#### PhD project

«No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin or his background or his religion»

«People must learn to hate and if they can learn to hate they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite»

Nelson Mandela<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. Research focus:

(Introduction and explanation about my point of view)

Violence, violence behaviour, context of violence. Combining to the anthropology the method of the psychodrama and of the psychogenealogy<sup>2</sup> I would try to understand the deep reason of this phenomenon that it is so scandalous to our species.

Carolyn R. Nordstrom made studies on the genocide in Sri Lanka and Mozambico; Antonius C. G. M. Robben among the desaparesidos in Argentine; Nancy Shaper-Huge studied the shapes of violence among the brazilian slums; Philippe Bourgois made research on the rapes of group in El Salvador; Alexander L. Hilton made studies on the red Khmer's massacres in Cambogia and there are many other example that I can make about this<sup>3</sup>.

Anthopology is already entered in this theme: it studied deeply the violent side of our species and its thinking is extremely interesting.

We notice that trauma and violence can be transfer to the next generation, from individual to individual. Just for make an example Yolanda Gampel say that the subjects are "radioactive": they bring within themselves (within the unconscious?) "pollution substances", memories does not digested yet which influence their live.

Bodies are not mere matter inert, they feel and remember. When the bodies live some violence they seems to be registered within the cell.

Whole our life is inscribed in the body: pain and fear are not only abstract emotion but they live in our flesh-matter, in our cell; they become skeleton, muscles, character, stopped energy, symptom and pathology.

1And if a person like Mandela can say this then I can believe it. Mandela suffered at the hands of evil yet at the same time was able to see the power of love. As anthropologist I start from here, from this thinking.

2This discipline is studying the psycology of the single sobject releted with his genealogy tree and so releted to his emotional background, to his biography. Have a look the studies by Anne Anceline Schützenberger, Jacob Levi Moreno, Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy, Yolanda Gampbel

3Have a look Fabio Dei, Antropologia della violenza.

Anthropology understood very well all of the above, but it never speak about this in an open and systematic way.

I would continuous this studies about anthropology of violence in my way, introducing a couple of new element which they never been studied from the anthropology: psychodrama and psychogenealogy.

## 2. Hypothesis

Anthropology of violence got down in context of strong conflict and it understood from the beginning that there cannot being research without action, research and nothing else worth a loss of responsibility. Anthropologist noticed soon how poor is go in a context of violence and just describe it: entering in contact with a context means start to know that context and knowing the context means become conscious about that. Once taking consciousness, if the context, which we would studied, is delicate like the context of wars, genocides or daily violence (Shaper-Huge and Bourgois talk about that) we cannot make just research any more. This one become action-research that means performing inside the same context that we are studying. The contexts that I'm going to be studying will be for sure context of violence around the five continents, but within sections of psychodrama and psychogenealogy.

I'll go to visit the violence in the five continents and I'll study those context in which the people are already using or want use the method of the psychodrama and psychogenealogy as method to understand and go over experience of violence.

In these context I think I'll find answers about how can be possible performed, suffer and maybe digested experiences of violence.

It would be extremely useful studying the potentiality of the psychodrama and psychogenealogy in violence context along the big five continents: Americas, Africa, Europe, Asia and Oceania

This is that I propose to myself to do, my studying project, my anthropological research: experiences of violence inside the sections therapy group using the method of the psychodrama and psychogenealogy.

#### 3. Current status of the research

There are no official data currently in anthropology to support this theory of the psychodrama and psychogenealogy. In other words, there are no, in anthropology, field studies, in violence contexts, which try to enquire the psychodramatic and transgenerational theory and practise: how work it, why work it and what could it explain which interest our specie, whereas instead could be useful do this.

This is one of the important points that I'll try to develop in my research.

I have three themes I propose to combine, which need to be read together, one in light of the other; they could make clear on the human behaviour . And this has not done yet in anthropology.

The three themes that I'll try to confront are:

- -The body and its importance
- -The hypothesis about unconscious

-The utility about the psycho-genealogic prospective in anthropology

# 3.1. Anthropology of the Body

The anthropology of the body is to understand what the body is. To understand the anthropology of the body we have to first understand the material through which we exist.

The body is the instrument for existing. In a note encountered in the book of Pizza, *Medical Anthropology*. *Knowledge, practices and policies of the body*, Levi-Strauss says that «no, the man is the product of his body, but vice versa, has been able to do anytime, anywhere of your body a product of his techniques and his representations»<sup>4</sup>.

We perceive through the body, are one body, and perceive the world around us through the body, our «experience and our knowledge are incorporated»<sup>5</sup>, even more clearly, «is the body that knows the world»<sup>6</sup>.

The body is the concrete space in which to live and represents us, the part of the human that can be manipulated: to express the wide range of emotions (the ritual naven by Bateson mentions<sup>7</sup>), to establish the transition to the condition of man (the transformative rite of the imbalu at Gisu<sup>8</sup>), or the transition from the state of nature to that of humans (at Caduveo of Brazil that they paint their face to be recognized as a human and not mere animals). Or interpreted as a symbol of alliance in the eucharist or the resurrection at easter (in both is the central body of Jesus). These are all expressions of the importance of the body.

Also, we have to take into account the behaviours and performance of the body: the simple fact of walking, to make war, love, give birth, sleep, laugh, crouch and Mauss brings many other examples. All of the above shows everyone how the body will serve to communicate who we are and what we want. These are examples of how the body is at the centre of our lives.

In short, in the words of Marcel Mauss the body is the first and most natural instrument of man. A tool that naturalizes cultural practices.

To techniques du corps Mauss meant exactly this: the body's ability to naturalize through observation and imitation of the gestures within its own cultural context. By imitating and "stealing with the eyes" the

5Ibidem, pag. 29

6Ibidem.

7It is performed among the Iatmul of the New Guinea at the moment in which a teenager achive an important aim, which mark the transit from teenager to adult. It is a camouflage rite which suspend the normal bodily habitus of men and women to permit unusual expression of feelings. The camouflage consist in a roles's exchange and in an exaggeration of the opposite sex behaviour.

8Gisu are a popolation which live to the slopes of the El-gon's mountain, between Uganda and Kenya. The rite has been studied by Suzette Heald. It is consist in a real transformation. It is a circumcision, which during three days. The young person will be make dirty with sostances that reguard important processes of transformation. The guy is considerated a fluid sostance like mud and he has to be transformed in new human status.

<sup>4</sup>Cfr. Giovanni Pizza, pag 253, note n. 2 to the chapter I "Figure del corpo" (trad it. *Antropologia medica. Saperi, pratiche e politiche del corpo*).

behaviours of others, we learn to move and occupy our social space. It is as if the body was able to absorb the knowledge with "pores of the skin" says Pizza. It is an evocative image that makes this idea.

Two anthropologists who have studied the body a lot, that is, Margaret Lock and Nancy Scheper-Hughes, talking about *mind-full body*, a "body full of mind"; a thinking body, able to remember the past. A heavy past, critical and negative? Could be difficult to live with it.

So I would like to address the issue of incorporation and show that each individual carries in his body a long history (especially histories-family) to which it is bound. More of this story is unknown to us, and less we are free.

Very often those who precede us in the family tree can leave in us a "trans-generational phantom" that leads us to repeat actions which are yet to be resolved.

Previous lives that we have penetrated inside and "trans-generational phantom" that we have incorporated can perhaps help us understand evil anthropological in general and who commit evil actions in particular?

## 3.2. Psychogenealogy

Psycho-genealogy invites us to observe the human world as a generation *system*. A system, like everything in nature. Nature express itself through systems.

Each of us is the summary of a huge family tree inevitably embedded in culture and history.

Antonio Bertoli<sup>9</sup> say that each of us is a «complex net of networks in interrelationship with each other». Are the summary 1) of our species, which makes it a biotype, that is, bipedal mammals; 2) the summary of our culture, which makes it an anthrop-type, that is, a Maori rather than an Iranian, or a Malagasy rather than a Zulu, a Wichi rather than an Italian; 3) the summary of his family, which makes it a genotype and in the same time a phenotype, that is, the depositary of the genetic heritage.

All of the above has an influence on our psychology and on our lives, that is, on our biography. Obviously, who we are does not determinate from all of the above, but depend from all of the above. To psychogenealogic experience we are a biological and psychological evolution of who came before us.

Psycho-genealogy is an anthropological perspective as well not only extremely interesting, but very precious, because it helps us understand "human nature" and also to make clear around our theme of violence and its nature.

In this psychological perspective the genealogic tree is precious, because it can explain our emotional background.

Anne Ancelin Schützenberger said «any system depends on its ecosystem»<sup>11</sup>. So, every person born and grow up within a family environment in which will share joys and sorrows. Willy-nilly if in the history of

<sup>9</sup>Cfr. Psico-bio-genealogia.

<sup>10</sup>Exist a "human nature"? it is a difficult one, anyway who write is persuade that it exist. It is just a intellectual proposal which could be useful, at moment, because we have no proofs about it

<sup>11</sup>Cfr. A. A. Schützenberger, The ancestors syndrome, pag 118

our family there are imbalances, negativity, that is, painful events, we will inherit, as well as we inherit the genetic heritage.

Each of us has behind its self dozens of people in his family tree, which interlace other family trees.

It is easier than in a family intersect dozens of names and it is just as easy to get to two centuries of history and have grandparents or great-grandparents who participated in important historical events, war dead, imprisoned, with difficult experienced and much more.

Genocides, wars, incarcerations, but also deadly diseases, suicides and any other event not yet processed but buried in the unconscious. All of above, in the trans-generational perspective, ends up in our bodies, in us.

So it becomes very clear at this point why the body is our history and why it has a history.

I make use of psychological genealogy, by virtue of that anthropological consciousness, from which it is clear that the body is the place where thought and life are interlace in a complex bond.

Nancy Scheper-Hughes shows how the disease is an "embodied rebellion"<sup>12</sup>, while Michael Taussig says that «it is as if the "nervous system" became a metaphor built the "socio-political system"»<sup>13</sup>. I believe, therefore, have the right to be influenced by this research and these anthropologists, as well as by research and observations which Schützenberger did in twenty years of psychotherapy.

Trans-generational psychology has behind it important contributions: insights, observations, experiences, social experiments which start even from Freud. His studies on dreams, the personal unconscious, the "collective psyche", the concept of the "uncanny" they have been retaken, reinterpreted, reworked; they have inspired, influenced, led to new considerations and new interpretations psychologists and therapists as Schützenberger.

The study's Jung on archetypes, the collective unconscious and synchronicity. The experience gained in the psychodrama by Jacob L. Moreno<sup>14</sup>, who has worked in prisons and in a community of deviant women; with alcoholics and couples in crisis managing to positively transform the lives of these people (he has also developed the method of sociometry). The "invisible family loyalty" by Hungarian psychotherapist Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy and the concept of "family justice", "family accounts" and "parentsation".

Other significant contributions are also those by Nicholas Abraham and Maria Török<sup>15</sup> on the concept of "crypt" and "phantom", unconscious figures to explain the repetition of traumatic events, painful or simply stressful. Working on subjects who had acted without knowing why, as if "they had another" the two scholars represented the phenomenon talking about a "phantom" who acted in those people as a "ventriloquist", or as in the case of a possession.

<sup>12</sup>Studies conducts in the north-est of Brasil, to the slopes of Alto do Cruzeiro.

<sup>13</sup>Cfr. Giovanni Pizza, op. cit., pag 44

<sup>14</sup>Psychologist and father of the psycho-drama method.

<sup>15</sup>Ungarien psychologist

Decisive has been the searches by Josephine Hilgard<sup>16</sup>, landed the discovery of the "anniversary syndrome", after a study about the children of the families deported from the concentration camps and extermination or interned in asylums.

These studies, in the psychological field, just confirm and deepen the ideas and anthropological reflections about habitus, incorporation and inseparability between the mind and the body. This is the idea which I have done about the contribution by psycho-genealogy.

It is in this perspective that the holistic approach of the "primary archetypes" by Antonio Bertoli and the "psychomagic" by Jodorowsky are grafted, providing an interesting contribution made of concrete experiences.

#### 3.3. Depth psychology and Jungian unconscious

The question of what should be the level of consciousness that takes in account an anthropologist is a matter that is placed in front of each researcher.

I believe that the lives of men and women will continue in the night's sleep, in dreams, in which pitted the unconscious contents: memories, fears, desires, expectations, impulses, aspirations and parts of the personality that in waking and solar life cannot emerge - because of social issues organized in permits and prohibitions - and this is, by now, an acquired from psychology and neurology.

So, for me the unconscious level of life is, like the conscious's one, real. Neurological studies have widely understood that the brain does not distinguish between dream and waking. For the unconscious does not rest, everything is life. Reality! And we really think that this inner part of us, even if it is silent and invisible to the conscience, do not finish among the artist's fingers, or in the hands of the murderer? In the gestures and glances, politics, economics, religion and at all levels where we organize the society?

The psycho-analysis of Jung is an analysis of the deepness within the human animal. About which myths, symbols and dreams seem to indicate as the source of the culture.

All his therapeutic work is in fact tended to reconstruct and integrate the parts of the personality: of the light and of the shadow, of the good and of the bad, of the goodness and of the evil which are in us, through the reading of dreams, the interpretation of synchronisms, the religious symbols, the management of transference.

To understand the meaning of violence, we have to understand what it means this path toward the Self, this research toward the completeness of the Self, but to understand the Self we have to talk about the hypothesis of archetypes, that is, about the image of the syzygy and shadow linked to Christian symbolism as well. Authentic unconscious powers, real «divinity as the antiquity had very rightly conceived them»<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>16</sup>US psychologist

# 4. Methodology:

The research is a participant observation in anthropological spirit, thus I believe that the participation should be the first step. With this I would express the necessity to apply the method on my biography. At moment I'm seeking data on my family tree, for give an example.

So I would try on myself such method to get that "sensitivity" and "educate" my body to that delicate and intense "dimension" which is to create inside the psychodrama and psychogenealogy groups.

I would mainly conduct myself of in-depth interviews, but if the circumstances require it, I could avail myself for structured interviews (if the subject is too evasive, elusive and the interviews are likely to become extremely long, etc.) as well.

The aim is collect significant data for process them and check the validity of my hypothesises.

## 5. Timing:

First year, first semester: finding bibliographic date or research on the fathers and mothers of the psychodrama and psychogenealogy. Researches in Americas.

First year, second semester: researches in Africa.

Second year, first semester: researches in Asia

Second year, second semester: researches in Oceania

Third year: processing of the obtained data and the presentation of the final thesis.

## 6. Feasibility of the project:

In all honesty, my intention – ethnography within violence context using the method of the psychodrama and psychogenealogy– is an entirely new work for me and I do not know, to date, how to assess the difficulty of the undertaking. I think, intuitively, that the feasibility of my research is difficult because the climate within the groups is really delicate and none every group could accept me during the sessions.

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