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From “parianism” to the intrusion complex

My candle burns at both ends;
It will not last the night;
But ah, my foes, and oh my friends –
It gives a lovely light!

- Edna St. Vincent Millay

In a scientific work one has to be precise. In other words “we cannot put apples and oranges together”; this is also true and important in the human sciences.

Unlike the majority of researchers, I belong to a marginal group that questions the inadequate use of the word “racism” before dealing with the consequences of the actual concept. In this respect, I agree with Albert Camus, who said, “Calling things by the wrong name contributes to the evil of the world.” (Camus, quoted by: Jeanclaude 2004, URL 1) I am of the opinion that one can easily analyse this phenomenon, which is after all a social one, with the help of an appropriate other concept. It is my view that the concept of “racism” is so easily established that it spreads itself effortlessly as the following proverb says: “Weeds are the hardest growth to get rid of”. It focuses on the obviously visible, albeit insignificant differences among humans, rather than emphasizing their similarities. I believe, as does Yves Barel (1993), in the lack of differentiation of the primordial soup of humanity, which is symbolic of its complexity as well as its unity. In order to reverse the perspective and give unity to the human species, I wish to speak of “uni-variety”. In fact, humans possess the ability to use language from two aspects: the emotional and the designatory. The latter sets us apart from animals, which only function in the emotional mode.

Why do I refer to language, although I am not a linguist? The following four reasons will explain this approach:

a) I use language to illustrate the “univariety” of humanity – according to the saying: “All equal, all different” – because unity means neither homogeneity nor (in the particular case of humans) identity. In actuality, identity, in regard to humans, is always two-sided because it is derived from differentiation. I will explain this point in more detail in conjunction with the intrusion complex.

b) In linguistics, as linguists (e.g. Arrivé, Saussure, and Pichon) (cf. Arrivé 1994) tell us, ambiguity is accepted and has its rightful place in dictionaries. “Polysemy” (multi-ambiguity: ex. “hôte” et “amateur”) as well as its related term “homonymy” can also be found. We all make use of a “double” language – a language and a meta-language-what is said and unsaid or the unconscious exist. This duplicity in language unveils a social reality, since human beings, according to Emile Durkheim (1994: 23), are also ambiguous; at the same time they are intellectual and physical beings. That is why sociology also speaks of the social individual.

c) I return to language also because the importance of the word is evident; the Bible points out that words are the beginning of everything. “At the beginning there was the word”. When someone’s word is put into action, it becomes powerful; in German for example you can combine these two words: power and word “Machtwort” means the capacity to tell others what they have to do. It does not matter if this word is in the form of an order, a prayer or an incantation, as long as it is realized in action. This could be called the magic of the word. In my eyes, this makes language a source of power. Since any power is numinous, meaning fascinating and frightening at the same time (mysterium faszinans and mysterium tremendum [Rudolf 1923]), this confirms the duplicity discussed above.

d) Finally, in spite of the fact that numerous different languages, due to various social groups, display certain characteristics, certain traits can be traced back to one source: the Tower of Babel, to use a common metaphor for the original unity of languages. I will deal with two of these traits: languages are certainly different, but they all have an ambiguous structure called “Janus face”.

1) The first is the *designatory aspect of articulated language*, which differs from animal language in its specificity. Only humans use language to name objects.

2) The second characteristic is the recurrence of the ambiguity phenomenon, in which two opposing meanings are contained in one term. This phenomenon attains great importance in view of the manner in which it is readily attributed to certain cultures, assuming a type of complacency towards inherent contradictions in their own languages. This is known as the so-called “prelogical” mentality. Language, the method of communication that sets us apart from animals, our most valuable cultural resource which created the cradle of human interaction, accepts opposition under the lexical union. Linguists tell us that this phenomenon (Enantiotropia) is indeed common in many languages. One could even go so far as to say that the few languages where this phenomenon does not exist are the exceptions to the rule. This has been metaphorically referred to as a “Janus face”. In my opinion, conference interpreters are the true living “Janus faces” because they have to listen to one language and at the same time to speak another language: two quite different languages are used at the same time from the same person.

“Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto” (See Dictionnaire: Petit Larousse 1967 : VI). *I am a human; nothing that is human could be foreign to me.*

In order to clarify the meaning and the function of “Janus face” one has to refer to the “principle of antagonism”, which was developed by Stéphane Lupasco (URL 2). This principle clearly shows the importance of the context in which the words are used and how they can mean exactly the opposite too. In French, for example, the word “hôte” can mean “guest” or “host”.

The symbolic function of language is a constant that one finds in every language, in spite of differences. The Janus face represents this constant and interests not only linguists, but also psychoanalysts and sociologists. In my research I have always been on the lookout for terms that possess a double meaning. I have created some myself, such as “Domino partnership”, referring to Afro-European love relationships; “pelicanism” (see Mutombo 1998; 2002), as a

symbol of an extreme sacrifice in love and therewith a double struggle for oneself, as well as for the object; “id-alterity” as a synonym for “alter ego”. I took “numinous” from Otto Rudolf (1923), meaning a double mystery – equally *faszinans* and *tremendum*. The “numinous” reflects the dialectic between the sacred and the profane.

Among various depictions of the Latin God Janus (Gatekeeper to the City: entrance and exit), I prefer that of Ovid. For Ovid, at the moment when all the elements (air, water, fire, and earth) were separated from one another, Chaos became Janus. That means that Chaos unites all of the natural elements into one whole. This power or inner strength only materializes in Janus through differentiation. This process is, however, not an interruption because Chaos and Janus form a synthesis of the self and the other.

Here are a few examples of “Janus faces” in some of the languages I know:

French:

personne: can mean “someone” or “no one”

écran: can mean screen or filter

La peur des ennemis: can be interpreted as the fear of one’s enemies or the fear that the enemies themselves experience

Numineux: attractive and frightening at the same time

Tshiluba (my native language):

Makelela: can mean “yesterday” or “tomorrow”

Muntu: means “human”, but without an article, therefore used for male or female. The gender is determined by the addition of **mukaji** (female) or **mulume** (male).

Lingala

Lobi: as in my native language, can mean “yesterday” or “tomorrow”

These examples from Bantu languages (Bantu is the plural of Muntu) correspond exactly to the following interpretation of the “Janus face”:

Janus or the God with two faces: He possesses a prominent place in the Roman Pantheon (honorary temple of all gods), among the greatest and most ancient of gods. He even comes before the highest god Jupiter. His story begins when he establishes himself in Latium after his fleet attacks Italy. He receives Saturn, the God of Agriculture, who has been ousted from Heaven. In return for his hospitality, Saturn gives Janus the gift of double knowledge. With this gift, he is able to control knowledge of the past as well as the future. That is why Janus is depicted as 2-faced (one facing the front and one facing the back”).

German:

Geschwister: siblings; sisters a/o brothers

Zwitter: a being with both feminine and masculine secondary sex characteristics

Aufheben: can mean to remove, to lift

Die Feindesangt: can mean either the speaker's fear of the enemy or the enemy's fear

Auflehnen: to lean on or to resist

The Tower of Babel

This tower represents the non-differentiation of the above mentioned primordial soup. A variation of languages was first created after its fall. It also symbolizes the unity of humanity and therewith the power of God. The builders of the tower wanted to reach this power of unity- God is One- the unity of word and deed. In my view, such a unity is the basis of a Paradise of which we all dream. Some interpretations proceed from "unique" to "multiple": "diviser pour régner".

The Intrusion Complex

I will make use of Jacques Lacan's concept (URL 3), in order to clarify the dilemma of human identity. In my empirical data in my study of "Domino partnerships", I determined that in spite of all visible differences: Gender (man/woman), skin color (black/white) and ethnicity (indigenous/foreign), the partners identify with each other. This leads me to believe that the "self" can be changed. In other words, one might say that "ego" = "alter", as in the motto: "idem alterum", which reveals an inner, invisible connection between the two. This makes the concept of universal variety more than a casual idea. If I understand Lacan correctly, human identity works with the help of opposing modes; those of the "self" and the "other". Children identify themselves in the third person who is not an other one, although different. This means they don't use "I" or "me". There is no easy way across this breach between "me" and the "other". The latter could be the father, mother, or simply one's perceivable environment. In this sense, we are all frustrated because following the "mirror stage" we all try in vain to recapture the totality of our identity. In this way, our identity has a dual function, since the "other" first entered into us and left traces, or an image. The feeling of recapturing our identity is only attained in conjunction with the "other", who was the original owner of our "self". The "other" is unavoidable, since even before our own identity emerged, we had internalized an image of the "other". For this reason, we sense a feeling of foreignness. Without the possibility of a radical solution to the problem of ridding ourselves of this sense of foreignness, I think that one should make the leap and intentionally absorb the "other". This second absorption of the other is a repetition of the first, involuntary intrusion. The second process is what happens when one falls in love. Consequently, because of the fact that we can't avoid this kind of intrusion, it would be better to assume it like it happens in the "domino love" (Black and White couples). It strengthens the feeling of identity (individuation) for the person experiencing it. This is how I view the strong personalities of the "domino partners", due to this secondary intrusion. It is as if the domino partners, far from being blinded by love, were clairvoyant in their choice of the typical "other" type (holotype) as a partner. The greater the divide between origins, the greater also seems to be the internal use of space of both partners. The motto is: overstepping boundaries in order to make progress. The domino couple thereby goes beyond the norms of the majority of their surroundings. It is an experience that structures and encourages identity. The first intrusion has left indelible traces which torture us or leave us no peace. This is the reason for numerous myths of origin. It also explains why religious cults are spread throughout various cultures worldwide and religion is a social and universal phenomenon. Every religion attempts to explain it in its own way. According to some researchers, notably the religious historian Jean

Delumeau (1983: 19 and 1978) and the sociologist Roger Caillois (1950: 55), the West (for Delumeau) and the North (for Caillois) are the seat of pessimism and doom, while the South is the seat of virtue. The differences in mentality between the Western and non-Western cultures led the first to reject and despise the other. Delumeau (op.cit.) explains this with the dogma of “contemptus mundis” (contempt for the world), while the second was led to the opening of the “other”.

“Parianism”

After having discussed the importance of the « Janus face », I would suggest now to use the right concept in the right context in order to get back to the track.

In searching for a substitution for the unsuitable word “Racism” (Guillaumin 2002), I have created this new term from the social context of India, using the root “paria”. According to the dictionaries “Petit Larousse” (1967: 752) and “Wahrig” (1986/1989), a paria in India is an Indian without a caste, an outcast and therefore despised and without rights, who exists on the periphery of Society. I have used the word “paria” first as a noun, then as a verb and finally, as an adjective. I have created this word in English as well as in French, in order to express the two characteristics of the social hostage: contempt, rejection and exclusion by the hegemonial society. The aim of this process was not to create a new word; to prove my intelligence by an enrichment of jargon, but rather simply to follow a rule of sociological method: to explain a social phenomenon with the help of a social fact. In doing so, I am swimming against the common current that has built itself into the use of the biological concept of “race”.

Out of “paria” I have created the following:

German: der Parianismus (noun), parianisieren (verb), ein Parianist (adjective)

English: parianism, to parianize, a parianist

French: le parianisme, parianiser, un parianiste.

Operational Method

The intrusion complex, which affects us all, leads us to an identity crisis: with the consciousness of “alter ego” we are also going step by step from the elementary consciousness to an objective consciousness and become “subject”. The attempt to retrieve the “self” brings us to a dilemma: either to open oneself to the “other” or to parianize her or him. “Parianism” is therefore a narcissistic behaviour in which we project our own fears onto the other.

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