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**The dislocated subject**

I would like to give you some points of reference in order to place this conference within the general discussion of *Geographies of Psychoanalysis* and the topic of *The Dislocated Subject*.

Yesterday evening we listened to Sudhir Kakar, a fundamental pillar of the analysis undertaken by *Geographies* which seeks to clearly point out how culture is not a consecutive substratum in the development of the psyche but on the contrary, it is present from the beginning of life. Culture and psyche reciprocally co-create each other, says Kakar and in this sense, there is no subconscious which is not cultural.

 Following this guideline, with Conferences and meetings promoted worldwide (please refer to the Overview on the web sites of IPA and SPI), Geographies has tried to further develop the meaning of this awareness, trying to help interaction between languages and traditions of different cultures with psychoanalytic theory and practice.

Starting from this discussion as the basis, attention is now focused on a particular kind of phenomenon: there is a type of experience in today’s world which is common to all cultures and societies, it is a life experience at subjective level which consists in decentering, deconstruction, dislocation.

The ways in which it is represented, especially through the new forms of communication and social organization which characterize our present time, bring us to hypothesize that we are faced with the birth of what we can define as a “new subject”, a dislocated subject, a hybrid, the product of different cultures combined.

This hybridization appears to be dominated by the western model which seems to be pervasive at global level and diffused in the various cultures, in a sort of “viral” way. Despite the fact that it also seems to have generated what appears to be a conflict between civilizations, the West against the East or more precisely, the Islamic world against the Western world. This “viral” diffusion produced new “formations” which are apparently integrated but which in fact struggle to survive as desperate antibodies of a system which indeed has already absorbed them. As a result, a mutation occurs which however does not follow a process of elaboration but it comes as instantaneous and unstoppable.

Today’s meeting is not the right opportunity to introduce this analysis but the phenomenon of suicidal terrorism by the young jihadists is an example. *Geographies* is attempting to further analyze this issue and will be presenting it in a Conference next year.

As we have had the opportunity to say, more than once, we can generally establish that the behaviours which we observe in today’s society, in different countries of the world as well, appear to be characterized by a tendency to “act the subconscious”, as though it were revealed inside out. As though the necessary distinction between the internal world and the external reality and the multiple elements distinguishing a subject, were evacuated and fragmented, in a way that is similar to the one which psychoanalytical thinking ascribes to psychotic thinking.

Subjectivity always seems to be dislocated elsewhere, in an extended physical place which by now includes both the inside and the outside without solution of continuity. A whole which is present, horizontal and simultaneous.

The main actor of this scene is the body. We can ask ourselves how its representation is transformed by these dynamics and indeed where does the body go.

Often we seem to be looking at the creation of a counter-reality which moves away from the body’s experience, as we know it, to take us to another dimension, similar to an hallucination, where meeting with reality is avoided, either because it is too painful or because there no longer are adequate representing instruments.

As we can also see in a lot of contemporary artwork or in certain adolescent practices, an altered body is brought on the scene, distorted, made unrecognizable, its parts and organs used in unusual ways.

It does not seem to us that the bodies which we happen to meet in our studies, through mass media, on the web, are bodies searching for an authentic bodily Self, belonging to an identifiable individual; they rather seem to pertain to a collective imaginary which exalts them, depriving them of their subjective features.

We could say that the body is strongly on the scene because there is a tendency to place on it problems which should rather rely on psychic elaboration, an evident sign of an insufficient symbolic function which is certainly a feature of today’s society.

For many years already, our vision of the body and the procedures we have so far used to understand and describe it, have been upturned. This causes unsettlement and disorientation and often, as a reaction, we feel reassured by taking for granted and as already acquired, behaviors which on the contrary are entirely new and still need to be understood and analyzed.

Indeed we often see that once the most reckless issues, which come out as perturbing novelties on the scene, have completed their positive function of deconstructing the most rooted and undisputed customs; they then impose themselves as new unquestionable models, which produce conforming behaviours and ideologies.

Yet the psychic organizations of desire cannot be directly transformed in socially applicable rights without going through an individual and collective elaboration, which recalls their symbolic and culturally determined aspect and above all, which problematizes them for their more “dislocated” aspects, in relation to the person and the social group.

This applies, first of all, to all those changes which relate to sexuality.

We know that the psychic and social container, composed of the Oedipal triad and of the diverse sexuality connected to it, on which for centuries the scheme representing reality was based, at least in western society, has suffered a crisis. This has dismantled the sense of Self which is no longer defined by the generational conflict or by sexual diversity.

At the moment, it is difficult to say whether there is a replacement of these psychic assumptions, through their transformation or if they remain functioning but disguised by altered forms.

 The paper by Gohar Homayounpour, which I do not wish to disclose here, looks deeply into this issue through the analysis of the transsexual experiences of his country, Iran, contributing a vertiginous vision of the practices and policies relative to the way this issue is addressed.

 Likewise, I will not disclose the other issues which are as demanding and which also refer to the new experience of the fragmented and altered body, used in unthinkable ways, which is brought upon us by the practices introduced by biotechnologies.

 The issue of transplants and surrogate motherhood, addressed in the paper by

Jeanne Wolff Bernstein in a striking way, outlines the psychic work underlying the possibility to accept alterity within one’s self and its connection to mourning and to the death drive.

These are in-depth analyses of complex issues which you may also find in the integral papers of our two speakers, in the book *Trans vitae / Le politiche dell’ambiguità*, just published in Italian (Mimesis).