

ESSENTIALLY, THE ARCHER AIMS AT HIMSELF

Translation by Achille Cattaneo / Gordon Leonard Symons

In a broad sense, if by journey we mean a directed movement, then everything is in progress. The entire universe is in fact engaged in an evolutionary path that manifests itself both in the life span of a man and a star, a cell and a civilization, a breath and a season. The single life of a man unfolds in a journey, is marked in a path, and so is that of a people, a culture, a language. Nothing escapes this law of movement.

Nature first follows its own precise path that takes place over the ages, in which even the element that at first sight would seem more static and inert regains its plasticity on a wider time scale. And then we will see that mountains disappear, or are formed, that rivers move, seas dry up, even continents approach or move away from each other, in short, they move!

The same solemn stillness of the starry vault has finally revealed itself for what it is, a simple optical illusion due to distance. In fact, there is nothing more dynamic and changeable than the universe itself, in its grandiose evolutionary path that started from the initial big bang.

The question then arises in what distinguishes the path of man from this common path.

If in the process of walking we distinguish two elements, that of movement and that of direction, we immediately realize that in the spontaneous evolutionary rhythm it is the first one that largely prevails. Evolution - as Darwin taught - requires a great deal of experience, i.e. movement, to introduce new elements of progress, to find new, more useful directions. In a process that is as slow as it is random.

The prerogative and task of man would seem to be precisely that of accelerating this process, introducing

with the awareness of which he is the bearer, more light on this path, giving it more directionality. This is why enlightenment, or vision, is considered as the fundamental element in what Buddhism defines as the process of liberation from the forced and repetitive dynamism of life.

The specific journey of man therefore presupposes a conscious goal, and the search for a direction to get there. The nature and level of this goal will be the most varied, and will depend on the degree of enlightenment achieved, on the level of understanding of the meaning of life. In man, to the energy of Eros, understood as movement and vital dynamism, the energy of logos is also added to a variable degree. And the path then becomes truly such, that is, consciously directed. Instead of moving mostly in circles, one begins to move forward.

Compared to simple movement, there are also other characteristics in moving, in addition to the main one of having a precise direction.

One of these is totality. While the movement can concern individual parts of the organism, whether this is a planet or a man in its various biopsychic elements, the displacement always involves it in its entirety, as a whole, in a process that is one of translation.

And it is significant to note how the more global the process is, the more it tends to go unnoticed, to elude us, identified as we are in a fragmentary perspective. For example, while the thunderous but superficial movements of the winds and tides of the planet catch the eye, which among other things mutually neutralize each other in the long run, however, the true, powerful displacement of the planet in its entirety passes completely unnoticed, because it rotates at very high speeds around the sun, and moves with it in a precise direction in space. So obvious is the movement, so elusive is the displacement.

And so it is also in man, in whom the real displacement always and only concerns the globality of his consciousness, and goes unnoticed.

To start moving, to get on the road, man must then begin first of all to... paradoxically stop, in order to find

himself, and learn to welcome himself in his entirety, to reappropriate every part of himself. Because, just like the planet, due to the laws of physics (or if we prefer of psychoenergetics), you cannot move if you leave parts of yourself behind. This is axiomatic.

The moorings of conscience, those that prevent us from really getting on the road (but not from deluding ourselves that we are doing so) are not then the unpleasant, or ugly, or negative elements of our personality, but on the contrary our refusal to appropriate them. Because rejection binds, as much as acceptance and acceptance loosen and liberate. Loving understanding towards oneself, and especially towards one's limits, thus becomes the passport to access that experience of totality, union, inclusiveness and uniqueness which is a prelude to moving and walking. In psychosynthetic terms, re-appropriation and self-possession are prerequisites for transformation and change.

Without this passport, the risk is to mistake the action or movement of some parts of oneself for displacement, for a journey. Moving with imagination, thought or aspiration is relatively easy, but illusory. These are the functions, albeit very noble of man, which can direct energy, but not move it. They feed a vision, a model, a reality that is only virtual, precisely because it is located in the future.

It is an ideal or potential reality which, above all in certain typologies, however, tends to be idealised, that is to say, to be credited with an intrinsic value which it itself does not have, and thus to lose that of a pure directional element of the journey, which it would otherwise have! Unbalanced forward in a misunderstood tension towards the goal, one loses that balance which only allows one to proceed... and one stops, often without realizing it. Because the movement of imagination and vision instead continues, at that point counterproductive and sterile.

It is a common danger in the inner journey to put the value of becoming before that of being, forgetting that the former exists as a function and expression of the latter. So we can "become" only and to the extent that we first manage to "be".

And "being" means, among other things, recovering one's centrality and inner presence not only in relation to oneself and one's psychic space, but also in relation to time.

"Being" then, as being totally aware of the present moment and the circumstances, totally immersed in the experience of the present, and at the same time detached and indifferent to it. Dis-identified. This combination of participation and detachment is precisely what gives the greatest intensity to the experience, that is, to the single step of one's journey, and is the guarantee of an effective movement.

Living in the present is... simply the only way to live. To really live.

Because it is the only temporal dimension - or window - in which life can be authentically lived, and not just remembered from the past or anticipated from the future. In the past and in the future there are images of life, in the present there is experience, lived experience. And while the past and the future are long, very long, indefinite... and it's therefore easy to stay there, the present is short... very short... instantaneous. And it tends to escape.

Hence comes the great importance - let's say preparatory - which has always been attributed by all religious and wisdom traditions to attention, concentration and awareness. In Psychosynthesis, this could perhaps be equivalent to emphasizing more the importance of what in the trifocal vision technique is seen as the attention to the step one is taking, i.e. the starting point, where one is (and who is) in the here and now.

If from this point of view one wants to compare the final goal (in the trifocal vision) to one's own global evolutionary project, and the single step towards its implementation, it is evident that what generally gives value to a project is in reality precisely its implementation. A modest realized project is absolutely worth more than the best project left on paper.

What gives value to the final goal is then the implementation of the individual intermediate goals. The last step that leads to the top of the mountain is worth exactly as much as the first, or an intermediate one. And the value of the conquest of the top is not given by the realization of the final step, the one that "touches" the

goal, but by the sum of the effort of all the individual steps taken, which have “built” that conquest.

Because - let’s repeat it - the value of the purpose is not intrinsic, but lies only in the ability to implement and direct the experience, the real experience that will lead to its realization!

Now, if the value of the present step thus appears as a function of the final goal, just as the latter is a function of the single step, then we see that also in the psychosynthetic perspective - as already in the Zen one - the distinction between means and end begins to fade. The goal is already contained in the medium, in the tool, in the path, and vice versa.

And again, from the point of view of relativistic physics, it is the very distinction between path and wayfarer that disappears. Path and wayfarer do not have an autonomous and intrinsic existence, but only mutually correlated. The path exists because there is someone who travels it, and vice versa.

It is the wayfarer who makes the journey, it is the journey that makes the wayfarer.

But then, if the road has already been traced, hasn’t the traveler already arrived?!

THE LONG ROAD TO JOY. ART MEETS LIFE

Translation by Alberto Gabba / Gordon Leonard Symons

Another Article about Joy.

In this magazine of ours there are countless articles on joy, there is one in almost every issue. Perhaps because the angles from which to illuminate this great theme are endless. Perhaps because it was one of the qualities most dear to Assagioli who considered it a real “spiritual coffee”. Perhaps because we would all like to live perpetually in joy, or at least in happiness, which is the younger sister of joy. Maybe because we’ve all met it, sometimes or even often, and when it happened we felt revived, healed, reconciled with ourselves and with the world. Joy has given us hope and a new openness to life. It made us glimpse a dimension of fullness and light.

Joy is not happiness, writes **Eugenio Borgna** in his beautiful book *Le emozioni ferite (The wounded emotions)* ⁽¹⁾. Happiness is often the result of fortunate circumstances, good fortune or happy and unexpected events that knock on our door. It is fragile, happiness. It is often placed in the future, anxiously waiting for something beautiful to come. It is expectation, anticipation of a desired moment. As in Giacomo Leopardi’s *Il sabato del villaggio (Saturday in the village)*, when, having put down the working tools, one anticipates the sweet hours of rest, fun and of the celebration to come. But when the celebration finally arrives, everything seems a lot less interesting than we had anticipated.

Just as often, we are unable to enjoy moments of happiness for fear that they will soon fade away. Other times happiness is in the past, like nostalgia for happy moments, with a note of melancholy for what was and is no longer.

*La donzelletta vien dalla campagna,
In sul calar del sole,*

Vittorio Viglienghi