

PSYCHOSYNTHESIS AND CONSTITUTION

Translation by Gordon Leonard Symons

1) The instruments.

Just two days have passed since the celebration of an important anniversary for our political and social life. In fact, on 25th April, the date of the liberation of Milan and Turin from the Nazi and Fascist forces, we celebrate the Liberation of Italy from the heavy shadows of a totalitarian regime, which, suppressed freedom, suffocated and crushed it in a deadly embrace with Nazi madness.

And a little over a year later, our tormented country was experiencing another pivotal moment, with a double vote, a referendum for the form of the State, a political move for a Constitutional Assembly, which was supposed to write a new Constitution, the founding pact of a Nation which had chosen the republican form and had done so by admitting for the first time to vote the other half of humanity, the female one.

Last year we remembered it, and celebrated, the 30 years from the entry into force of the Constitution, and here in Ancona we were able to organize 9 meetings on the unknown and neglected aspects of the Constitution.

I therefore had to look with particular attention at our founding pact, aiming, so to speak, at its watermark to be able to see it in all its harmonious beauty, which would be even more significant if all its “threads” were equally intertwined and enlightened.

While looking at the material to publish the acts, now in print, I got an idea, which could have brought together those two moments, the pure politician and the “differently political” if it is true that all our acts and experiences are not clothed in “politics”, understood etymologically as the art of bringing to life the polis, the city.

I remembered that I had already once used the tools of

psychosynthesis to publicly retrace the roads of my profession (in Rocca di Papa at the 2012 world congress). And, even more, I recalled the many moments in which I had found useful and opportune ideas and practices in my psychosynthetic experience, starting with the practice of disidentification, indispensable for the well management of the discretion that every magistrate must use and use well.

Then, after a long conversation with Piero Ferrucci, I realized, almost inadvertently, that a not small part of my professional commitment materialized in the interpretation of words, those words that form a norm, and they form it giving it a meaning, transforming it in a kind of mold, in which the reality of human behavior must be condensed and which it is the job of the magistrate to evaluate.

The words of the laws, therefore, must transform themselves and become reality. They must, in short, **evoke** a path of life by comparing the real with the virtual or better, compare the lived with the described, and prescribed.

The words of the laws, of every law, beginning with the most important one, the one based on our living together, the Constitution, with some doubly interpretative effort, could fall into the category of “**evocative words**”.

I will try, in this reflection, to repeat the experiment together with you.

From theory to practice. Instructions for use. Having guessed the road, it was necessary to fix the stages. In fact, here and now, we cannot “handle” too many words. It is possible, however, here and now, to choose four or five words and start the experiment. The first temptation was to immediately compete with the famous motto of the French Revolution, **LIBERTÉ, ÉGALITÉ, FRATERNITÉ**, which we will see later on how they can be adapted to our program. But it seemed to me more “orderly” to start right from the beginning, that is, from Article 1 of our Constitution, which begins like this: “Italy is a democratic Republic, founded on work”. In this opening, **two** are the evocative words I have chosen, namely **Republic** and **work**.

Republic.

Beginning with the first one, the etymology of the word leads us to two Latin words, *res –publica*, that is, the public thing, *Res* is word from the multiple and numerous meanings, in our case we can take for granted a meaning equal to the Latin, which designated with the term *respublica* the organization that today we call State, and understand the beginning of our Constitution as referring to the public Thing, that is, of everyone. (I always

remember, on the subject, the assertion of a Swiss colleague, who argued that for the inhabitants of the nations beyond the Alps, that is, the states bordering on Italy, public means of everyone, and therefore everyone must take care of it, while for Italians public means of nobody, and therefore nobody takes care of it.

Taking as a good the positive meaning of the term, the word should evoke, that is, recall, directing the common action, a sense of material rooting and not only, closely linked to an assumption of responsibility. In conclusion, the Republic is always a set of subjects, a me and countless yous, who share some, or many, abstract and concrete elements, from the language to the territory, to a bundle of rights. If I wanted to represent the thesis on display with a visualization, I remember the scene, so frequent once and now almost disappeared, of the fishermen of a boat who pull the net together to control the outcome of the fishing.

Work

“Italy is a democratic Republic, founded on work.”

Work, therefore, is the second word of this Article One that could become “evocative”. (Also, article 4 too is dedicated to work, article which recognizes the right to work of every citizen).

We must, however, agree on the word, because here I do not mean the work connoted solely, or principally, by its economic and financial repercussions, while admitting that it constitutes, for a very large part of the population, the instrument with which one gets the goods necessary for the needs of life. However, I would like to look at work from a relational point of view, that is, as an “incubator” of relationships. Often bad relationships - the famous problems deriving from an unfriendly work environment, problems that are limited, sometimes, to being merely “pinpricks”, but that at other times become real sword wounds, or arrow wounds - but sometimes good, in a double direction. “Having a job”, as we say, very often increases self-esteem, while not having a job can destroy self-esteem. The same path is replicated

with reference to hetero esteem, that is to the esteem of external subjects.

But there is another aspect of the question that I would like to highlight and it is the relationship between the worker and his work. We recall the famous anecdote about the construction of the cathedral of Antwerp. To a curious wayfarer who had asked him about his work, a mason replied: “Can’t you see? I’m breaking my back to make a living. Leave me alone.” And a second one answered him the same way, and finally a third, more and more sweaty, but with a smile on his face, told him” that all together they were building a cathedral “. This is the main value of work, from the psychosynthetic point of view, that is *awareness* (**know**, *possess*, *transform*, the motto of psychosynthesis).

Liberty

The Constitution never mentions “**freedom**”, but always recognizes a freedom (**personal freedom, freedom of correspondence, freedom of assembly, of association, of circulation, of religious faith, of manifestation of thought**, to the first articles of the first part, dedicated to the rights and duties of citizens). But **no freedom of** (and **freedom from**, according to more recent interpretations) is possible, without there being at the base, implicit but clear, a broad and, so to speak, all-encompassing notion of **FREEDOM**. A freedom that is not a simple definition entity, even from a psychological point of view. In a first approximation, we can content ourselves with defining freedom as the power of self-determination, in general (including also that of making oneself voluntarily hetero-determined). This power is not unlimited, because, according to a now classic definition, “my freedom reaches the border of your freedom”, but “claims” to have no limits within that territory (except those deriving from the laws).

The discourse on freedom becomes simpler if we pay attention, at the same time, to its opposite, which we can define as “dependence”. Freedom does not tolerate dependencies, of any kind, from the classic ones (alcohol, tobacco, sex, gambling, for example) to the last ones, symbolically represented by the crowds of teenagers, and others, who proceed with their eyes fixed on their electronic gadgets, without forgetting the immense power of de-responsibilisation, hidden behind an apparently neutral activity, such as that of advertising, in all fields.

But freedom sometimes also discounts another internal limit, that is the rejection of responsibilities.

To put it briefly, the man in sole command, a figure born in the political sphere, is also affirmed because of the great difficulty of orientation, with related responsibili-

ties, in a complex society like ours, a difficulty that can be annulled by the renunciation of power/duty of choice, transformed into an open-minded acquiescence to the determinations of others.

If this is the tangle of problems that are hidden behind the term of freedom, their dissolution must pass through another juncture of psychosynthesis, that of the will.

Deliberate freedom, deliberately acquired freedom, possesses, uniquely, the liberating and empowering power of a mature personality.

A freedom consciously desired, free from all conditioning, is the first prerequisite for the existence of a true democracy.

Freedom, therefore, and in conclusion, lived as an evocative word and as the fruit of the constant exercise of a good and wise will, as Assagioli claims.

Examining the other two “revolutionary” words, starting with equality, leads us to a similar conclusion.

Equality.

Even equality, explicitly recognized by Article 3, is not simple and easy to be accepted, if we want to avoid the risk of it becoming an obtuse egalitarianism. Remember Don Milani’s teaching on the injustice of making unequal parts between equals, but also equal parts between unequals. And in fact equality, correctly understood, also from the psychosynthetic point of view, must (should?) translate into “equality of opportunity” (“*know, possess, transform*”).

Fraternité and the like.

The Italian term closest to the French one, in the absence of an express textual reference in the Italian Constitution, is surely that of “solidarity” (political, economic and social, according to article 2).

The concept of solidarity, understood as a concrete manifestation of empathy, is at the center of a galaxy of other concepts, all equally revolving around two pairs of nouns. The first is based on generality and specificity, which are placed on a psycho-bio-

logical level (Assagioli expressly defines his theory as biopsychosynthesis) and can be disconnected but (almost) always only in theory. In extreme synthesis, solidarity presupposes the existence of absolutely unique individuals, though more or less similar in some sections of their physical and psychological constitution, who consciously act in a way that brings benefit to all members of the community. To obtain this result it is necessary to activate the second pair of elements, the rights and duties, which come under the first part of the Constitution, in articles 13 to 54.

Rights and duties are two mirror faces of the same coin, and are interconnected, so that the one without the other gives life to an absolutely disproportionate, unbalanced entity.

Although in article 4 there seems to be a separation between a right (to work) and a series of duties (to contribute to the “material and spiritual progress of society”), a complete reading of the text leads us to the conclusion indicated, of inseparability between rights and duties, not only nationally, given that articles 10 and 11, alongside the rejection of war, provide for the possibility, on equal terms, of “*limitations of sovereignty necessary for an order that ensures peace and justice among nations*” “And here we are fully in that psychosynthesis between Nations, very present in Assagioli’s reflection.

Finally, a first approach to a reading and a deepening, jointly useful, of own but not exclusive paths and conclusions of psychosynthesis and of our Constitution.

May the continuation of the journey be at the will of each, without limits, if not subjective.