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The ecopsychology is a new methodological discipline, which intends to study in a scientific way the relation between man and the environment that surrounds him. Man is the ultimate aim of a development that ties together in an inseparable way the mineral, the vegetal and the animal kingdoms, in a process of systemic-complex organization. Starting from this evolutionary assumption, the ecopsychology intends to study the possibility of man to revisit by means of his conscience the archetypal aspects of life, sedimented in the body as instincts and traceable in the psyche as symbolic images.

The Weltanschauung which the ecopsychology tends to is not the one dominated by a thought of casual relation, which reduces to "sign" and "semantics" all what concerns nature and man. On the contrary it can be defined as a holistic approach, which endeavors to put together in harmonious and vital way the conclusion of physical and biological sciences with those of human sciences. Such a wide program, of course, requires the dialectic integration of many disciplines, and this is made possible by means of a correct use of the analogic and symbolic thought. Through the symbolic language and the comprehension of the analogic significance of shapes, colours, images of all what surrounds us, it is possible to go back to the archetypes present in man. This way makes possible to recognize the plot of the totality of the world (*Unus Mundus*), and therefore the sacral sense of the existence.

With these premises, ANEB operates as scientific association without a purpose of gain, and gathers researchers of various scientific fields, ranging from Psychology and Psychoanalysis to Literature and Philosophy, to Art and Aesthetics, to Mythology and Religion History, to Economics and Social Sciences, to Biology and Physics. The aim of ANEB is, therefore, to recover a common language of approaching the world and man, based on a "circular logic", as analogy, which allows to tie the psychosomatic aspects of the being, and the synchronic events of the becoming.

AN ECOBIOPSYCHOLOGICAL SIGHT ON EUROPE: REFLECTIONS BORN AT ERANOS

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*The ruin of Europe is the balance point
between Past and Future;
It is necessary to think the Present.
Besieged by the ruins of a crisis tormenting us,
we are risking not to see the depth
and the menace, will we be able to seek the seed of some redemption?
Salvatore Settis*

The days of study speculating on the theme of ecobiopsychology spent at Eranos in 2016 did invite us to reflect on the value of an intellectual continuity, but also on the creative discontinuity among the literary, mythological and psychological and broadly speaking humanistic cultural tradition of the location, as well as on the ecobiopsychological conception of Man, whose construction we have been working both individually and as a group.

The days spent at Eranos made us reflect on the debt we have got as scholars of ecobiopsychology, with the tradition that permeates, as *Genius Loci*, the rooms, the library with its books, the open view on the lake of this place that has welcomed discussions and dialogues on the key themes of the depth psychology, specifically those belonging to the Jungian tradition that for decades in this place in Switzerland, has seen scholars of different backgrounds - a real psychological, intellectual, cultural and geographic "vital centre".

We are at the same time invited to recall that sentence attributed to Mahler, for whom having respect for the traditions does not mean worshipping the ashes, but keeping the fire burning. The aim of this article is actually to put wood on the fire of the ongoing elaboration, always dialogic and never dogmatic, of the ecobiopsychological thought born in Italy, but fed by contributions belonging to the European tradition, of a Europe open to what elaborated overseas in particular in the laboratories of the "hard" sciences present in America, and also in the East, cradle not only of a recent unprecedented industrial and economic development, but also of ancient still interesting symbolic, religious and spiritual traditions.

Which is the connection between the ecobiopsychological thought and Europe? The first suggestion I feel like to present to the debate, focuses on the role of the "three", of the "third", and of the "middle": ecology-biology-psychology, three dimensions of the existence, three scientific fields, three "places" of the human experience. There is not only one relation between the physical, biological and somatic dimension, and the psychic and psychological one. We are not only dealing with a *psycho-somatics*, quite a fertile ground for recent researches, just think about the intense and fruitful dialogue between the humanistic psychology and the neurosciences. We are neither dealing with an *eco-psychology*, an innovative term used by one of the most original Jungian scholar, Joe Cambray (2017). There is not only one relation between the individual and the collective sphere, between Man and environment, between nature and culture, between the spiritual and the material. Environment, body, psyche draw a triangle with three vertices, or alternatively an image where two terms are juxtaposed sides and the third a bridge that connects them. The word that better describes the sense of the triangulation, and of the "third" with the function of a bridge between the two sides, is *complexity*, a central concept in the ecobiopsychological reflection.

But what about Europe in all that? It is beyond doubt that if for long centuries from a spiritual, cultural, scientific, economic and political point of view the history of Man has been "Eurocentric", we must recognize

that for many a decade that has changed. Fallen in the XXth century into the abyss of two World Wars, broken out in the centre of Europe and especially the second one, flared up until burning the whole world, our continent has progressively seen its decisional centrality gliding towards the capitals of the new “blocs” ratified at Yalta, the American and the Soviet ones. In 1989 the Old Continent became once more theatre of a fundamental event of the world history with the fall of the Berlin Wall, in the centre of Europe, in that Berlin considered in those days the “centre” from where a new historic period could have had origin.

The Wall was taken down, but today’s Europe, fragmented and divided economically, politically as well as spiritually and psychologically, is again troubled by conflicts between “blocs” that are bilaterally formed and give rise to continuous clashes. Solutions are hard to be provided and even possible pathways “thought” to be undertaken difficult to be found: the tensions between the North and the South, the local inhabitants and the immigrants, the central organs and the national sovereignties seem to give life to two forms of psychological answers: on the one side the exasperated nihilism, and on the other side the European unity, the ideologies “alone is better” and “the good people here, the bad ones over there” with the dangerous exclusion of a “third” vision. A reflective perspective able to take into consideration the complexity of the problems with the aim to find out solutions, instead of a strategy that “solves” them easily in a unilateral and not reflexive way cancelling one of the poles of the conflict remaining victim of that inevitable dialectic tension between the opposites that can never be eliminated by the human experience, both individual and collective. Writing on this subject. Neumann, as an original follower of Jung’s thought stated: «The opposition governs the world», and added (and that is fundamental): «Although this condition may appear at a first sight totally incomprehensible, paradoxical, it is confirmed in the experience of the analytical psychology» (Neumann, 2015, p. 46). The “crisis” that is troubling Europe can be analyzed from a number of psychological, economic and political perspectives from which suggestions for a way out can rise. After having breathed the austere but also vital atmosphere of Eranos, ancient and innovative at the same time, I feel like to give an ecobiopsychological suggestion based on the courage to find out solutions inspired from one side by a complex and deep way of thinking, indeed aimed to “enter” the articulated depth of the events to understand it, and from the other by a human attitude thought to be tolerable, acceptable and feasible for Man. The role of Europe today cannot be anymore that of aspiring to a leadership based on quantitative parameters like the GDP, the bank deposits, the dimensions of the manufacturing production lines: the large numbers are not anymore prerogative of the Old Continent as at the time of the colonial empires that dominated the world with their economies, fleet and armies immensely superior to what present in other parts of the world, they are nowadays to be found in the gigantic dimension of the manufacturing activities that prosper in China and in other non-European countries or in the rises and falls of the financial market daily obliging the world to look at what is happening on Wall Street and in the other centres of the financial world. We must accept we have become “smaller” both demographically, and in respect to markets, political actors and military powers. Being forced to renounce the role of hegemony for those that have played it for centuries, can easily take to a depressive consideration: the less economically thriving Europe, where people are older, globally more mistrusting, risks of becoming poor also in another field - that of the capacity to think coherently, analyze, desire and project. The poverty of the European thought takes everybody to run a great risk, that of being prisoners of the fear, a particular kind of fear we like to define as “nihilistic-dehumanizing”. A kind of fear that from an anthropological, social and psychological point of view can generate two conditions, both of them characterized by a critical incapacity to think about complex, innovative and creative solutions. The first one is the fear leading to an untrusting, cynical, depressive surrender of whom is unable to see new perspectives, waiting for the end contenting with the sad role of Cassandra. It is the position dominated by the prejudice, the belief we as European people are sclerotized, fearful and old destined with no hope of escape, to be invaded by immigrants, products, religions,

ideas, objects and styles of life coming from an elsewhere consciously despised, but unconsciously envied for the perception of its alien as well as disturbing vitality. It is the fear of being the victims of a new, but equally distressful "barbarian invasion". That is the nightmare many European citizens are living: not only for a question of age, but psychologically. They do not feel anymore part of a society that other than problems and conflicts, is still able to express a thought, projects, possible solutions, they feel "old" not in the sense of having experience and wisdom, but of having lost the fertility, what daily gives rise to a nihilism that is falsely rational. The second position refers to that fear that generates a sort of blind courage that is not reflexive, but paranoid acting on the basis of individual and collective decisions guided by a psychology dominated by projective mechanisms, absolute, omnipotent and schizo-paranoid mechanisms. It is the position of those "being against", of those who attack feeling attacked without well understanding by whom and why attacked: real dangers and projected ghosts, real enemies and internal threatening objects merge together and come to generate the dangerous illusion of having clearly identified the enemy, the exact location, even the aim of an enemy without whom Europe could benefit again of its privileges like the flourishing economy, the historical-political centrality and the social security.

The enemy quickly loses the connotation of a real problem to be faced with strategies that need to be specifically thought (for example the difficult integration of a larger and larger number of migrants, or the weight of a society with bureaucratic obstacles imposed by the European institutions) becoming an a priori menacing and unamendable category from which to get free.

From Eranos we would like to send an ecobiopsychological message, a suggestion to face the theme of that fear that today seems to strangle Europe: it is necessary to start from Man, a Man who does not give in to fear with depression, who does not react in a paranoid way, but deals with it as a critic event to be confronted with his inner perceptions: a "process of humanization". Our proposal is a third possibility: an ecobiopsychological humanism, halfway between the surrender and the attack. We think of a European Man who does not scream to exorcise fear, does not silence because overwhelmed with dread, but speaks to express his thought, and has the courage to transform such a thought into "action", also a political action - *Vita Activa* as Hannah Arendt wrote. An active life that is not a frenetic movement, a headlong rush, a bulimic and anxious consumption of experiences without depth even before than of products. We think about the contribute of those thinkers who in the crisis following the fall of the Roman Empire spoke about a *Usus*, an "active doing" to be proposed as an alternative to the nihilistic surrender to ruin. A fruitful and oriented doing arising from a reflexive thought defined by the term *Doctrina*, that implied a non-dogmatic, curious and creative re-reading of the knowledge of the ancients to give birth to a new culture and practice thanks to the individual and collective exercise of that faculty that was defined as *Voluntas*. An ancient concept still actual if thought as the matrix of an acting that is free but responsible, courageous but prudent, enthusiast but always lucidly critical (Hoffman, 2017). At that time as today, the objective was to defend oneself against the nihilism, the death drive present in Europe.

At Eranos we tried to "work" with the *Voluntas* of everybody on a *Doctrina*, sharing ideas and reflections that from the richness represented by the plurality of people present, could give rise to a concrete and practicable thought, not an abstract one, but a perspective ready to incarnate in a human *Usus* able to begin and change the life of those present, and start to change that of people in general, of the relational dimensions, of the institutional and working reality, a scenario each of us would like to return to. We are dealing with a thought that does not simply arise from the psyche of the one who thinks, but that comes from the complexity of his being in the world as mind incarnated in a material body that inhabits a world in turn made of matter that is not inferior or vile: it is rather the approach presented in his *De Rerum Natura* by an ancient Master of Europe and of his culture, Lucretius. The European Man can start again to consider problems and find solutions free from an idealism that was for centuries a powerful resource for the development of the Old Continent, but that now

is to be put under discussion also because from its hypertrophy was born the hegemony of a dangerous economic *materialism*, because it denies the complexity of the human nature that is material, psychical and spiritual. The ecobiopsychology guides the *Psychè* of the European Man to become a mind, or better a *Mens*. Only a mind can think about an answer to the European crisis. New ideologies cannot do that, new ideologies would end up being dangerous for the human condition as those of the XXth century. Neither the culture of the technocrats, being unable to deal with comprehensive concepts, can do that. To get what Settis defines «the seed of some redemption among the ruins of a crisis tormenting us» pushing himself even further to consider such a seed as something able to take to «an Italian and European Renaissance returning to a vibrant historical dimension, an answer to decay and death» (Settis, 2017, p. 58), it is necessary a new will, a new balance and a new intelligence.

Qualities that belong to a mind that is less aerial than *Psychè*, less identified with a noble breath that looking with too much love to the elevated world of the *Ideas* of Plato, of the *Reason* of Kant and of the *Spirit* of Hegel, has actually left the conduction of the European history for an efficient pragmatism often thoughtless, in particular if dealing with the great economic and political issues, as well as the land, environment and resource management. The *Mens* we are speculating about, being less aerial, is also less disincarnated and less distant from the body: «We are first of all, mainly a bodily Self in a world made up of bodily presences and material things, and our first interaction is with a mother who is materially present» (Gentile, 2007, p. 547), as in 2007 the psychoanalyst J. Gentile wrote echoing what prophetically suggested by the famous French philosopher Ricoeur in the 80s: «Being a subject in the world includes the notion of having a body» (Ricoeur, 1997, p. 50). A *Psychè* is not a prisoner, but incarnated in the body that is vivified and not weakened by the psyche. Jung wrote: «Don't run away and make yourself unconscious of bodily facts, for they keep you in real life and help you not to lose your real way in the world of mere possibilities where you are simply blindfolded. [...] Not to do so is to fall prey to the power principle and this produces dangerous effects [...] Irreality is the quintessence of horror» (Jung, 2012, p. 553).

The constructive dialogues we had at Eranos, and the consequent inner dialogues that have emerged from that short but intense experience, have taken us to formulate a thought we can now here courageously present. Europe that in the past was the symbolic uterus that nested, grew and gave rise to the modern concept of *psyche*, daughter of the Greek concept of *Psychè* and the Roman one of *Anima*, originally pagan and then enriched by the creative and vital nucleus of the Jewish tradition thanks to the symbolic bridge the Christianity traced between Jerusalem and Athens, can today live a second pregnancy: its product will be an *eco-bio-psyche*, or even better an *eco-bio-mind*. Radicated in the ecological and biological concreteness, the *Mens* of the ecobiopsychology can give back to the men and the women of Europe the power to think, and permit them to recover from that disease that made Edmund Phelps claim: «Europe is a continent that has run out of ideas» (Phelps, 2015). It will be an eco-bio-thought generated by women and men alive that will be able to create it with an eco-bio-psyche. It will be the result of a psychosoma that thinks breathing, digesting, moving with its locomotor system in an environment where it is a responsible guest and not a destructive colonizer. Being an ecobiopsychological thought, and not just a psychological one, it will not produce only sublime ideas in their abstract coherence, but probably also catastrophic on the bodies of the men and on the “body” of the nature. Arising not only from the blow, from the wind, from the subtle and vertiginous spirit of *Psyche* and *Anima*, but also from the Love of *Mens* for the balance, the proportion, the sense of the limit that can be broken but never abolished, it will escape from that danger that again Jung defined with the following provocative words: «You know, we think that to be moved by the spirit is something marvelous, absolutely respectable: everyone likes being moved by the spirit [...]. And we do not realize that constitutes a danger [...] We cannot do away with the living man by making him spirit» (Jung, 2012, p. 576).

We hope for a mature thought, courageous but respectful, capable of sense of measure. That sense of measure that does not deny the crisis, courageously defined by Settis in his essay as «ruin», that does not take to surrender nihilistically and in a depressive way to the crisis itself, but neither gives in to the narcissistic temptation cultivating the dangerous nostalgia of an expansive growth without any limit, rule and critical reflection, of a recovery unable to reflect creatively and not nihilistically on the limits, the mistakes and the unilateralism of the past, and therefore unable to live a tolerable present and to give life to the future.

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