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THE VOICE OF SENTIOPIL, SON OF THE CORN¹:
ANCIENT NAHUATL PROPHET FOR OUR TIMES

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¹ The myth has been orally collected in various previous versions and is now published in "Teiuan Tikintenkakiliaya in Toweyitataiuan. Les Dimos Contar a Nuestros Abuelos. Etnohistoria de San Miguel Tzinacapan." Tomo I, 1994, INAH (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia), México, a bilingual (Nahuatl-Spanish) presentation of a series of Nahuatl plots gathered by Taller de Tradición Oral Cepec (a present day Indian organization dedicated to preserve indian traditions). See also: Sanchez, Ma Eugenia and Almeida Edurado. "Synergistic Development and Participatory Action Research in a Nahuatl Community". The American Sociologist, 23:4 Winter 1993.

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ABSTRACT

Democracy and the defense of human rights are the highest achievements of modern Western civilization. They represent the peak of the human process of individuation (Fromm, 1941). The underlying "totalitarianism of market laws" (Bellah, 1992) engendered by the same system, with its foolish and indulgent waste of the planet's non-renewable resources, and the incommensurable human suffering fostered by the inequality and poverty it produces, is the principal threat to our decent subsistence and the source of our alienation.

The Nahuatl Myth of Sentiopil, Man's creator will be presented as the Indian representation of the paradox of human existence, a contradiction in itself, and from the very moment of its origins. Spirit and blood. Happy and playful on the one hand, greedy, envious and earthly on the other. The Son of the Corn, producer of music and happiness emerges profoundly and intimately identified with orphanhood, lack of security and protection. These characteristics are not experienced by the indians as a latent potential of the situation of childhood but as tangible facts of everyday life as it is lived in extreme poverty. Our profound powerless human condition is under these circumstances not easily idealized nor disguised by the accessibility of economical resources.

The Indian Nahuatl culture locates the centrality of Nature in both our human origins and future. It calls our attention to the present absence of a profound sense of human existence, equally valued amongst all ages, classes and genders. It identifies material ambition and disdain for the poor as ancestral vices, which impede human development.

Western culture lacks the highly-valued Nahuatl community sense of life. Our present day characteristic individualism and its profound longings for fraternity and human contact, so necessary in the healthy search for self-hood, will be illustrated in light of a dream and the life experiences of a contemporary Third World patient.

Our openly recognized clinical attention to the relational dimension of the analytic process offers us today the opportunity to immensely enrich our professional comprehension and awareness of our participation in today's troubled world through clinical experience which includes a greater perspective on patients with vastly different cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic origins. We will look at the passions emerging from the repetition of the patient's past experiences in which his own emotional subsistence was frequently threatened as was Sentiopil's (representing the mistreated indians and the poor) by his relations with his caretakers.



INTRODUCTION

Democracy and the defense of human rights are the highest achievements of modern Western civilization. They represent the peak of the human process of individuation (Fromm, 1941). The underlying "totalitarianism of market laws" (Bellah, 1992) engendered by the same system, with its foolish and indulgent waste of the planet's non-renewable resources, and the incommensurable human suffering fostered by the inequality and poverty it produces, is the principal threat to our decent subsistence and the source of our alienation.

The Nahuatl Myth of Sentiopil, Man's creator will be presented as the Indian representation of the paradox of human existence, a contradiction in itself, and from the very moment of its origins. Spirit and blood. Happy and playful on the one hand, greedy, envious and earthly on the other. The Son of Corn emerges –as do the Indians and the poor– profoundly and intimately identified with orphanhood, lack of security and protection. These characterize as a latent potential the very situation of childhood, yet even more tangible when it is not idealized. The process of becoming an adult means for a vast portion of humanity, to be able and to master the hability to overcome adversity.

The intimate quality of profound interpersonal relations and the dyadic process involved in responsive care (Ainsword, 1978, Sroufe and Flesson, 1986, Sroufe and Waters, 1977) that are the basis for developing a healthy "self-in-relation" have only recently been translated into words by women (Jordan et al 1991). Our openly recognized clinical attention to the relational dimension of the analytic process, offers us today the opportunity to fully share that wisdom (Devereux, 1967, Mitchel S, 1993 and Merton Gill, 1995). We have now the capacity to immensely enrich our professional comprehension and awareness of our participation in today's troubled world (Siirala, 1993) through clinical experience which includes a greater perspective on patients with vastly different cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic origins.

Our Western culture lacks the highly-valued Nahuatl community sense of life. We will look at the dreams and life experiences of a contemporary Third World patient, at the passions emerging from the repetition of his past in which his own emotional subsistence was frequently threatened by his relations with his caretakers.

THE NAHUATL CULTURE A SURVIVOR

The Nahuatl culture lives in Mexico, in an underground and hidden fashion, intermixed and surviving the basting of our Western "civilization" which fails to even take it into consideration, much less respect it. The ways of life of the industrialized world are considered as optimum and as a road close to reach the solution of the ills which beset humanity.

The arrogance concomitant to the exercise of power and the ease with which one tends to annihilate the perspectives of all



others who are different, should carefully and systematically be avoided in our dialogues based profession.

The impact produced by the indian story's peculiarly slow and repetitive rhythm constitutes a first opportunity to realize the vital contrasts which encompass our different ways of assuming existence. Think of the characteristic waiting of the Indian, that of the countryside peasant, so different from our common modern western life style. Notice how it involves an attentive attitude, patient and respectful of Nature's intervention. See how it is based on its own world conceptions. Nature is for the Nahuatl prior to and more important than voluntary and proposed actions of protagonists which eventually complement it¹. It calls our attention to the present absence of a profound sense of human existence, equally valued amongst all ages, classes and genders (Chazaro and Almeida, 1985). It's different manifestations identify material ambition and disdain for the poor as ancestral vices, which impede human development.

Sentiopil's Story: The Resilient Creator of Man

In the Nahuatl Story of Sentiopil, Man's creator, our spirit of freedom, symbolized by a hummingbird, falls in love with our earthly envious nature represented by a female cannibal. The love of the bird's light, ingenious and volatile nature, with the mysterious and gruesome force of the daughter of a tsitsinimit, (one of those supernatural and powerful cannibal beings, known in Nahuatl culture as the predecessors of humans), results in a ball of blood, which produces successively two red corn plants. Having passed through repeated vegetal stages, this ball is thrown to the spring by the ancient tsitsinimimej. The ball (which makes us analysts think of subsequent attempts and failures of being aborted), becomes rooted in the earth. Somehow, with the intervention of the water from the spring, it transforms into the newborn, Sentiopil.

The child does not have parents. The tsitsinimimej pick him up, they half nourish and care for the orphan who is born gifted with a type of supernatural magic. He is capable of producing music which makes his tutors, enjoy and dance. Then the story tells that they want to eat him up.²

The old couple in charge of Sentiopil, attempt to deceive him. They tell him that they are going to bathe him in temazcal, (a type of hot steam bath which is very commonly used amongst the Nahuatl for purification). With these sophistries, Sentiopil is introduced into the oven. The overly gifted youth is nevertheless able to save himself.

Because he is the son of God, as Indians over the years have explained, he received exceptional powers with which he could overcome the extremely adverse situation. Inside the oven³, he produced two little turtles who proceeded to form a very small lake. Sentiopil bathed in it and saved his life⁴.

Having survived thanks to the magic of his contact with the slow and encapsulated Nature's beings and identified with their well known capability to produce the water, Sentiopil sought out



revenge. Those who attempted to assassinate him were turned into ashes in exactly the same oven.

The story reaches the moment when Sentiopil (already really born) wants-needs to know about his father and searches for him. No one can help him in his cause until he turns to the dogs, who gather for him the meatless vestiges of his father: his bones. Yet, the youth, who is in search of his own masculine identity, requires his live spirit. He gathers up together the skeleton and wants to revive him. His mother –not referred to, at this point, as his step-mother, although she is- is needed in the crucial restorative procedure. Yet, she is curious and by disobeying his instructions not to look at the bones before the ceremony is completed, damages his manhood. By ignoring Sentiopil's instructions, and turning around when he had prohibited her to do so, she shatters the possibility of reviving his father.

The mother's presence made manifest, prevents him to succeed, to provide life. This scene refers in a metaphoric sense to the battle among the sexes and the symbolic Nahuatl incest prohibition. The son Sentiopil has to abandon the mother's house, sow in other fields and, assisted by animals and Nature, produce on his own account. Later in the story, another direct confrontation arises with his mother during his search for autonomy. This time, the mother instead of bringing him the bit of food which he had asked of her, becomes involved in preparing an inordinate amount of tortillas rather than the few which he had requested. She proves to be intrusive. For as much as she may desire, she is incapable of understanding the experiences and peculiar demands of her son gifted with such an important generative ability. The excess greatly bothers Sentiopil. For the Indian of this world and his culture, nothing more is involved than producing what is truly essential. Finally the youth leaves his town to go out on his own. He struggles until he traps a snake and tethers it in Mexico, which, according to the story, permits him to establish the most important cities in the region. He immediately after must hasten to leave earth before midnight, to prevent losing his immortality. However, his absence proves to be only temporary. He later returns dressed as a beggar, to visit his own creations. He is then treated with disdain and thus comes across human "civilized" arrogance and disrespect for the weak. Modern urban individualism of these city dwellers is confronted by Sentiopil making them listen to him by threatening them with a type of flood he gets to sprout from amongst the rocks and putting these "coyotes" very survival at risk. This name appears in the story for the first time. Meaning wolves "coyotes" is the name indians use until the present time, to refer to mestizos, Westernized men and women who they thus identify with foreign and voracious oppressors. With the threats made reality and the exercise of brute force the city dwellers are left no alternative but that of recognizing him. Thus, and only thus, they offer to grant him whatever he wishes. From his



place of invulnerability, it is he who may scorn them and make known that they boast undeservingly of grandeur⁵.

IN SEARCH OF HIS BEING: THE RESILIENT SON OF TODAY'S WESTERN CULTURE.

The oneiric representations which we will view below as a clinical illustration of the actuality of the Myth of Sentiopil, show the paradox of human existence as it has been experienced by Efrain, a youth of contradictory origin.

Dream:

"I was in my house in Acatitlán. My girlfriend had returned to her home. It was nighttime. Upon hearing that she had returned, I called her house. I tried to dial the telephone, but it connected me to another number. I tried again, but the dial got stuck. I decided to go look for her at her house, which is very close to mine. On my way, I realized that somebody was following me. I decided to wait for him and hit him. I stopped. He continued on his way and I didn't hit him. Not only that, but upon arriving at the corner of my girlfriend's house, I passed on by and couldn't go up to it. I attempted to stop and go in, but I couldn't. A giant force impeded me. I went into a shoe store which is nearby. While there, I heard a child above me in a type of tapanco (a type of bench made from fiber). His father was screaming, "Get out of here! I don't want to even see you!". The mother shouted at the man, "That's enough. Leave him alone." The child only said, "Don't kill me." The man threw a pewter plate. The child got down running, very frightened. I tried to console him, but I couldn't even talk. I tried to follow him, but I remained immobile. I saw the businesses all around. They were shoe and baby clothing stores. While the boy walked around there, one could see lots of people and as soon as he left, it became dark and there was nobody, not even a light.

In that moment I remembered that I had to go to my girlfriend's house. I headed toward there. It was dark, very dark. Upon arriving at the entrance, I saw her mother. The woman looked at me annoyed. I rang the doorbell and my girlfriend came out to answer. She looked at me as if to say "what a shame that you arrived in such a bad moment." It was as if she wanted to see me and as if she didn't want to. While hugging her, I realized that she wasn't really her. She was a fat and very ugly woman, but supposedly it was her. She asked me why I hadn't put on a shirt. I turned to look at myself and I realized that in effect, I was not wearing a shirt. I asked some children who were walking around there, if they could lend me one. They laughed at me. The one said to the other that he wouldn't lend me anything. Finally they lent it to me and it was very dirty. It was very small on me. It barely covered half of my chest and the fat woman laughed at me and the people who were there in the room were looking at me. Some asked who I was. Others said my name and some others said, "oh, I want to meet Efrain." Right then, the entire scene changed. My girlfriend and I are in the room of the apartment where I currently live with my brother. I ask her if she wants to see some of my



brother's Italian books. He has a lot. She says that she would prefer to tune the piano. I ask her what piano. She tells me that she learned to tune it in the house of my other brother. I decide to follow her drift. I tell her that that's okay, she can tune it, although I don't know what piano or anything else she's talking about. That's where the dream ends."

Although the associations and background information about Efrain's past and present life experiences are necessary to understand the actual emotional moment and the struggle which he molds into these dream images, Efrain transmits in a symbolic way his doubts about his own sense of identity. He seems to query almost literally in one of the images who is Efrain, I want to meet him. There also appears a sense of threat to his existence. The child inside of himself seems to have been terrified by the attempts against his life, he must wander alone in the streets full of stores and people who do not even notice him.

Efrain is seeking yet simultaneously avoiding the possibility of establishing-developing-continuing the relationship with women, with the absent girlfriend and -as it would be inferred transferentially in a double game of proximity-distance, strength-destruction - with his analyst.

The roots of a modern orphan.

Efrain's birth, which actually took place in conflictive conditions for the adults in charge of him, seems to have complicated and simultaneously consolidated mixed patterns of his caretaker's daily lives.

He was the last child of a family of eight. For more than 20 years, this family accepted living in the household a "friend". He was taken into the family and offered "temporary" refuge due to a crisis which followed his separation from his own wife and children. Ever since, the family members became accustomed to calling him "uncle". Even Efrain referred to him that way, despite the fact that he was his biological son. That paternity was never openly recognized as such by the family group as much as it was so apparent. During the course of analytic investigation, we were able to clarify how obvious it really was.

As a successful businessman, the "uncle" became the family's economic provider from the very moment of his arrival on. The family would certainly have endured hardships otherwise.

Dream, Myth and Reality.

The terms of the relationships which Efrain can establish with women and how these are modelled, are apparent in his dream, which he brought to a session several months after the beginning of treatment. It seems to allude to a good part of his family history's essential elements. It describes his ambiguous feelings for his girlfriend who he continues to seek out, with the sense that he lacks something necessary to conquer her. She, proves suddenly to be accessible, a possibility which urges him to seek communication, but fails repeatedly to get in contact. He then heads out towards her house. Above and beyond his intentions, he is aware of something very strong which impedes him.



In front of the door, alone, he once again corroborates the dimension of his own found forces and is unable to enter, nor even knock on the door.

The following scene shows him involved in a type of business where he would most certainly venture to acquire "his own shoes", perhaps signifying a type of legitimacy. The plot unfolds into a melodramatic scene in which a frightened young boy is banished. Efrain is unable to get close to him (the threatened boy inside himself) nor console him. Following the renewed persecution sequence, now fraught with life threats to the boy who goes down streets alone, Efrain finds out he is surrounded by the businesses, the institutions where money is exchanged for baby clothes and shoe stores, representing once again the possibilities of acquiring through money exchange his missing legitimized space in the family.

Late afternoon, in the darkened panorama, Efrain suddenly remembers his original purpose to reach his girlfriend's house. This time it is the figure of her mother and her attitude of rejection which becomes another of the obstacles to overcome. Evoking his own ambivalence in his search for her, she turns out to be "that fat woman" and his "anxiously desired girlfriend". The composite woman who he was seeking and avoiding at the same time, also receives him with her own touch of ambivalence.

During the exchange of encounters/dis-encounters, he fashions himself as a type of uncouth ashamed child, without rights, shirt-less as if he would be dressed as Sentiopil like a beggar⁶. A part of him behaves as if only through what his brothers own and obtain –maybe representing the future "uncles" of his past– that it will be possible for him to keep his girlfriend. On the one hand he offers her books which do not belong to him. On the other hand, she demands a piano which supposedly another of his brothers owns. The piano combines two types of motifs. Although this request involves a musical thus art related instrument, it is the most costly and implies at the same time a socio-economic level higher than that which Efrain could reasonably offer.

This seems to be the most obvious metaphors as they are related to Efrain's aspiration to re-establish, repeat, evoke the figure of both fathers in the original triangle with the mother⁷.

The Course of the Therapeutic Process.

Due to bouts of severe anguish Efrain attended several series of therapeutic sessions ever since he was 19 years old. He travelled expressly for this purpose from his town located over 1,000 kilometers from Mexico City. After one year and a half, during which he went to study in another city, and to the extent that he was able to resolve the circumstances of his external life, he proceeded to move to live and study in Mexico City. This permitted him to participate in a psychoanalytic treatment.

He mentioned as the immediate detonator of the initial anxiety crisis his having experienced episodes of "sleepwalking" in which with unsuspected force he beat the "uncle". Efrain



shared the room which he, "the uncle", had been using ever since he arrived at the family's house, even before Efraim's birth. There and throughout his childhood, Efraim was a captive witness of the love encounters which the "uncle" cultivated with his mother. The episodes were thought of or exculpated by all as "prayers", like supplications in spiritual-magic ceremonies. Efraim seemed to still believe this even when he began treatment. The "primary intention" of these ceremonies was to obtain miracle cures for extraordinary illnesses, mainly of himself, or more frequently, to obtain economic advantages which would assure the success of the business administered by both the "uncle" and his mother.

Efraim was born, like Sentiopil, with the gifts of artistic talent and sensitivity. After he had survived failed attempts to eliminate him, in his character of evidence of blames not assumed by his parents, he finds himself obliged to integrate and participate with a role relevant to the plot of the lives of his "cannibalistic-like" guardians who, instead of assuming a parental role they rather constantly took advantage of him, exposing him to situations of genuine emotional risk.

Like Sentiopil, Efraim has been seeking all along to save his life and to consolidate, repeatedly and in distinct fashions, his own sense of identity. The search for his father and the difficulties in achieving his self-esteem as a man, originating in the conflict with his parents, but particularly with his mother –disposed as she was to sacrifice him and as if she would be his tsitsinimej stepmother.

To the extent that we could proceed to recognize the family facts for what they were, it was increasingly possible to understand a good part of the symptoms from which he was suffering. Many had intimately to do with doubts concerning his sexual identity. His true origin became relevant as did the scenes in which from a very young age he had to make consequent and remain an accomplice in his mother's disassociative-hysterical experiences.

In addition to using him as an enticement, witness and active participant in the so called "prayers" –during which it was common for Efraim to speak as a medium of the supposed interventions of a female's Doctor spirit– his mother also sent him as a peace emissary during the frequent, heated hostilities with the "uncle", who would threaten to leave. In order to manipulate him and assure that his participation would be effective, the woman did not hesitate to fling tearful suicide threats which the alarmed child, Efraim, experienced in all of its melodramatic splendor.

In the sessions, Efraim reconstructs the blackmail which he imposed on the "uncle" while playing the role of his mother's messenger. He also becomes aware of the origins of his incontrollable like impulses to steal money. Since he learned and became accustomed to take money his mother and "uncle" used to leave at his reach, and they pretended not to notice it whenever they discovered the frequently missing sums, he got used to take



money as exercising a type of revenge. With the yield of dissimulated blackmail, Efrain spent disproportionate amounts at school and in the street, earning the admiration of classmates and friends.

In accordance with the progress of the sessions of analytic investigation, Efrain came to recover memories of that family history. That which was being explained in the house did not prove easy to adapt to Western cannons. The shocking attempts to justify and complicate things in order to hide what in fact occurred, demanded suppositions entailing supernatural affairs, unexplainable through reason and distinct from what was really involved.

To the extent that Efrain continues to recover his past – never officially recognized – and while we come to understand the transcendental role which he performed in the family history, his incommensurable anguish and doubts with respect to his sexual orientation begin to dissipate.

A short time after having the dream described above, another dream image, presented him in erotic scenes with a friend's mother. After being discovered, he suffers in the dream persecution by the husband who wants to kill him.

The amazingly eloquent oedipal conflict and repetition of his childhood love triangle, denote Efrain now occupying the place of his biological father. Once his sexual role is assumed, the persecution reappears. This time the woman herself wants to destroy him. Everyone around him –including his entire family– turn their backs on him and mark him as a traitor.

As was to be expected, the relationship with Efrain during treatment has not been easy to establish. The periods following the crises of anguish were succeeded by both incursions into, and frantic flights from, the literary terrain. He produced texts which were published for displaying unquestionable worth. He also participated for a time in specialized workshops where he received open encouragement to dedicate himself more seriously to writing. He then always has avoided getting more seriously involved, because he says he is perfectly aware that he would not earn enough, in that kind of profession, to lead the style of life which he desires.

He currently at the beginning expressed an ambivalent gratitude for receiving my attention, which made him feel so much better. It was nevertheless, ever evident that everything which we analyzed or reviewed in the sessions related to his sexual and working life was utilized immediately thereafter in acting-outs against himself, like resistances which complicated the daily conditions of his real life. He thus got married after having made pregnant a girlfriend and interrupted treatment. After five years he sought to reestablish it once more.

I have now come to think he was testing the limits of my patience, as he frequently continues to do until the present time. When once, not long ago he was able to overcome these limits, and while I had become more aware of the sort of provocation he is constantly exerting I reacted in a way that



allowed me to discover a recourse which I have later used purposefully and which has since always proved to convert the session into a immediate real opportunity for him to express his feelings and experiences in greater depth. As soon as I started telling him in an emphatic manner that in effect he had every right to destroy his options, to do damage to himself and in that way demonstrate the rancor which he was harboring, he became astounded, startled. Then he laughed a bit, partly at what I had said, and partly at himself and his potential for self-destruction. Unmistakable evidences of insight then followed, a demonstration of his ability to put his most genuine feelings into words, over-charged with emotion. Expressing himself in this way, as if he would have had a chance to make his own decisions, and as if I would have renounced to play the role of an intrusive (step)mother, he suddenly appeared to be ready to renounce a good part of his fragmentation and with doing so earning some sort of a right to exist⁸.

PSYCHOANALYSIS BETWEEN CULTURAL FRONTIERS

Many patients who are treated in so-called Third World countries come from poor families that are large and barely structured. Their members effectively survive by implementing daily life strategies which in many senses implicate sacrifice and superlative neglect of their vital and affective needs. Nor is it rare to observe mistreatment and the utilization of children as a target for discharging and alleviating frustration⁹. The adults (very frequently in a familial organization headed by a single mother) have to assume an exceptionally stressful style of life, one which fails to provide them dignifying or sufficient options for the care and attention of themselves, much less for their families. This becomes increasingly evident when they emigrate to the large cities, as is so common in these type of economies. In search of material resources, they are forced to leave behind the benefits of their co-habiting in extensive families, their daily contact with nature and a life based on subsistence. Despite the fact that their economic condition is classified as miserable in statistics –and in reality it certainly is–, this type of lifestyle also was offering them human cultural resources of invaluable worth. Their traditional way of life protected them through customs and rituals rooted in their other and distinct manner of valuing life; an essentially different culture.

We psychoanalysts that presence the processes of this type of patients hold the opportunity to learn to take part in vitally different perspectives. If we dare, we can come to discern that we are dealing with people who are incredibly capable, intuitive, who are divided, confused, situated between cultural frontiers that simultaneously enrich them. The combination of contrary vital solutions and difficult integration makes them not infrequently, more than complex incomprehensible entities within the original analytic scheme (since it emerged from the patriarchal, nuclear European vision which gave it birth). Confining ourselves to schemes, myths and traditions which for



these patients are quite foreign, often proves to be the most accessible option available to us. The opposite alternative which proves counter-current and not always easy to sustain is on the other hand, that of learning from the vital visions which they actually represent (Casement, 1985).

Very sensitive, artists, almost as if they were autistic, fearing to be discovered in their critical-marginal intimacy, they avoid establishing and consolidating the analytic link to whatever extent possible. They place it in jeopardy at every opportunity. Some due to the color of the skin, others for hair color, many for the taken for granted class differences they rebuff themselves where intimacy is concerned. They secretly preserve their sensation of their social-climbing, as betrayal to their own truths and origin. Fearful of the encounter, suspecting the existence of socio-economic differences which ultimately will fatally disqualify them, they hide the ultimate certainty that something very valuable of their being is lost in their internal sphere, whenever they are careless to the extent of becoming capable of assuming the culture of "success"¹⁰.

In the office, we not rarely witness struggles similar to those of Sentiopil. They are extreme high-risk confrontations, which have to be liberated opportunely, in spite of the adverse elements available. It is not coincidental that this is so frequently the path that must be plowed and from which a man, a woman, emerges.

Just as Sentiopil's, Efrain's slow process is paused and difficult, oriented toward integrating his sense of identity. It certainly has yet to be more definitively resolved. His unsteady progress is being contended between resistances and periods of recovery, which although moderate, have also given evidence of persistence.

Notes

1. From the Indian's perspective, human beings and their actions do not definitively occupy the central role nor the ultimate objective of the Universe.

2. This intention –clearly manifest in the story although it may signify the recognition that it has to do with "something good, which is thus eaten"– makes us think, of envy, the one which glimmers in the eyes of Melanie Klein, sheltering the infantile desire to consume that which produces satisfaction, in order to make it one's own.

From my experience of being in contact with especially economically deprived populations (Gojman, 1992 and Millan 1992) swallowing or destroying that which produces happiness or satisfaction, can be common as the (apparently masochistic) disposition of not allowing oneself to openly and purposefully search for gratification. The pain of supporting extreme deprivations which are in effect unavoidable, weakens by becoming fatalistic. The most efficient strategy is then to escape the continuous disappointment of the illusion and disillusion of



every moment, to repress the desire, behind frustration and resentment

3. Which we are led to think of as the maternal womb.

4. My "counter-transferential" conception, marked by "progress", is immediately led to feel surprised when confronted with the paradox of receiving in the worst moment possible, the assistance from the turtles, naturally slow and here especially small, who successively produce a very small lake, and thus save life!.

5. In various moments although to a greater extent near the end of the story roars of cannibalistic hunger as well as the thirst for ethnic revenge are uttered.

The final message is nevertheless without any thirst of revenge. It is affirmative and perfectly coherent with a favorable prognostic because it asserts (after this and other terrible stories of mistreatment and abuse to the indians, perpetrated all along their history) that "we are all valuable, nobody has the right to treat anyone else as if they were not." This interpretation is effectively opposite to a neo-fascist one so unfortunately recurrent these days.

6. It is in fact what is said of someone who has lost everything economically - "not even a shirt on his back".

7. He might also subtly be wanting to offer his artistic talent, not recognized as his own in the dream, as a way of following the woman's current, as long as he can keep her.

8. This successively giving him a chance for real options to emerge, a possibility for defending himself, for confronting himself and his past which he had been reliving in every moment.

9. As has been repeatedly noted in longitudinal prospective studies regarding attachment in populations that are economically deprived, generally with the single mother as the head of household, elevated indicators of anxious attachment in the children (Ainsworth, Sroufe) which simultaneously encounter forms of relating coherent with this non-accessibility or succession between accessibility and non-accessibility, should surely be rooted in an equivalent phenomenon.

10. To this day, although perhaps for not much longer (while endeavors to integrate to the industrialized and totalizing world persists), Mexico is a country that brandishes an enormous range of autochthonous cultures, with their languages, customs, art religion, food and music. The majority are experienced in an occult fashion, almost like a secret, but with the illusion of someday, somewhere encountering a space to revive, the one which should belong to all of us, as human beings on earth.



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