocimiento cultural del espectador. Así, una vez más se puede afirmar el carácter polisémico y cultural de las fotografías.

Por tanto, las fotografías analizadas y las “historias ocultas” que nos obsequian, son los referentes, los soportes, que han hecho que en la lectura de la historia y cultura andina en general y de la sociedad cuzqueña a comienzos del siglo XX en particular, se privilegie el análisis de la representación subjetiva de la cultura andina a través de sus sujetos sociales, es decir, una análisis de los fenómenos culturales andinos desde las subjetividades – representadas en las imágenes presentadas – de esa cultura. Eso incluye un análisis de cómo se crean las diferencias subjetivas en la sociedad cuzqueña (las subjetividades diferenciadas arriba mencionadas y en adelante visualizadas), privilegiando por lo tanto la atención a esos

procesos que han contribuido a la construcción de las diferencias entre los sujetos, a la construcción del ‘otro’, así como a los procesos de construcción de la propia subjetividad a través de la diferenciación del otro.

A manera de conclusión, y de introducción, podemos decir que el propósito de este artículo es de intentar acercarnos al análisis de las fotografías de la Fototeca Andina para revelar esas historias ocultas que encierran sobre la sociedad cuzqueña y la cultura andina a comienzos del siglo XX. Reconociendo que las fotografías sugieren significados a través de la forma en que se estructuran, puesto que “la forma de representación hace que una imagen sea accesible y comprensible para la mente, informando e informada por un *corpus de conocimiento oculto* que es llamado en cuestión a través de los significantes de la imagen”, lo que nos proponemos es justamente el ofrecer ese “*corpus de conocimiento oculto*” de las fotografías, para que ellas puedan ser comprensibles para quienes se acercan a queriendo encontrar historias sobre las imágenes en ellas representadas.

La ciudad del Cuzco

Para comenzar, creemos que es imprescindible presentar a la ciudad del Cuzco, locus de producción de las fotografías y los sujetos sociales representados en ellas, y creemos que las palabras poéticas de Alfredo Yepez Miranda son las que mejor capturan la esencia y el alma de esta maravillosa cuan compleja ciudad:

“El Cuzco, la ciudad de piedra, está junto a la Cordillera de los Andes, la columna vertebral de todo el continente, donde el paisaje vibra con el Sol maravilloso y único de estas serranías. El Cuzco surgió entre montañas, mirando hacia el cielo y teniendo por horizonte altas cumbres, profundas y misteriosas en su lejanía (...) La Cordillera de los Andes define la América del Sur, geográfica e históricamente, el sino de los tiempos, está expresado en el misterio de esas altas montañas que se yerguen desafiando a los cielos, cumbres fragorosas, altas y bravías, llenas de misterio, que han estado formando la conciencia de sus habitantes. Por eso la montaña y el hombre son el diálogo de la naturaleza y de la vida (...) Así es el Cuzco, la ciudad es parte de las montañas que la rodean. Así es esta ciudad abuela del continente, que fue y sigue siendo ombligo y centro del mundo, corazón de un país (...) el Cuzco es (...) ciudad de síntesis y unión (...) Ciudad que reúne la unción cósmica del infinito y el anhelo de eternidad de los Incas, ciudad sagrada que fue considerada como un santuario, ha tenido y tiene fuerza fascinante. El Cuzco es un embrujo, porque domina y penetra en el alma de su visitante. En cada calle, en cada esquina, en cada retablo, en el campanario dominante esta su historia de siglos. Aquí el pasado y el presente están ensamblados como las piedras de sus muros. Aquí las tres edades: la imperial, la virreinal y la republicana se confunden en un abrazo inmortal, en la historia viva de sus monumentos y en esa otra historia más viva aun de su pueblo, en cuyo corazón, está la posibilidad de la síntesis fecunda, para que el Cuzco vuelva a reiniciar por los caminos de la historia, las jornadas gloriosas de los siglos pasados (...) Cuzco no es

solo ciudad del pasado, ciudad museo llena de historia y tradición, es la ciudad viva, con historia dinámica donde el pasado se convierte en presente (...) En el Cuzco es su pueblo eterno, imperial o republicano el que talla, pule y cimenta su historia, por eso es la ciudad en la que florecen los frutos del pasado maravilloso y en la que se hunden también en el surco profundo de semillas del porvenir. Es la ciudad que tiene de crepúsculo y de aurora, de ayer y mañana, es el producto de las viejas edades que palpitan en sus monumentos admirables donde los siglos cantan, y es también el producirse vigoroso del futuro (...) (A. Yepez Miranda 1962/1963 y 1944)".

El Cuzco: historia, sociedad y fotografía

A fin de poder contextualizar histórica y culturalmente a las fotografías de la Fototeca Andina, y por lo tanto, para comprender a la sociedad cuzqueña y a sus sujetos, es importante detenerse un momento y considerar el proceso histórico particular del Cuzco, y el Perú, a principios del siglo XX.

Creemos que cualquier análisis sobre la sociedad cuzqueña y sus sujetos necesariamente tiene que abordarse dentro de un marco imprescindible, que considera las relaciones de producción/diferenciación subjetiva (entre estas la relación étnica-clasista), por un lado, y por el otro, el contexto histórico en el que se denota su constitución social. Esto ayudaría a comprender la complejidad de su constitución y expresión en la historia. En otras palabras, estos son hechos sin cuyo análisis no podría entenderse completamente el estructuramiento de la sociedad cusqueña.

Durante la primera década del siglo XX en el Perú hubo una bonanza económica que sin embargo, no resultó en un progreso nacional equitativamente distribuido. En este escenario "la Costa ha representado la innovación, rapidez, la diversión y el placer; la Sierra ha simbolizado un casi involucionista conservadurismo, una seriedad que se aproxima a la tristeza, una disciplina que se aproxima al servilismo y una resistencia que conduce virtualmente al letargo (J. de la Riva Agüero 1995 c.in M. de la Cadena 2004:38)". Por lo tanto, la Sierra simbolizaba el retraso en este camino del progreso, mientras la Costa era la "estrella". El declive económico y la dependencia respecto de Lima, provocarán en el Cuzco durante la década de los '20 y '30 una reacción federalista-descentralista en lo político y regionalista en lo cultural, acompañadas de la emotividad local Cuzqueña que despertó lo Incaico, con el propósito de contravenir el centralismo de la capital peruana.

A nivel político y cultural, se puede decir que la ciudad del Cuzco deseaba diferenciarse de la ciudad y sociedad Limeña a través de la construcción de una conciencia regional cuzqueña enraizada en la historia pretérita de la ciudad y de la región, en concreto en el periodo Incaico que se convirtió en el referente ideológico societario.

En dicho entorno histórico y cultural, al intentar analizar la constitución subjetiva cuzqueña a principios del siglo XX, tenemos que tener en mente que el

cuzqueño, como cualquier otro individuo, es participe de una cultura, de un modo de vida, con patrones, metas, regulaciones y mitos. Como cualquier sociedad el Cuzco tiene sus mitos, que son importantes porque nos señalan metas, modos de comportamientos, valores y maneras de actuar y vivir en sociedad. Uno de los mitos resaltantes es el mito de lo ‘Inca’. No nos referimos al Inca tal o cual, sino, como sugiere Flores Ochoa (1990), a lo Inca como idea, como principio, como existencia, como razón de referencia en el tiempo. En la mentalidad cuzqueña de esa época, sea cual fuera su ubicación social, grado de instrucción y diferencias culturales y étnicas, está presente el sentimiento de identidad con lo Inca, con las glorias reales o supuestas del Tahuantinsuyo. Como sentimiento se vuelve intemporal o atemporal, se refiere a un pasado lejano o cercano según las circunstancias en que es evocado (J. Flores Ochoa 1990:11). En la determinación y en el despliegue del mito de lo Inca, vemos la convergencia de varios planos de ideologización, que se constituyeron en procesos de socialización de valores y modos de pensar que se traducen como ‘tradiciones’: “tradición incanista, tradición incaista, tradición indianista, tradición historicista, gestión edil contemporánea y el qosqorunismo, memoria colectiva y el imaginario colectivo (A.F.Galindo R.Calvo Calvo 1995:82)”. Cada tradición puede verse como un proceso de ‘producción identitaria’ societaria, que, en manera distinta, tiene como referente lo ‘inca’, que se constituye como el componente ideológico más importante que la caracteriza en su determinación. Esas tradiciones llegan a ser consideradas como “una filosofía, en otros casos hay quienes las destacan como una doctrina, como una religión, que se cristalizan en el fundamento y el sentimiento, en cuyo marco han brotado encendidas motivaciones colectivas e individuales de identificación, de respeto, de entrega, de construcción (R.Calvo Calvo 1995: prefacio)”. Son evidentemente expresiones de una ideología cristalizada en sus propios valores. De la misma manera, dichas tradiciones parecen teorizadas dentro del marco de la ‘utopía andina’ en el cual se plantea “encontrar en la redefinición del pasado la solución a los problemas de la identidad contemporánea’ estaría en el Qosqo, ligada a un proceso de ‘invención de la historia’ (H.Hosaya 1992 c.in R.Calvo Calvo 1995:83)”. Alberto Flores Galindo problematizó la identidad en los Andes con referencia en lo inca: ‘en el caso particular del área Andina, la utopía tenía un lugar en la historia, existió en el reino de los incas, pero en un reino de los incas transformado, reconstruido por la imaginación colectiva que elabora una imagen distinta de lo que fue, y esta imagen se ofrece en futuro deseable, como alternativo al presente (A.Flores Galindo 1989 c.in R.Calvo Calvo 1995:81)’.

Pero, ahora veamos exactamente como estas tradiciones fueron forjándose y las implicaciones que tuvieron, en nuestro específico caso, en la constitución subjetiva e intersubjetiva cuzqueña:

De manera significativa, paralelo a este proceso político de construcción espacial, se puede decir que hubo una construcción racial del Perú moderno, en la medida en que las razas eran asignadas a unos espacios geográficos jerarquizados según los esquemas evolucionistas (M. de la Cadena 2004:38). Por lo tanto, los individuos fueron clasificados en función de su ambiente: cuanto más elevada la altitud geográfica, menor el estatus social de sus habitantes (M. de la Cadena 2004).

Entonces, “la imagen de la Costa, en tanto emplazamiento histórico de la cultura colonial, se evocaba como el ambiente natural de los españoles y sus descendientes criollos, los que desde el siglo XIX habían sido etiquetados como blancos, independientemente de su color de piel (R. Barragán 1998 c.in M. de la Cadena 2004:38)”. La Sierra por su parte, esa región donde había florecido el Tahuantinsuyo¹, fue considerada el hábitat natural de los “indios” (M. de la Cadena 2004:38). Por lo tanto, las imágenes de subdesarrollo asociadas con la Sierra vinculaba a las élites cuzqueñas² con la condición de serrano, subordinándolos de este modo a la élite limeña, que era percibida como el grupo racial más avanzado. Estas circunstancias político-espaciales generaron un proceso de diferenciación social-racial entre la ciudad de Lima y la ciudad del Cuzco.



Hermanos Cabrera, “Reunión de campesinos en hacienda, 1925”

¹ Tahuantinsuyo: imperio Inca.

² Detentoras del poder económico y político de la ciudad, principalmente terratenientes con grandes extensiones, llamadas haciendas, que englobaban muchas veces a comunidades indígenas que automáticamente se volvían de “propiedad” del hacendado, en una relación particular que roza la esclavitud. Para referencia, mirar la foto de los Hermanos Cabrera “Reunión de campesinos en hacienda, 1925”.

En este proceso, como hemos mencionado arriba, se recurrió a la construcción de una conciencia regional cuzqueña enraizada en la historia pretérita de la ciudad y de la región, es decir, en la historia del Tahuantinsuyo, consecuentemente, “las élites cuzqueñas emplearon la racializada geografía nacional para enfatizar la hispanofilia característica de los limeños, y en contraste, se vanagloriaron de la autenticidad de su nacionalismo, que legitimaron geográfica e históricamente por el rango de una ciudad que había sido nada menos que la capital del imperio inca (M. de la Cadena 2004:39)”. En la ciudad del Cuzco, desde los primeros años del siglo XIX, entre los llamados españoles-americanos, puede determinarse cierta valoración por el ‘pueblo antiguo’ en una visión estereotipada del pasado incaico, del que los ‘indios’ a los que segregaban nada tenían que ver excepto con la degeneración racial alcanzando en ella la cultural. Como correlato de esta situación, la vida sociocultural urbana la grafica de manera institucionalizada. La ideología de su constitución social como sectores hegemónicos, se expresaba en la vida sociocultural corporizada donde se distinguía valores transnacionales e imitadoras de la cultura occidental, en cuya compartamentalización social tomaba distancia de la vida ‘india’ urbana al que definía también el servilismo y la sumisión (R.Calvo Calvo 1995:84).

Podemos decir que, en este contexto, las expectativas cuzqueñas por los valores Incásicos, vienen desarrollándose como un referente de identificación que entre los cuzqueños de estrato alto vienen adoptados con la intención de legitimar su “estrategia interna” de diferenciación de “los otros”, elevando aún más su prestigio. La vida sociocultural urbana fue caracterizada por el carácter excluyente de la identidad de las élites cuzqueñas, con su constitución hegemónica. Así mismo, en la vida sociocultural de la ciudad del Cuzco gravitaba una corriente de “invención” de tradiciones cuzqueñas, de recuperaciones míticas no del todo fundadas, en las consideraciones del “tradicionalismo” ideológico terrateniente, que, en definitiva, formaban parte de esa construcción identitaria del Cuzco.

Con esta carga indianista “la identidad se cuestiona estructuralmente a las relaciones sociales, reivindicando no solo su connotación étnica sino la propia historicidad urbana del Qosqo, en su origen incaico (R.Calvo Calvo 1995:38)”.

Antes de continuar, es importante presentar cómo y por quiénes estaba constituida la sociedad cuzqueña a comienzos del siglo XX.

Étnicamente podemos decir que el Cuzco en esa época en su casi 100% estaba formada por mestizos, pero admitimos un coeficiente de población blanca, cuya proporción acomodada se situaba en el plano aristocrático/elitista. Un censo sobre 8,522 personas registradas en la ciudad “matriz” (sin parroquias) del Cuzco de la segunda mitad del siglo XX evidencia su composición “étnica”: blancos 3623, mestizos 2651, indios 2202, asiáticos 10, negros 36 (R. Calvo Calvo 1995:12). Luis E. Valcárcel, notable intelectual cuzqueño, caracterizó a los estratos sociales cuzqueños de esa época utilizando una caracterización mas racial que cultural: “en el Cuzco las relaciones entre las clases sociales dependían del color de la piel, de tener o carecer rasgos occidentales. Excepcionalmente pertenecían a la clase alta, personas con facciones indígenas. Los prejuicios eran fuertes. La vestimenta era un elemento

distintivo de las clases sociales, (...) blancos y mestizos, y que estos imitaban permanentemente los usos de los primeros. Sin embargo, los mestizos conservaban en buena medida su arraigo indígena (L. E. Valcárcel 1981 c. en R. Calvo Calvo 1995:13/14)”.³



Jose Gabriel Gonzalez, “Grupo de mujeres en casa, 1910”

³ Para mejor comprender, sugerimos hacer referencia a las siguientes fotos: Jose Gabriel Gonzalez, “Grupo de mujeres en casa, 1910” (en lo que se refiere a la “clase alta”, elite cuzqueña); “Retrato de mestizas, 1940” y “Retrato de hombres, 1935” de César Meza (en lo que se refiere al “mestizo”) y “Retrato de campesino, 1945”, “Retrato de campesino, 1942” y “Campesino en Plaza de Armas, 1942” siempre de César Meza (en lo que se refiere al “indio”).

El antropólogo cuzqueño Demetrio Roca también caracteriza a la sociedad cuzqueña en términos raciales y culturales: “este Cuzco (...) ha estado constituido en la cúpula social por la denominada “alta sociedad” privilegiadas de “cultura moderna” (...) de apellidos extranjeros dedicados a las actividades comerciales, industriales, funcionarios públicos y emparentados con antiguas familias de los grandes hacendados y gamonales. También la integran los altos jefes militares, comendadores de los conventos, autoridades, magistrados (abogados), algunos docentes universitarios y otros profesionales (...) Todos ellos detentadores de poder en una u otra forma (...), otro estrato social de aquellos años es denominado la mozada (...) gente adinerada también vestidos bien llamativos, comerciantes (...) finalmente vendría la gente pobre de la ciudad, que posteriormente mereció de boca de un político el epíteto de “wirataka” (Demetrio Roca 1991 c.in R. Calvo Calvo 1995:18).



César Meza, “Retrato de mestizas, 1940”



César Meza, “Retrato de campesino, 1942”

Siempre, en cualquier situación, el estrato ‘blanco’, o el grupo de la élite regional, veían y trataban despectivamente al mestizo, por el prejuicio de sangre, tan hondamente arraigado en las esferas sociales del Cuzco, porque en él veían una posible redención del indio, el sujeto que ocupa el eslabón más bajo de la sociedad; nunca por nunca, precisamente por ello, el blanco, el propietario, el aristócrata vería con agrado el triunfo de su consabido servidor (Rodolfo Zamalloa 1944 c. en R. Calvo Calvo 1996). La clase mestiza propiamente dicha, la componen aquellos que en su ascendencia próxima no cuentan sino con mestizos y blancos. Se colige su situación por el apellido, generalmente de origen español. Sin embargo, hay que aclarar que el mestizo en el Cuzco no constituye un grupo homogéneo, más bien en un grupo sumamente heterogéneo con subdivisiones que se diferencian por su ascendencia, apellidos, educación, vestido, lenguaje, etc. Sin embargo, hay que tomar en consideración la cuestión del mestisaje cuzqueño en el contexto societario cerrado institucionalizado, propio de la dinámica étnico clasista en el que se evidencia el carácter estigmatizado de su composición.

En el Cuzco hubo un argumento histórico para definir racialmente a los mestizos e indios como ‘otros’ (inferiores) en términos morales, diferentes de las élites, con las que sin embargo, compartían el mismo color de piel. Por lo tanto, se puede decir que nace en el Cuzco una forma de racismo hacia el mestizo y el indio.

Sin embargo, la poca diferencia en el color de la piel entre las varias clases sociales existentes pudo haber sido la causa para que en el Cuzco hubiera una inclinación a minimizar la importancia del fenotipo, y en cambio, a privilegiar el árbol genealógico, el mérito intelectual, la educación, en las consideraciones sobre las jerarquías raciales. Lo que finalmente transforma el racismo hacia el mestizo y el indio en hegemónico en el Cuzco es “el acuerdo implícito de que la ‘blancura’ – en su versión local no necesariamente fenotípica – es en último extremo superior y que la indianidad representa la inferioridad absoluta (M. de la Cadena 2004:26)”. Situados ambiguamente entre los dos extremos, los cuzqueños de piel oscura y de clase media y alta luchan por aproximarse a una blancura social elusiva, aunque todavía posible para ellos (M. de la Cadena 2004:26), e intentan de todas maneras evitar la indianidad⁴ considerándose a sí mismos como mestizos (si bien existen distintos tipos entre ellos). Los cuzqueños perciben la indianidad como una condición social que refleja un fracaso individual. Por lo tanto, el ser mestizo – una mezcla cultural racializada española e india – implica una evolución desde una indianidad “primitiva” hacia una etapa más “civilizada” e incompatible con las maneras indígenas.

Por eso es que en el censo de 1912, según sus cifras, la gente “india” es mínima con respecto al estrato mestizo que aparece inflada, esto en la consideración que los “indios urbanos” emergentes tienden a registrarse en el estrato mestizo, apareciendo así abultado en cifras con respecto al estrato blanco e indio, esto por las connotaciones sociales estigmatizadas asociadas con el ser “indio”. Como se puede advertir en el editorial de un diario del Cuzco del 24 de junio de 1915, se escribe: “la condición social del indio es análoga a la de los menores de edad y de los incapaces, no siendo inexacto compararlo con la de los ausentes, por el alejamiento de todo centro cultural en que se arrastra su vida (R. Calvo Calvo 1998:75)”.

En esta Cuzco que utiliza lo Inca como referente ideológico, podemos enmarcar el uso de la fotografía, según Poole, para documentar un artificio construido de la identidad (D. Poole 2003). Aquí, la fotografía es la expresión de la objetivización de la propia imagen y se vuelve una manera de comprender la relación del sujeto con el “otro” y por lo tanto de comprender las relaciones sociales cuzqueñas. Por un momento podemos imaginar que la fotografía puede entrar en esta filosofía incaista de la identidad artificial o del “ser”, como un medio para imaginar nuevas identidades, así como un medio para representarlas y expresarlas. Consideremos por un momento las fotos aquí presentadas⁵ y la discusión de Christopher Pinney y veamos por un momento a la fotografía por su potencial para hacer que la gente y los lugares “salgan mejor de lo que realmente son” (C. Pinney 2003), recordando también la discusión sobre lo Inca como referente en la diferenciación societaria cuzqueña, y subrayando por lo tanto, el aspecto de la “construcción” inherente a la fotografía. A veces los fotógrafos reconocen que su tarea no es la de producir un esquema que encarcela a sus sujetos, sino es de actuar como empresarios, creando una visión ideal y aspiracional que los sujetos desean de

⁴ El ser indio.

⁵ En especial la foto “Retrato de joven en estudio, 1925” de los Hermanos Cabrera y las fotos “Retrato de hombre, 1935” y “Retrato de hombres, 1945” de Horacio Ochoa.

sí mismos. Con diversos soportes, accesorios y escenarios, el fotógrafo estiliza el espacio pictórico, aumenta la puesta en escena del sujeto, cuyas poses, gestos y expresiones revelan un "yo" no como él o ella realmente es, pero sí "sólo un poco más de lo que realmente somos" (K. Marcer 1995 c. in C. Pinney 2003:215). Los fotógrafos muchas veces utilizan la decoración de sus estudios para mejorar el mundo y transformar o pulir la posición de los sujetos en el mismo.



Hermanos Cabrera, "Retrato de joven en estudio, 1925"

En otras palabras, los fotógrafos de la Escuela Cuzqueña de Fotografía en sus estudios, "crearon un espacio de satisfacción de deseos, ilusiones, imaginación que trasciende la 'cultura del realismo', mientras que al mismo tiempo lo confirman (H.Behrend 2003:238)". En nuestro caso particular, podemos ver cómo las relaciones

desiguales de poder caracterizan los dominios de representación visual a través de la detección de las características estructurales que regulan la manera en que ciertas clases sociales están representadas a través de la fotografía, o de cómo ciertas clases sociales se representan a través de la fotografía. Así, la fotografía se convierte en un vehículo para expresar el deseo de distinción, singularidad, diferenciación de los “otros”, en términos de la lógica del etos de clase. La fotografía viene entonces a representar un signo de estatus social ya que parece expresar el esfuerzo para reafirmar – y escapar – del propio rango social, por lo tanto, es un discurso de poder porque es un sitio privilegiado para la afirmación de las diferencias – y similitudes – ya que el deseo de auto-representación y consecuentemente de distinción y diferenciación – así como de similarización – de los demás se externaliza en el mismo objeto fotográfico. En nuestro caso específico, el significado de las fotografías de la burguesía de la ciudad del Cuzco puede entenderse como el deseo de construir un “yo” noble, moderno, civilizado, culto, europeo, en contraste con un primitivo “otro”, es decir, del mestizo y del indio. La finalidad ideológica inmediata de la presentación del “otro” primitivo como exótico y colorido en contraste con el negocio “real” de ser un burgués, con su línea de parentesco (aunque ficticia) con el Inca, progreso educativo y su “decente” forma de ser, manifiesta la diferencia cultural y la inferioridad del “otro” primitivo⁶. Así mismo, podemos ver como las fotografías de los mestizos aquí presentadas manifiestan la intención de los mismos de representarse en términos de esa ‘blancura social’ que representa esa evolución desde una indianidad “primitiva” hacia una etapa más “civilizada” y, de esa manera, subrayar la diferencia entre ellos y el ‘indio’, posicionándose en un eslabón mas alto en las jerarquías sociales y raciales.

Conclusión

Lo que se ha intentado hacer en este artículo es presentar las fotografías de la Fototeca Andina bajo una lectura que visibilice y valorice su capacidad de narrar subjetividades, culturas e historias alternativas. Hemos querido proponer una lectura reflexiva y crítica de las mismas para contextualizarlas y valorizar la Identidad Cultural Andina.

Se ha podido hacer eso porque se ha creído en la capacidad de las fotografías de la Fototeca Andina de reflejar el sentido social, de representar el conjunto específico de relaciones y contextos característicos de la Sociedad Cuzqueña y del Mundo Andino. Se ha intentado presentar a las fotografías valorizando su característica de ser expresión tangible de una cultura que encierra una comunicación significativa, si es que definimos una cultura como todas las formas, los modelos, etc., a través de los cuales una sociedad se manifiesta. Las fotografías para nosotros son no sólo imágenes, sino objetos sociales, representaciones, que producen significados y relaciones sociales, a través de las cuales se articulan historias. Estas

⁶ Favor, referirse a las fotos mencionadas en el Pié de página número 4.

representaciones a su vez, a lo largo de la historia, comprenden creencias, valores, clasificaciones que a un nivel se han expresado físicamente y políticamente, mientras a otro nivel se han grabado en imágenes. Se ha intentado explorar las fotografías más allá de sus características visuales, buscando sus significados sociales, utilizándolas como “un objeto a través del cual lo visual se lleva a cabo y es comprendido (E. Edwards 2005)”.



Horacio Ochoa, “Retrato de hombre, 1935”

Se ha decidido representar a la Sociedad Cuzqueña a través de la presentación de algunos de sus mitos, para visibilizar esos “significados ocultos” que acompañan las fotografías aquí presentadas. El mito resaltante que se ha decidido utilizar como filtro para acercarse a la comprensión de la sociedad cuzqueña, es el mito de lo “Inca” como referente de “producción identitaria” societaria en el Cuzco. Se ha presentar el cómo este proceso de constitución de la identidad desde la “representación” de lo Inca explica la existencia de una diferenciación social jerarquizada que se manifestó y fue comprendida en términos raciales.

Se ha querido ofrecer una visión subjetiva de la cultura andina dando “voz” a las personas retratadas en las fotografías aquí presentadas. Se ha querido resaltar esa característica de la fotografía de ser una representación de la “experiencia inmediata del vivir”, y a través de las representaciones visuales de los sujetos, se han construido historias alternativas, orales, relacionadas con el sonido y el gesto, con olores, con rostros específicos, con contornos naturales... Se ha intentado ofrecer una lectura más íntima, más personal, de los ‘fenómenos culturales andinos’.

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Recensioni

Didi-Huberman, Georges *La conoscenza accidentale. Apparizione e sparizione delle immagini.* Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 2011, 243 pp.

di Fabio Corigliano

È stata tradotta soltanto nel 2011, in lingua italiana, la silloge di testi di Georges Didi-Huberman dal titolo *La conoscenza accidentale*, miscellanea e florilegio di note sparse ed appunti del celebre filosofo e storico dell'arte francese, originariamente pubblicata in Francia nel 1998, con il titolo *Phasmes. Essais sur l'apparition*.

Si tratta di un volume essenziale a vari livelli, così come vari livelli di *essenzialità* sono in esso esposti e trasposti: nelle annotazioni che seguono sarà possibile rivolgersi solamente ai più evidenti e meno ri-piegati; i vari livelli di essenzialità, infatti, potrebbero essere da subito descritti come delle *pieghe (plies)*, ognuna delle quali intenziona originariamente una domanda, una parte dell'essere che appare, uno scampolo di realtà. L'Autore li suddivide, come fossero i momenti salienti di una nuova teoria dell'immagine ed altresì di una nuova teoria della rappresentazione in senso lato. Essi sono *somigliare, apparire, guardare, scomparire*.

Si diceva delle pieghe: il termine, che nell'esegesi deleuziana sta a significare “l'unità di materia, il più piccolo elemento del labirinto”,¹ viene utilizzato da Didi-Huberman per rimandare, anche figurativamente – e qui il dispositivo della figura autoimplicante, che è un po' il *leit-motiv* dell'intera opera – ad un “segno logico”, un gioco del limite “tra l'aperto e il chiuso, il visibile e l'invisibile, il qui e l'aldilà, la cosa captata e la cosa che capta, il davanti e il dentro”:² l'*Unter-schied*, per utilizzare un termine heideggeriano che rimanda alla differenza, allo stacco, al frammezzo, alla lacerazione tra mondo e cose che originariamente vivono un'assordante intimità.³

Le pieghe sono momenti, elementi minimi di materia.

E quindi, somigliare apparire guardare scomparire: i punti di increspatura del visibile, intorno ai quali si snodano infinite piccole piegature, che rimandano tutte a quei fondamentali ed elementari momenti (nel senso di strutturali, costituenti della

¹ G. Deleuze, *La piega. Leibniz e il barocco* [1988], Einaudi, Torino 2004², p. 10.

² G. Didi-Huberman, *La conoscenza accidentale. Apparizione e sparizione delle immagini* [1998], Einaudi, Torino 2011, p. 184.

³ M. Heidegger, *Il linguaggio della poesia. Il luogo del poema di Georg Trakl* [1952], trad. it., *In cammino verso il linguaggio*, Mursia, Milano 1973, pp. 38 ss. L'immagine dell'assordante intimità vuol rimandare volutamente al concetto del linguaggio, che con il suo parlare chiama la differenza, riportando mondo e cose alla loro originaria intimità e identità, lacerata dall'assenza della parola e del linguaggio, lacerazione dolorosissima e *silenziosa*. La parola il linguaggio, che non è silenzio, ripristina la primigenia intimità.

materia). Momenti nei quali si snoda l'esperienza visiva, l'esperienza dell'immagine, l'essenza del visibile. Ogni immagine, prima di scomparire dal cono visivo o semplicemente dalla memoria o dall'attenzione di chi guarda, passa attraverso la somiglianza, l'apparenza (ma anche e soprattutto l'apparizione), infine l'essere-guardata. Ed ogni capitolo, al di là della sua collocazione testuale all'interno di una delle suddette macrosezioni (nelle quali viene ripartito l'intero volume) non è che un'esperienza all'interno delle pieghe.

Il tutto, è molto più chiaro, sol che si guardi all'introduzione: Didi-Huberman annuncia che ogni conoscenza, ogni esercizio conoscitivo, ogni ricerca che si rispetti, si compone di una strada maestra, una via principale, ed una via secondaria, si direbbe quasi suburbana. La principale è la ricerca in sé, che talvolta lascia il posto ad osservazioni annotazioni indagini esplorazioni eccentriche — che sono una forma di tributo alla “generosità” di quanto si viene a scoprire strada facendo, una specie di imposta che la ricerca deve corrispondere ad una realtà così munifica così prodiga di materia da ispirare le riflessioni più inconsuete ed eccezionali. La realtà dell'apparire dei fenomeni, in questo senso è uno scrigno, al quale il vero ricercatore deve saper attingere a piene mani, senza nulla tralasciare: è per questo motivo che l'Autore da anni tiene un diario in cui raccoglie le scoperte più singolari, gli eventi e le immagini che più lo colpiscono, che raduna tutte sotto il nome di *fasmidi*, nome che dà il titolo all'opera (nell'edizione originale del 1998, come si è specificato in apertura) e che ne spiega l'indirizzo.

Il fasmide è un insetto *pterigote*, che viene comunemente detto “insetto-stecco”, a testimonianza della capacità mimetica che ne qualifica l'essenza. Infatti, la sua caratteristica principale è quella di confondersi con l'ambiente che lo ospita, sia attraverso l'*omocromia* che attraverso l'*omomorfismo*, cioè per il tramite di un'immedesimazione cromatica ed anche morfologica. Didi-Huberman, nel primo capitolo, dedicato proprio ai fasmidi, accompagna il lettore attraverso un percorso periglioso, all'interno del quale gli fa scorgere l'intera via della conoscenza accidentale, il percorso integrale di ogni esperienza intellettuale fortuita.

Il fasmide, egli dice in una sorta di onirico racconto, è probabilmente l'insetto più platonico che ci sia (“l'animale mitico di ogni platonismo”)⁴ perché pur essendo *ente*, si identifica ed anzi prende il posto dell'*essere*. Pur essendo semplice ente, si nutre ed ingloba l'essere per continuare ad esistere, e a dispetto delle apparenze, si nasconde allo sguardo proprio per identificazione con l'essere che ha fagocitato e di cui ha preso il posto. A dispetto delle apparenze, si diceva, scompare per tanatosi, simulando quindi la morte, ed in ciò passa attraverso tutte le pieghe da cui è formata la visione: dapprima *somiglia* alla realtà in cui si trova a vivere, colla quale si mimetizza; quindi *appare* allo sguardo di chi *guarda*, infine *scompare*. Il fasmide è l'animale paradigmatico di ogni esperienza visiva. E come ogni conoscenza, la sua immagine, una volta scomparsa, lascia il soggetto che guarda avvolto da una vertigine: il *vivarium* all'interno del quale l'animale è custodito potrebbe essere rotto, così da aver acconsentito la fuga dei fasmidi e dei serpenti che con essi convivono, e

⁴ G. Didi-Huberman, *La conoscenza accidentale*, cit., p. 23.

la possibilità di venire fagocitati a nostra volta dalla realtà circostante stimola un brivido di paura: “tutto ciò che ti appare si rivela essere una forza del dissimile, e tutto ciò che dissomiglia, in fondo, si rivela essere soltanto una minacciosa qualità del luogo”⁵.

Nella poetica hubermaniana, da quanto detto, sembra di scorgere non solo una teoria dell’immagine, ma altresì una teoria dell’immaginare, una sorta di metafisica della rappresentazione che prende spunto da due fondamentali domande: *che cosa* “vede” la filosofia? *Come* “vede” la filosofia? Domande cui potrebbe dare una risposta ognuno dei capitoli che danno vita all’opera: l’epopea di cui si parla, in fondo, rappresenta il concreto tentativo di utilizzare l’immagine come metodo, posto il metodo costituito dalla struttura stessa dell’immagine, quale appare. Un libro sull’instabilità del vedere mitigato dalla sostanziale stabilità della visione: l’ontologia cui fa riferimento Didi-Huberman infatti è quella classica, quella che egli stesso attribuisce a Sant’Agostino nel capitolo intitolato a “I paradossi dell’essere da vedere”. Il mondo della *doxa*, il mondo terreno interessato da una sorta di perenne disseminazione di cose, è *fantasma di splendore* (*phantasmata splendida*), apparenza e quindi copia di un *reale dello splendore* che è l’essere, la matrice platonica dei fenomeni visibili, Dio, il Dio della tradizione cristiana (anche quella figurativa, si badi). Un Dio così vicino eppure così remoto; così vicino nelle apparenze disseminate sulla terra, così lontano in quanto essere che pur essendo verbo (è), non è visibile, non dà vita ad una visibilità se non per immaginazione. E ritorna la teoria del fasmide: “l’occhio che capta il nulla dei corpi tende verso il nulla, diventa un nulla divorato dal nulla. Potrà salvarsi solo se si distaccherà da questa diversione dell’essere – questa *perversione* –, attraverso un movimento di *conversione* che gli offrirà qualche possibilità di rivolgersi all’essere”⁶.

Ens et unum convertuntur.

Nel paradigma del fasmide, e nell’esperienza di Agostino, nel punto più basso della disseminazione e in quello più alto della visione, ogni esperienza visiva o conoscitiva convergono, perché ognuna di queste esperienze fa riferimento ed anzi intenziona l’essere, l’uno, l’unità, Dio.

In ogni punto della disseminazione terrena, in ogni uomo, in ogni cosa, si imprime (e, con termine tecnico, si direbbe si *impressiona*) l’ascesi che porta alla visione, con la luce:⁷ *photeinographeistai* secondo il termine utilizzato da Filoteo il Sinaita, protagonista di uno dei capitoli del testo.

Dal che si deduce, senza passare attraverso gli innumerevoli spunti di altissimo interesse sparpagliati nel volume (dall’arte figurativa del Quattrocento tedesco sino al video di Lanzman, da Beato Angelico sino al cubo di Alberto Giacometti) che la filosofia vede l’immagine come un segno di luce, che l’immagine è un sintomo di luce, che l’immagine, nel suo apparire è un indice dell’essere, ed anzi transita nel campo del visibile, per poi scomparire, come avviene agli enti,

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 24.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 130.

⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 57 ss..

caratterizzati, tutti, dalla loro spontanea vita all'interno del movimento delle pieghe: somigliare apparire guardare scomparire.

E forse anche l'essere, a volte tralasciato, a volte ignorato a volte sottinteso nelle normali scoperte e faccende di ogni giorno viene ritrovato, accidentalmente percorrendo la rilassante e stimolante via suburbana della conoscenza accidentale: "ci sono tempi per esplorare la strada maestra, e tempi per scrutare le vie laterali. E, forse, i tempi più intensi sono quelli in cui il richiamo delle vie laterali ci porta a cambiare strada maestra, o piuttosto a farcela scoprire per ciò che era già ma non comprendevamo. In quel momento, il disorientamento dell'accidentale fa apparire la sostanza stessa del percorso, il suo orientamento fondamentale".⁸

Krueger Alan B. *Terroristi, perché. Le cause economiche e politiche*. Bari: Laterza, 2009, 185 pp.

di Carlo Paganessi

Gli attentati dell'11 Settembre hanno portato alla ribalta durante l'ultimo decennio la tematica del terrorismo, da lungo tempo esclusa dal novero dei principali temi di dibattito politico in ambito di sicurezza dei cittadini. L'improvvisa importanza riacquistata in un lasso di tempo relativamente limitato ha portato ad una proliferazione di teorie in materia, spesso azzardate.

Alan B. Kruger è l'economista che Tito Boeri ha definito come "uno dei più brillanti in circolazione". Professore di Economia e Politiche Pubbliche dell'Università di Princeton, è consulente del *National Counterterrorism Center* ed ha ricoperto numerosi incarichi di rilievo presso il *Department of Labor*. Il volume, edito da Laterza, è la sua prima opera ad essere tradotta in italiano (la traduzione è stata curata da Paola Marangon).

Terroristi, perché si compone di 3 capitoli, trattanti rispettivamente le condizioni individuali degli affiliati ad un'organizzazione terroristica, le condizioni economico-politiche del paese di appartenenza e i risultati ottenuti dall'attività terroristica. Nell'appendice, infine, è possibile leggere le domande poste all'autore durante le sue conferenze sul tema tenute alla London School of Economics.

Il primo capitolo è intitolato "*Chi diventa terrorista? Caratteristiche individuali*". Si apre, oltre che con la definizione di terrorismo come "violenza di matrice politica", con il tentativo di confutare la sopra citata mole di affermazioni secondo le quali le organizzazioni terroristiche riuscirebbero a riscuotere consensi esclusivamente tra le fasce povere e con basso tasso di istruzione nei paesi in via di sviluppo. Tra gli esempi degli enunciatori di tale teoria Krueger cita nomi di un certo rilievo, tra cui quello dell'ex Presidente degli Stati Uniti, George W. Bush, e della moglie Laura, e dell'ex presidente della Banca Mondiale James Wolfensohn. L'autore

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 12.

chiama in causa una grande varietà di dati tratti da studi precedenti e da studi di altri economisti a beneficio della propria tesi. Conclude sostenendo l'importanza di investire sui contenuti dell'istruzione nei paesi in via di sviluppo. Attraverso una logica stringente e puntuale, conclude il capitolo cercando di equiparare il terrorismo ad un normale mercato con una domanda e un'offerta nel quale, accettando le teorie confutate, le persone che sono state effettivamente coinvolte nell'organizzazione degli attentati terroristici sarebbero quelle che hanno minori opportunità di mercato. A supporto di tale teoria porta gli esempi degli attentatori dell'11 settembre, tutti con titolo di laurea e in grado di parlare due o tre lingue, dati quindi che contraddicono la teoria sostenuta dalla gran parte dell'*establishment* statunitense del settore. Propone di applicare al terrorismo il concetto economico di "funzione di risposta", sintetizzabile nella reazione di una parte all'azione della parte concorrente, intendendo quindi come contrapposti l'Occidente (Stati Uniti *in primis*) e l'area medio-orientale.

Il secondo capitolo si intitola "*Dove nasce il terrorismo? Condizioni economiche e politiche*". Si apre con una forte critica ai dati proposti dalle diverse agenzie del governo statunitense e diffuse al grande pubblico, denunciando un quantitativo importante di errori nei diversi documenti pubblicati. La motivazione, secondo l'autore, è da ricercarsi in un grave caso di incompetenza e di errore di computazione e imputazione, non in un tentativo di manipolazione dei dati al fine di dimostrare al Congresso e ai contribuenti il buon funzionamento degli organismi di sicurezza. L'autore procede poi con un'analisi di dati sempre tratti da suoi studi precedenti e da altri studi compiuti da altre organizzazioni che operano nel campo dei diritti civili. Ne trae la conclusione che i terroristi non provengono tanto dai paesi in via di sviluppo, quanto da paesi con un basso livello di libertà civili. Il testo si conclude poi con l'analisi di fattori diversi da quelli economici e politici, come quello religioso e quello della distanza, e ne stabilisce la maggiore o minore correlazione con casi di terrorismo.

Nell'ultimo capitolo, intitolato "Quali risultati ottiene il terrorismo? Conseguenze economiche, psicologiche e politiche", l'apertura è dedicata all'illustrazione delle due tesi sulla valenza dell'impatto di un attentato terroristico. Tra la tesi del grande impatto e quella dell'effetto modesto l'economista sostiene la prima, anche se ammette che in precedenza aveva sostenuto la tesi opposta. Nel prosieguo del capitolo, Krueger opera infatti una precisa distinzione relativa all'importanza dell'impatto considerando diverse categorie (effetto sulla borsa valori, psicologico, politico e via dicendo) e allontanandosi dalla generalizzazione proposta dai due modelli. Fornisce infine una prospettiva interessante su come i media fungano da veicolo di propagazione del terrore, agendo da amplificatore degli effetti prodotti da un attentato.

L'analisi puntuale dei dati, se da un lato fornisce una visione parziale, dall'altro regala spunti interessanti, specie quando avviene il confronto tra coppie di paesi (originari degli attentatori e di destinazione degli attentati), dimostrando che non conta tanto il prodotto interno lordo del paese d'origine, quanto quello del paese

di destinazione. L'autore fornisce alcuni “consigli” ai *policy-makers*, riguardanti una adeguata formazione dei funzionari delle agenzie del governo statunitense.

Nel complesso, l'opera risente del fatto che l'autore è un economista. Questo fornisce una visione parziale della tematica: la stessa definizione di terrorismo sopra citata fornita all'inizio dell'opera appare semplicistica e eccessivamente inclusiva. L'interpretazione dei dati appare meticolosa e decisamente logica, ma questo finisce per tradursi in una visione incompleta ed eccessivamente generalizzante, che sembra trovare delle tendenze anche dove non sussistono. Le conclusioni appaiono infatti talvolta forzate, e l'autore tende a “sbarazzarsi” dei casi che non avvalorano le sue tesi imponendo etichette errate, ad esempio classificando l'*Irish Republican Army* come un movimento di guerriglia urbana, più che come terrorismo vero e proprio. Il libro può infine non essere di facile comprensione se non si hanno adeguate conoscenze di statistica.

Latouche Serge *La scommessa della decrescita*. Milano: Giangiacomo Feltrinelli editore, 2007, 215 pp.

di Andrea Snaidero

Serge Latouche, professore emerito dell'Università di Paris-Sud (Orsay) e studioso noto nell'ambito dell'antropologia economica, affronta ed approfondisce in questo saggio il tema della decrescita economica.

La sua visione del mondo odierno mette in luce le innumerevoli contraddizioni, alcune delle quali mai considerate nella riflessione comune, del sistema capitalista orientato alla crescita infinita. Se da un lato è vero che si sta vivendo almeno in Occidente il momento di maggiore ricchezza, con un aumento costante delle condizioni di vita medie, dall'altro è un fatto l'incremento costante di suicidi, omicidi, problematiche legate alla depressione, non dimenticando naturalmente la crisi ambientale che si manifesta in una miriade di modi e che si configura sempre più come una spada di Damocle sul genere umano.

Latouche mette in relazione queste due facce della società in cui viviamo, una società definita “tossicodipendente dalla crescita economica”, in cui il *ben-essere* coincide con il *ben-avere* e che concepisce la felicità come nient'altro che una promessa, riservata soltanto ai vincitori del gioco a somma zero del sistema economico.

Una società in cui la felicità comporta stress e turbe psicosomatiche legate al compulsivo aumento della quantità di beni posseduta è una società in profonda crisi. Soprattutto se poi per sopravvivere è costretta a devastare l'ambiente in cui vive.

L'alternativa a questa società c'è, e viene espressa da Latouche sia sul piano filosofico che su quello pratico. *La scommessa della decrescita* si articola in due parti, intitolate “Perché la decrescita” e “La decrescita, come?”. La prima parte si focalizza intorno ad alcuni punti di estremo interesse e di pronta applicazione alla

realità quotidiana, la seconda indica una serie di obiettivi da porsi per iniziare il “circolo virtuoso della decrescita”.

“Decolonizzare l’immaginario” è un’espressione ricorrente nell’opera. Questa decolonizzazione si pone come linea guida da comprendere e coltivare al fine di porsi nella direzione di una società della decrescita economica. Questo è il punto focale dell’analisi (o meglio, della auto-analisi) che ognuno di noi deve compiere e di cui ognuno sente, più o meno inconsciamente, il bisogno. Decolonizzare l’immaginario significa uscire dal cieco tunnel consumistico in cui ci ritroviamo, soprattutto dal punto di vista filosofico; significa considerare la nostra società come una delle possibili alternative, non un paradigma da diffondere, non un filtro attraverso cui esaminare il mondo. Una decolonizzazione dell’immaginario pone l’uomo nel posto che gli compete, eludendo il sogno (o incubo?) positivista dell’uomo che domina e sfrutta la natura; questo grazie a nuove prospettive, che mostrano la vuotezza di significato della crescita stessa.

Latouche analizza ad esempio lo strumento, simbolo per eccellenza, dell’impostazione socio-economica del capitalismo orientato ad una crescita infinita: il PIL. L’analisi del PIL operata da Latouche si struttura su due livelli: inizialmente vengono mostrati i limiti concreti che ne fanno un indice imperfetto e viziato dall’origine nella sua affidabilità. Non a caso, le società con il PIL maggiore sono quelle in cui vi è minore serenità. La felicità, evidentemente, non è direttamente proporzionale al PIL (anzi...): questo indice non comprende (come potrebbe del resto?) tutte le esternalità negative che questo sistema produce, quali inquinamento, stress, distruzione dell’ambiente ecc.

Preferibili sono gli indici “corretti”, quali il Prodotto Interno Dolce, elaborato in Quebec, che cercano di “contabilizzare l’incontabilizzabile” e che mostrano chiaramente come il riferirsi unicamente ad un criterio economico per valutare la società sia assurdo, oltre che fuorviante.

Proprio dalla critica posta dagli indici corretti Latouche trova un altro spunto per evidenziare i problemi della società della crescita e del pensiero colonizzato: nell’epoca delle grandi recite collettive, ci si riferisce agli indici di crescita non più in un *logos* logico-deduttivo, ma in uno metaforico-emotivo. Ciò ha elevato il PIL da mero strumento statistico a vero e proprio “oggetto di culto”. A tal proposito l’autore utilizza il termine provocatorio di “a-crescita”, intesa come a-teismo. L’atteggiamento che gli individui devono tenere è di demistificazione della crescita ad ogni costo, di rifiuto del “dio PIL”, sui cui altari già sono stati fatti compiuti sacrifici.

Interessantissima e rivoluzionaria è anche la trattazione del concetto di “sviluppo sostenibile”, considerato sia un termine inflazionato e quindi ormai vuoto di qualunque significato, sia come un escamotage per dare una “spolverata” di verde a progetti e attività che sono comunque orientate alla crescita infinita in un mondo finito. Riferisce lo stesso autore in una sua famosa metafora: “Siamo su di un treno diretti verso il fianco di una montagna. Rallentare la velocità non impedirà lo schianto, bisogna cambiare direzione”. Lo sviluppo sostenibile non è altro che un palliativo, l’ultima (forse) forma di resistenza agli imperativi della crescita assoluta.

La proposta di Latouche sulle modalità di attuazione della società della decrescita, che anima la seconda parte del saggio, si snoda attraverso il percorso delle “otto R”, vero e proprio manifesto della decrescita: rivalutare, ridefinire, ristrutturare, ridistribuire, rilocalizzare, ridurre, riutilizzare, riciclare. Otto R che fungono da linea guida e da obiettivo, da attuare nella nostra realtà quotidiana al fine di accettare e promuovere la convinzione per la quale “di più non significa meglio”.

Rivalutare e ridefinire i termini e le priorità della nostra vita sono il primo passo per uscire dalla colonizzazione del nostro pensiero. Bisogna rivalutare la spirale distruttiva della crescita ad ogni costo per accogliere una spirale inversa di decrescita virtuosa, basata su valori ridefiniti. Un piccolo sondaggio riportato nell’opera mostra come gran parte del campione intervistato sarebbe favorevole ad una riduzione delle ore di lavoro in cambio di un aumento del tempo libero, anche rinunciando a parte dello stipendio. Latouche immagina allora una società tanto piacevole da sembrare impossibile, in cui si lavora tutti e si lavora di meno, si produce di meno e si compra di meno, si ha più tempo libero per il proprio *otium*, inteso come l’unione di riposo, divertimento e auto-sviluppo. Agli occhi dello *homo œconomicus* sembra una immagine da vacanza, da ferie. Tanto potente è stata la colonizzazione del capitalismo, da farci credere di poter godere appieno della vita soltanto in una situazione eccezionale come la vacanza (magari artificiale sul modello dei villaggi turistici), momento di fuga dal nostro mestiere di macchine produttive, peraltro sempre meno importanti ed efficienti, sempre più scomode ed obsolete per la stessa crescita che andiamo ad alimentare.

Ristrutturare la catena di produzione dei beni e dei servizi e rilocalizzare i processi produttivi sono i due punti su cui l’autore insiste molto, riportando ad esempio una produzione basata su quei valori che rendono felici le persone, ovvero i rapporti interpersonali, letti come erogazione di servizi. La decrescita avrà inoltre successo solo con un ritorno alla dimensione locale dell’ottica produttiva. Come fa notare saggiamente l’autore, vi è una correlazione inversa tra l’identità geografica dell’economia e la percezione dei limiti della stessa. In altre parole, più grande è l’organizzazione che produce, maggiori sono i danni che può fare, dato che non ha legami diretti con la realtà locale ed i limiti naturali, percepiti solo da coloro che ne sono contigui. Una rilocalizzazione dell’economia permetterebbe, oltre ad una gestione più intelligente dei trasporti, una cognizione realmente importante dei limiti alla crescita, nel rispetto e nell’armonia con la natura e non nel suo sfruttamento illimitato, richiamandosi alla saggia sobrietà di società diverse o passate.

Ridurre, riutilizzare e riciclare sono concetti affini nel progetto della decrescita, orientati ad una riduzione intelligente della produzione e dei suoi sprechi, aumentando ad esempio l’arte del riutilizzo e della riparazione, pratiche accantonate aprioristicamente oggigiorno perché ritenute ingiustamente espressione di miseria, preferendo un consumismo sfrenato che altro non è che concretizzazione di un tipo differente di miseria.

Latouche affronta così la questione relativa ai paesi del Sud del mondo e al loro ruolo nella decrescita, sostenendo provocatoriamente che questi paesi non vadano “aiutati” nella strada della crescita e dello sviluppo, nella strada che li

omologherebbe alla civiltà occidentale, ma che vadano lasciati liberi di svilupparsi secondo la loro identità culturale, ricca dei valori di rispetto e sobrietà che sono andati perduti nella nostra società.

La scommessa della decrescita fornisce una visione radicalmente originale su una problematica di fondamentale importanza ed urgenza; auspica una società diversa, che conterrebbe le sicurezze di cui il presente manca, basandosi su uno scambio valoriale tra lavoro e tempo libero, tra ben-avere e ben-essere, tra ore di lavoro e rapporti personali, tra i dannunziani *haberi* e *habere*. Una società che vista con gli occhi dell'*homo œconomicus* si configurerebbe come un'assurdità, se non come un incubo, ma che potrebbe rivelarsi come la migliore realtà possibile e la corretta risposta alla crisi economica, ambientale e valoriale che stiamo vivendo.

La lettura di questa opera è un passo importante per uscire dalla dittatura della crescita, dall'etnocentrismo economico di cui siamo parte, e che più o meno inconsapevolmente non riusciamo ad abbandonare, per trovare una risposta soddisfacente ed originale alle domande che dobbiamo tutti porci.

Niola Marino *Si fa presto a dire cotto. Un antropologo in cucina*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2009, 154 pp.

di Pamela Bravo

“Mangiare, l’atto apparentemente più naturale ed elementare, è in realtà estremamente complesso”. Al contrario di quanto afferma e cerca di dimostrare Niola, notiamo come sia comunemente diffusa una percezione erronea e semplicistica dell’antropologia dell’alimentazione. Molto spesso, infatti, il curioso che tenta un approccio a questa disciplina sottovaluta tanto la complessità del linguaggio alimentare, quanto la ricchezza dei significati attribuiti al cibo nelle diverse culture. Con ciò non si vuol negare che il semplice atto del “mangiare” sia prima di tutto un’azione istintiva dettata dal primario bisogno di nutrirsi. Si intende, invece, sottolineare come l’alimentazione vada considerata alla pari di qualsiasi altro tipo di linguaggio e, come tale, costituisca una “cerniera” tra natura e cultura, un anello di congiunzione tra le mere esigenze del corpo e una ricca serie di significati storici e culturali.

Il cibo come linguaggio, dunque: un variegato codice di comportamenti, regole e simboli che disciplina la commestibilità, il disgusto, l’immagine e le cultura di una società e l’identità dei suoi membri.

Nonostante il tema affrontato sia vasto e notevolmente variegato, Niola lo approccia in modo preciso, esaustivo e al tempo stesso leggero e scanzonato, riuscendo a soddisfare la curiosità di quanti si interrogano sulle origini delle tradizioni alimentari e sulle particolarità della gastronomia internazionale.

Si fa presto a dire cotto. Un antropologo in cucina si propone come un valido punto di riferimento per l’antropologia dell’alimentazione. Il testo, semplice e lineare,

raccoglie tutta una serie di interessanti tradizioni gastronomiche, tipicità territoriali, modalità di cottura, simboli e significati, passioni, repulsioni e valori estetici legati al mondo dell'alimentazione. Tutti questi spunti stimolano una riflessione critica, non senza un pizzico di ironia, sulle abitudini alimentari, considerate tanto nella dimensione individuale che in quella collettiva di ciascuna società.

Il libro è suddiviso in cinque sezioni principali.

La parte iniziale, che senza dubbio costituisce la sezione più ricca ed interessante, fornisce una premessa alle regole fondamentali che disciplinano l'alimentazione nelle varie società ed alla simbologia ad essa collegata. Il nutrimento, infatti, va interpretato come un sistema di comunicazione, un insieme di immagini, un protocollo di usi, costumi e comportamenti che si estrinseca in un vero e proprio linguaggio autonomo, i cui singoli componenti permettono l'espressione tanto di bisogni ed atteggiamenti collettivi quanto di opzioni individuali o di un gruppo ristretto.

Nell'indagine antropoculturale delle abitudini alimentari l'analisi delle opposizioni appare di grande interesse: Niola tenta di dimostrare come, nella maggior parte delle culture, esistano delle relazioni interne al linguaggio alimentare disciplinate dalle dicotomie vicino-lontano, puro-impuro, maschile-femminile e crudo-cotto e come il criterio della commestibilità si sviluppi proprio in funzione delle suddette categorie. La nostra cultura occidentale, ad esempio, esclude o circonda di tabù il consumo di specie animali considerate troppo lontane o troppo vicine, troppo simili o troppo diverse.

Un'altra tematica rilevante affrontata nella prima sezione è senza dubbio la relazione tra alimentazione ed organizzazione sociale e dunque tra produzione alimentare, forze produttive, rapporti di produzione e categorie sociali. In particolare è interessante notare come la scarsità o l'abbondanza dei cibi, così come la loro qualità e la loro rarità, influenzino lo status di un individuo e la sua posizione all'interno della piramide sociale.

La seconda sezione del libro si concentra maggiormente sulla simbologia legata al mondo dell'alimentazione e focalizza la sua attenzione sul valore simbolico delle modalità di cottura come forme di mediazione culturale. Interessante è la riflessione sul triangolo culinario (crudo-cotto-putrido) e sulle cause tecniche-sociali-simboliche che determinano la preferenza per l'uno o l'altro tipo di cottura.

Le tre sezioni successive analizzano, in ordine, le origini e le curiosità dei prodotti legati alla terra, al mare e alla nostra patria, l'Italia. Si passa dunque con grande disinvoltura dalla descrizione dell'arrivo del pomodoro (*tomatl*) in Europa ad opera dei *conquistadores* alle vicissitudini del pesce povero nella tradizione gastronomica europea sino agli usi del caffè nella penisola italiana.

Dalle basi dell'antropologia dell'alimentazione sino alla trattazione di tematiche più leggere come le origini delle tradizioni alimentari, il libro di Niola fornisce una panoramica completa del vasto universo del cibo e dei consumi della società moderna.

È bene sottolineare nuovamente come le tradizioni gastronomiche costituiscano uno specchio del rapporto che gli uomini hanno con la propria identità e

con la società che li circonda. Un'attenta analisi delle abitudini alimentari in società con tradizioni differenti dalla nostra è la chiave per collocare entro limiti storico-sociali più definiti la nostra cultura del cibo e, soprattutto, è in grado di renderci più aperti e tolleranti verso le proposte culinarie provenienti da altre culture, rendendoci maggiormente disposti ad una maggiore integrazione tra noi ed il diverso, una premessa fondamentale per l'arricchimento delle rispettive identità e per la costruzione di un nuovo Noi, più flessibile e adatto alla civiltà multiculturale che ci attende in futuro.

Chang, Leslie *Operaie*. Milano: Adelphi, 2010

di Andrea Quadrini

Vale la pena scrivere di una città cementificata, colma d'impianti industriali i cui segreti appartengono esclusivamente a chi vi è entrato e chi vi è uscito? Vale la pena descrivere un'umanità ambivalente, scissa tra slogan del passato e recenti elogi dell'individualismo?

In fondo, il testo che verrebbe alla luce potrebbe contenere molteplici ovvietà, o parole e pensieri vissuti, talvolta inconsapevolmente, altrove. Potrebbe essere un inutile discorso, chiuso in sé stesso, recintato dagli spigoli di uno specchio vetusto. Eppure qualcuno potrebbe ritenere quella storia un obbligo narrativo, che possa trasformarsi infine in reperto o essere una riproposizione d'ovvietà necessarie, per creare un'appartenenza o, nel caso opposto, un sollecito all'affrancamento da ogni retaggio manipolante.

Nel libro *Operaie*, edito da Adelphi nel 2010, la giornalista sino-americana Leslie Chang decide di raccontare angoli della Cina novecentesca e, per lo più, della Cina odierna, basandosi sulla necessità di capire un popolo e il suo approccio alla storia. Il suo intento sembra poggiarsi sull'individualizzazione di uno spirito, un sentimento comune cinese. Così le tragedie della ventennale guerra civile, le migrazioni del XX secolo, la predominanza del gruppo sull'individuo nella Rivoluzione culturale, trovano una corrispondenza nel passato e si ripresentano, con variazioni, nel presente irriflessivo.

E Dongguan, realtà industriale espansa per effetto della svolta "moderata" di Deng Xiaoping, diventa, per l'autrice, un simulacro dell'immaturità e della farraginosità di un sistema mutilatosi e annullatosi per continuare ad esistere.

Dentro quel sistema si scorgono i visi di Min, Chunming e di tutti quei migranti che, giunti nelle Zona economica speciale, lottano per uscire dall'insostenibilità e dalla mediocrità della catena di montaggio. Sono volti che corrono, alla ricerca di un sollievo, un riparo destinato a disfarsi per timore del limite, del finito. Mentre loro s'affannano come dei fuggitivi, altri e rari volti rimirano il passato per descrivere – e non accettare – i torti subiti, o rivivere, accontentandosi di

una danza solitaria. Ma ci sono anche i volti delle campagne, truccati dalla consuetudine e rivolti agli oggetti presenti e assenti.

Leslie Chang ritrae questi visi, insistentemente, evitando di renderli meri simboli o esclusivi supporti di proprie teorie. Così non emergono soltanto i succubi e i tiranni che hanno costruito la Cina, e i sentimenti del singolo non vengono associati, sempre e forzatamente, ai sentimenti di una pluralità. Inoltre, forse per coerenza, l'autrice evita paragoni tra la Cina e gli altri paesi, seguendo la spontanea ignoranza dell'altrove espressa dalla maggior parte dei suoi interlocutori. Lo scopo non è allargare il campo, ma interessarsi al particolare.

I riferimenti sono, quindi, gli individui, con le loro gioie e i loro affanni così simili così differenti rispetto alle gioie e agli affanni altrui. Individui acritici nei confronti del sistema in cui sono stati catapultati, che accettano una spessa serie di restrizioni: la presenza della catena di montaggio – pur ritenuta infima –, l'inefficienza dei burocrati e l'immutabile sequenzialità della vita rurale.

E, tacitamente, si fanno strada i dubbi sul presente e sul suo senso. Sembra che il presente cinese, contraddistinto dall'accumulo materiale e dalla predominanza industriale, non sia per il suo popolo, nient'altro che tempo di sopravvivenza. Così gli uomini vivono e lottano in nome di un'unicità che si rende paradossale perché fondata su un'identica forza di volontà, pur modificatasi nel corso degli anni. Se prima e durante la guerra civile, i cittadini cinesi, per vivere, non potevano fare a meno del sentimento nazionale e, in primo luogo, della devozione famigliare, ora una moltitudine sembra aver interiorizzato gli imperativi dell'individualismo. Non si tratta, tuttavia, di una lotta tra un individuo e una collettività tetragona. Sembra trattarsi, invece, di una lotta per una sistemazione accomodante necessaria per oscurare l'impotenza umana.

Inconsapevoli, molti giovani di Dongguan studiano come trasformarsi in persone distinte, affermate, e proseguono un gioco di convenienze ed espedienti. Così prosegue il tempo, reiterato e sempre più disinteressato ad offrire delle tracce per il futuro.

Ma questa costruzione, apparentemente casuale, non riguarda soltanto la Cina e il lettore dovrebbe accorgersene. Così potrebbero nascere immedesimazioni, intese, capaci di avere una valenza politica e rappresentare una rottura. Potrebbero però nascere anche legami silenti, sospesi tra la consapevolezza e la meraviglia, composti da parole echeggianti in un solo corpo, non pronunciate per timore o per difficoltà insormontabili. Legami presenti in uno spazio indefinito, dove l'essere umano non ha risposte così esaustive (o così limitanti) ed è incapace di ricorrere al controllo.

Probabilmente, le più grandi soddisfazioni stanno là, in quello spazio di grandi fughe, di viaggi capaci di travalicare lo spazio e il tempo, e di sguardi umani concessi senza pretese. E un pensiero può farsi beffe del “Pensiero”. Valeva la pena.

Autori di questo numero

Veronica Boldrin, nata il 20 marzo 1989, si è laureata in Scienze Internazionali e Diplomatiche presso l'Università degli Studi di Trieste. Ha effettuato studi sull'estetica in Pier Paolo Pasolini. Attualmente conduce ricerche inerenti al tema della performance, con particolare attenzione all'attività teatrale, e lavora all'interno del Laboratorio di Antropologia Visuale dell'Università di Trieste. Da sempre interessata ai linguaggi artistici, esprime la propria sensibilità per l'immagine attraverso la pittura e il video editing.

Jan M. Broekman studierte Soziologie in Leiden und Philosophie in Göttingen. Er promovierte 1961 an der Göttinger Fakultät mit seiner Dissertation „Faktisches und transzendentales Ego bei Edmund Husserl“. 1964 veröffentlichte er mit H. Müller-Suur den Essay „Psychiatrie und Phänomenologie“. Zunächst war er Professor für Ästhetik und Moderne Philosophie an der Universität Amsterdam, dann von 1967–1996 Ordinarius für Philosophie der Gegenwart am Hoger Instituut voor Wijsbegeerte an der Katholieke Universiteit Leuven sowie für Rechtsphilosophie an der Juristischen Fakultät, deren Dekan er in den achtziger Jahren war. Von 1980–1995 war er außerdem als Professor für Philosophie der Medizin und Medizinethik an der Freien Universität Amsterdam tätig. Seit 1998 ist er „Visiting Professor of Law“ in den USA, zuerst an der Universität Illinois und seit 2006 als „Distinguished Professor of Law“ an der Penn State University. Broekman verfasste über 25 Bücher und mehr als 350 wissenschaftliche Artikel über Themen wie Philosophie der Gegenwart, EU-Recht, Rechtstheorie, Philosophie der Medizin, Semiotik und Kulturphilosophie.

Prem K. Khatri got his PhD in Anthropology at the University of California under the Fulbright Scholarship Schemes, USA. He has been Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at Tribhuvan University, Nepal, and then Director of the CNAS and Board member of Lumbini Development Fund, and the Principal at the Pyramid Higher Secondary School and College. He has written several books related to Anthropology, Sociology, Social Work and Buddhism.

Antonio Luigi Palmisano is Professor for Cultural and Political Anthropology, University of Trieste. Researcher and teacher at several Universities (Berlin, Leuven, Göttingen, Addis Ababa, Kabul, Lecce, Turin, Trieste, Rome etc.). Ten years field in Africa and three years in Central Asia. Several surveys researches in Latino America. *Research on the field as a way of life.*

Research among political-religious brotherhood in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. Study of social change and social order: the role played by religious brotherhoods in the integration processes of marginal social groups during modernisation processes in peri-urban context.

Study of marginal groups: ethnic identity and integration processes in the national context, Sudan. Study of migration processes: representation and self-representation of political and ethnic identity. Study of politics and religion: the role assumed by mythology and other forms of narrativity in the establishment of social control.

Study of the relations between Welfare and State: the intertwinement of law, politics and religion in the situational establishment of social order.

Study of the political processes of social integration by minorities and marginal groups in the urban context, "Politics, Religion and Law in Ethiopia: the *zar* Cult": manipulation of social networks by socio-religious entrepreneurs and conflict resolution processes. Study of ethnic, religious and political identities in the post-war situation: the growth of Islam in Ethiopia and the attempt to establish *shari'a*-like order in the Horn of Africa.

Study of the formal and informal institutions dedicated to the processes of dispute settlements in Afghanistan. Fieldwork in Afghanistan from November 2002 to December 2003 as Senior Advisor for Judicial Reform, Rebuilding the Justice System Program, entrusted to the Italian Government after the Bonn Agreements of 5.12.2001, together with the Judicial Reform Commission and other Afghan national and international institutions (Kabul University, Unicef, Who etc.).

Survey researches on the relation between customary law, i.e. informal law, and state law in Ecuador, Paraguay, Guatemala and Argentina, critical analysis of the relation between juridical systems, social order, and the order of the market, the financial markets in particular.

Ron Remnick, a psychological anthropologist, earned the Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1973. He has been studying about and researching in Ethiopia for the last 42 years. His original fieldwork in Ethiopia (late 1960's) focused on gender identity and ritual symbolism. Two consecutive Fulbright grants in the mid-90's allowed him to contribute to the establishment of a Master's Programme in Anthropology at Addis Abeba University and supervise 6 ethnographic Master's researches. During this time he also conducted 4 major research projects with the valuable help of his students. In 2005 a Senior Scholar's Fulbright Grant allowed Dr. Remnick to travel to Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, Cleveland's "Sister City", where he advised in establishing a social sciences curriculum at Bahir Dar University. A fruitful series of lectures and workshops on research methods, proposal writing, and grant-seeking promoted a good deal of on-going interactions with faculty and a few students. A gender identity transformation project was begun with women students. In addition to the articles written about Ethiopia Dr. Ron has published a theoretical book on ethnicity, a book on African-American ethnicity, and has a book in press on the evolution of Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. At present Dr. Ron and 3 colleagues at Cleveland State University's Center for Healing Across Cultures have

opened up research on tribal healers of the Western Ghats of southern India. Out of that initial research came a coauthored book. The core faculty of the Center is developing a cross-cultural study of traditional healing in South India, Belize, Ethiopia, and North American Appalachia. Recently, Dr. Remnick was awarded a certificate from the Whitehouse and a personally signed letter from President Barak Obama in appreciation of his volunteer and civic work over the years.

Nicoletta Velardi si laurea in antropologia sociale al Goldsmiths College, Londra, nel 2000. Nel 2002 consegue il Master in Studi sullo Sviluppo alla London School of Economics, Londra. Dal 2003 al 2009 si occupa di antropologia dello sviluppo in diverse organizzazioni internazionali, come la UNESCO, e ONG grandi e piccole. Lavora *on the field* in Argentina, Guatemala, Perù e Albania, occupandosi principalmente delle problematiche relative a popolazioni indigene, interculturalità e donne. Nel Dicembre 2011, con María Antonia Sadurní Roig, pubblica un libro di fotografie intitolato “Fototeca Andina: Fotografía y cultura en el Cuzco del siglo XX” in coedizione con il Centro Bartolomé de las Casas – CBC – del Cuzco, Perù e la AECID – Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo.