

SUBJECTS? THEIR STORIES MUST BE TOLD*

Psychiatric knowledge is increasingly ordered on the basis of abstract definitions of pathologies, on the cataloguing of symptoms and syndromes and the tendency to elicit the diagnostic signs of semantic chains structured into illness.

It delves in the gloom of consciousness or stigmatises sequences of behaviour. It investigates disturbances in order to add abnormalities or pathologies to the catalogue.

Life-stories, the biographies of women and men are the only credible forms of resistance to current psychologies. A long road lies before us, in cultural and probably also in scientific terms, in order to re-establish a psychology based on experience, contexts, on the existential projects of individuals and groups, on collective and solitary moments, on ethnic identity and other forms of belonging, and then to reconnect them to historical givens and human landscapes: their evolutions and involutions, their development and regression, both macro-social and micro-contextual.

The unlimited community which we desire (a community made up of local solidarity but open to the freedom of global exchanges) speaks of multiple identities not always realised, of failures and renewal, of potential to be revealed and made manifest, of scenarios in motion which allow each individual possibilities denied to others, possibilities not only given but given in happier circumstances, and dignity for all in an infinite diversity. Only life stories, enriched biographies - and certainly not pathological hypostasis - can give us the understanding necessary in order to change, instead of definitions to deny and invalidate others, the other (meaning: otherness, aliens, alienation, exclusion, annihilation, stigma and stereotype, prejudice and definitive judgement).

To reopen the field of narration and insert normality and ordinary madness, to divert oneself with life and with individual lives is not to deny the right to treatment but to reclaim the right to care about others and the right that someone care about you, whoever you are, wherever you have stopped, shut up in your pain or in a fixed immutable idea, in a never-ending repetition or delirium, in a defection from the world or disassociation from the linguistic chain which constitutes a world of belonging.

The other can always reinvent you or rob you of speech. But this latter action is always illegitimate, never scientific, always a violence.

In the face of insanity as a defection from the world or an expulsion suffered, of insanity as the language produced by psychiatry, or the abandonment to its silence, or its being taken up by groups, associations, sects which re-propose the opaque scission in a collective form, is there still a language, a word worth telling which is still part of a story that can be considered universal yet singular?

Stories of individuals moving within the world's infinite energy, seeking and not finding their own path, but going on anyway, maybe in circles, but always keeping on. Atoms of a matter which today constitutes an unlimited community full of insurmountable restrictions and barriers. How many embargoes exist within this community, and yet how many times is this embargo of the other actively sought after or wished for? We must create connections, exchanges, openings, networks, so that in the margins on both sides we don't work to bury one another alive.

How else exit madness except by recognising reason(s)?

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