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Introduction

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The following collection of texts is one of the final outcomes of the project *Teatrodentro. Il teatro: educazione non formale per detenuti inseriti in programmi di reinserimento socio-professionale*². (*Teatrodentro. Theatre: non-formal education for inmates in socio-professional reintegration programs*)

Carrying out this project has been an important opportunity, at times a very complex one, to develop a field for comparison and further exchange among the partners who took part in every step of the project and led to the production of some interesting theoretical and testimonial material. This collection includes different contributions which will offer the reader a stimulating and critical access to the non-formal educational and training experience within a detention context.

The work on this collection of texts has developed along with the project itself, collecting different kinds of material and implicitly reaffirming the fact that education should always question itself on the meaning of outcomes and tools, always keeping a clear sense of the fact that form is never unrelated to content. This is why this collection offers material for theoretical reflection, critical stimulation and provocations, elements and suggestions on method, direct testimony of operators and participants in educational courses, observation and survey tools, bibliographical suggestions, legal and context elements. These materials proceed by opening fields and views in order to make it possible both for people operating in this line and for those who do not deal directly with detention contexts, to have a reference which states the complexity in which non-formal educational processes move, and to have a perception of the plurality of resources that some of the processes manage to encourage, even in a situation of extreme structural and systemic poverty.

Obviously this collection is also aimed at helping the reflection of those who, with different roles, operate in a detention context, and might use it as a support to further develop their observational skills, with particular regard to non-formal educational activities, so that it might be possible to proceed in defining adequate processes of treatment for the education and evolution of the person in detention. Non-formal activities, in fact, involve very specific skills and sensitivity, and their educational potential is often hidden within the background of other elements that are more in evidence, such as the entertainment and amusement these activities offer, the free time they take up. These elements all exist, and they are an important opportunity to engage in the educational process, but they definitely do not describe all the educational strengths of these practices and at times become stereotypes through which they are observed by people who are not directly involved, barring any chance of an interdisciplinary dialogue between different operators of the same context. In order to stimulate an interdisciplinary and multi-skill exchange, this collection presents theatre and cinema as non-formal educational processes in detention contexts, highlighting exactly some elements of method; theoretical reflection structured in its cultural, pedagogical, psychological, anthropological and artistic references, direct testimonies, specific prison and territorial analysis, and identification of the process evaluation tools that can integrate the non-formal perspective with more customary approaches to education and treatment. In this picture, elements of connection between different views are highlighted, still maintaining the

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² Progetto 116674 – CP – 1 – 2004 1 – IT Grundtvig – G11

specificity of various professional identities that act in the context, together with their specific objectives and educational goals.

Specifically, the collection is structured in five sections.

In the first section, *Elements and questions concerning training in prison*, we can find contributions that are preparatory and introduce the matter of education in prison. The matter is stated in a critical and provocative fashion by Marc De Maeyer, and is subsequently developed in the essay by Rose Marie Noissant with regard to the reflection on the relationship between education and change, while the reflection on the relationship between education and elements of the context, with specific reference to the state of resources, is furthered by Thomas Louvat. The section ends with a further development supplied by Attilio Gardino's reflection, which reminds us of the helping role of the educational relationship in the detention context, and the central position of the body experience, declaring another strong element of reference, that is the bioenergetics theory.

The second section *Theatre and cinema in non formal education in prison: current experiences, methods and reflections*, gets to the heart of the two non formal education experiences followed within this project: Theatre and cinema. In particular, after a short introduction that explains, on the whole, the value of non formal experiences – with specific reference to those pertaining to the art and creativity universe as related to developing educational processes in prison – the section offers articulate and rich in-depth material on a theoretical, experiential and methodological point of view, regarding two experiences: theatre in prison, which has now been active for years in Milan, Italy, and cinema in prison, through the experience active within Marseille's prison, in France.

The third section, *Evaluation processes in non-formal education*, edited by Gianna Stefan, deals with another core area of the educational process: the evaluation system. Specifically, the matter of the evaluation process is faced starting from its premise, that is the possibility to experience a participative evaluation, which puts in action every one of the subjects involved in the educational process evaluating their dimension on quality rather than quantity, and considering the relationship between education and change, individually – the person in prison – and collectively – the entailed systems of relationships and the socio-emotional and institutional network. A number of tools are suggested, that could be useful to develop the evaluation and the relationship mode that contribute to the process efficacy. Finally, some crucial statements are made on context analysis and on the present experiential resources, because a correct analysis of the situation, of resources and restrictions is a core strength in order to carry out a project and develop it.

The fourth session offers an articulated bibliography on non formal education in a situation of detention, with specific reference to theatre and cinema experiences.

Finally, the last session consists of a number of attachments that supplement and crown the knowledge of the detention context, with regard to treatment and re-education, parallel educational projects, and further in depth prison education.

We believe this collection fully meets its objectives of training and information. We can further add that it is the most updated collection of informative and theoretical material pertaining to the two experiences of theatre and cinema as non-formal education in prison.

The process of working on this collection, and above all the development of the whole *Teatrodentro (Theatre: non formal education for inmates in socio-professional reintegration programs)* project, has pointed out the necessity to keep a continuous, open dialogue among subjects working with these non formal education experiences within the prison context, so that good procedures can become an element of comparison and give birth to more effective

forms of intervention leading to successful educational processes. This is why we consider this collection of texts, as it is offered today, as the outcome of a first phase of a work we hope will go on developing into hyper-textual forms, progressively integrating new materials and developing into a place for continuous exchange on the web.

“A character, sir, may always ask a man who he is....”

L. Pirandello

1.

Elements and questions concerning training in prison

1.1. From the prison role to roles in prison

Marc De Maeyer³

Education under surveillance?

Discipline and punish, we know these prison tasks.

Create, learn and take pleasure from it, these are not aims envisaged from the prison system.

What then? How can we imagine and at once claim the right of education for all, and give way to the idea that “making theatre” within the prison is part of this right to education?

In some peoples imagination, for unknown reasons, the notion of education avoids, escapes, is incompatible with the idea of pleasure.

Hence prison must be hard and education must be an ordeal.

There is no guarantee that persisting in this opinion will better one thing or the other.

Of course, we should not overstate this: many programs have already taken in the idea of education based on the pleasure of discovery.

But as far as prison is concerned, it is still an everyday struggle.

Discipline and punish, we were saying!

What about a change in perspective?

In prison, the script is already written; roles are set from the very beginning. Space is well defined, and the show goes on 24 hours a day. Ritual and obligation, are we not in the realm of punishment?

Prison is a theatre in which all roles look alike, and are forever repeated. And it is a theatre not many people come to visit. Even when tickets are going for free...

In front of this situation, “learning throughout life implies a rethinking of content to reflect such factors as age, gender equality, disability, language, culture and economic disparities”.⁴

“It is essential that approaches to adult learning be based on people’s own heritage, culture, values and prior experiences and that the diverse ways in which these approaches are implemented enable and encourage every citizen to be actively involved and to have a voice.”⁵

We are far from an idea of education as a synonym of schooling. This is not an automatic shift, because it is rare that school memories are happy ones for the greater part of inmates. It was often a defeat; either for personal, familial, or economic reasons. School gets to be a part of that “bad start” in life, and everything that would remind us of this bad start will be rejected. An effort will be made to forget it.

Education shall not be a complement to other basic services the prison supplies, such as health, board and lodging. It is not a complement, but an integration to these services which are generally of very poor quality. “Every prison must allow inmates to access learning programs which are as thorough as possible and will respond to their individual needs, taking into account their aspirations”.⁶

In this condition, prison educators get to meet obstacles on every level: weak motivation on the inmates part, “competition” with other activities - like work, which pays money (although very little), and the prisons structural inadequacy for study purposes (poor libraries, difficulty in moving from one place to the other, nonexistent dedicated infrastructures, overpopulation, meaningless television programs, various urgings).

³ Marc De Maeyer is Senior research specialist, Unesco Institute for lifelong learning, project coordinator international watch for education in prison

⁴ Adult education - the Hamburg declaration - the agenda for the future. Unesco 1997 – item 2

⁵ Ibidem – item 5

⁶ Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly European Prisons Charter Recommendation - item 28

Non-formal education programmes will often meet with wariness from prison staff and inmates alike, agreeing for once that this education is not “serious”. Non-formal activities are classified as re-creational, whereas they should be considered “simply” creative! This would change the opinion about inmates involved in the activities, about operators, about the guards role, about the prison role altogether!

“Instead, if it is just to keep them busy, keep them quiet, well... why not.”

“And they are such fine ladies, dealing with this kind of education ...”

Prison is a place of unsaid, secret, silence. The crime prison commits will remain hidden for the longest time. In order to survive in prison you must keep silent, and be discreet – and this just to keep oneself in the variety of networks, because the “no demand” code has to be honoured. A good inmate is the one who does not ask, and agrees to everything without a word.

Education: a potential to be discovered

“All children, young people and adults have the human right to benefit from an education that will meet their basic learning needs in the best and fullest sense of the term, an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together and to be. It is an education geared to tapping each individual’s talents and potential, and developing learners’ personalities, so that they can improve their lives and transform their societies.”⁷

What the UNESCO has solemnly declared in Dakar and Hamburg, for the last decades, keeps happening every day: adult education means, for every adult person, an ongoing process of discovery of their own potential, “taking into account the previous background”.

Education is a right. Even if it did not affect relapse, it would remain a right. It must not be exploited.

The court of justice judges on behaviour and acts, education combines them in a process.

The real challenge offered by education in prison lies there: not a liability in a place where there are so many, but the open promise of an individual pathway, holding hope for a different future.

Education in prison does not aim to solve every contradiction in the system; just helping to see them would be accomplishing one of its goals.

Life does not stop in prison; it is just “developed” (like photos are developed in an acid bath) in an artificial space-time. The inmate goes on learning and experiencing, because we all learn unceasingly, informally of course, but still we learn – and what prison has to teach is no trifle, nor is it neutral.

Education is in fact a multiple and complex process. We will have to free ourselves from the idea that serious education is only the one we “practice” in a classroom.

All over the world the majority of people have never had a classroom in their entire life. Are we saying they learned nothing at all?

The concept of continuous education is yet to be fully explored in its full richness and potential. It is not another form of continuing school; firstly, it is a will to understand the world we live in, to try to live in it and bring to it projects for improvement.

Non-formal education is education, formally

Individual history is written. It has even been judged. It has been described – see/seen: interpreted (if not justified) – by professionals such as psychiatrists or other experts. It has

⁷ Education for all Forum

been ratified. In theatre, the actors of the story get to tell it their way. It is not the story of the actor, but the actor of the story.

In order to write one's story, first of all one has to see it, hence see oneself. See as we are, not only the model or role assigned in the outer world or during detention.

See oneself in the eyes of others: family, sons and daughters, society... one's peers.

How to understand that we will foster creation, spur emotion, try different individual and group reactions: To pass the time of the day, for recreation? But why call it re-creation if we do not create in the first place? We will learn to move in a universe that does not expect us to.

Citizenship forms itself in the given diversity; it is not a choice; choice is knowing what meaning we give to it and what role we want to play in it.

Education is global; it is formal, non-formal and informal. We learn everywhere, always. It is not in prison that we start our upbringing; we continue it absorbing everything we meet on our path. Good and not so good; learning social reality.

Political absence

The absence of politicians is manifest.

Here there are three examples:

This is the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012). There is no documentation dealing explicitly with illiteracy in prison. This fact is yet to be considered, even though we know that the illiteracy rate in prison is, in some cases, very high: some prisons house up to a 40% of immigrants, often illiterate.

During a governmental Heads of State conference dedicated to education, some of the representatives refused to include the issue of education in prison in the resolution, taking as a pretext the fact that this is mainly a specific problem of the "northern Countries".

An education program evaluator committed to international cooperation writes that, considering the state of prisons, it is necessary to focus all efforts on infrastructures and other basic services. Education will come... later, when "everything else" will have been taken care of. Obviously this person has not yet fully grasped the driving role of education, in every condition... if we at least had faith in subjects to express their own claim for education!

Just three examples: there could be many more. In this field, as in many others, civil society has taken the place of politics. The state will then have to reassert its authority in education offer, while the civil society will have to clearly negotiate its intervention in the diversified education offer and claim its interest for the expression of education needs.

And it is here that non-formal education can find its role.

Formal learning can obtain no result until the essential contradiction of the prison experience can be cried out, said, and finally expressed.

This operation is necessary if we intend to further education and learning.

In fact, what use could it be to learn a profession in prison (in the exceptional case where it is even possible) if one does not learn at the same time how to be in a work team, how to accept hierarchy in a society where work – if you can find it – is still not the key to economic and social welfare.

How can we deal with growing frustration... without speaking of therapy?

One has to experience conflict and contradiction, considering them cause of action rather than the denial of others.

Non-formal education, such as theatre, at first allows integration, because some of the sequences are wordless. Obviously gestures come from culture, too, but non-formal education can help people to put words on personal reality.

Theatre

Hence theatre will be this space-time “out of prison” where, paradoxically, roles are not defined yet, but to be thought up. It is not a theatre that reproduces (that is theatre of the prison), but a theatre that produces jointly (theatre in prison).

This space-time escapes the institutions control, and in this discrepancy, proposes a process.

It is a frail space-time, to be preserved, a place where things can be learned, other than the prison in which we are kept. There we create learning; we learn creating: learning individual and joint creation, learning connection with the body, learning non-violent conflict management, learning to develop common projects, learning to deal with emotions. It is an apprenticeship in taking a production successfully to its end, finalizing the result with a good aesthetic outcome.

The audience coming to see the show will also be a witness; a civil society witness invited to a micro-space (the theatre) turned into a public space open to all, in which to share a creation, a product atypical of prisons. A space-time in which the demand for quality is part of the learning process: to show to others (and oneself) not a collective mediocrity but an aesthetically, socially and humanly accomplished process.

It is a space-time in which diversity is not only accepted but sustained and valued; this acceptance is a form of learning. Instead of being denied, they will be worked at, they will be subjected - through managing techniques – to the group pressure and there they will find their proportion.

Beyond individual difference, there are stories; beyond stories, there are projects that failed momentarily, unexpressed desires, a future that scares and for which prison, in its traditional form, does not prepare.

An imaginary nation – a future to be imagined

More than ten million people all over the world. A small nation.

A strange human community, made mainly of adult men, a few women (even though during the last years their number has been growing).

They are considered to be adults, even when they are 14 or 15 years old.

They are of different nationalities, but their stories bear odd similarities: they generally come from poor environments; they are younger and younger and have little or no experience of school and formal learning. But they know a lot; it is well known you need a lot of imagination and a net of social relationships to survive when you are poor; and a lot of energy.

We put them in the shade, and that's why they don't get much light in resolutions and educational programmes of the international educational community. This imaginary nation abides by strange laws; some of them very specific, others implicit and silently acknowledged. Many make their own laws. Each plays a role and all roles look alike.

They are asked to play quite a simple part: obey, consume what they are given, and get ready (who knows how – theories and practices change) to leave this enclosed, peculiar nation, and enter another world: The world they come from and where the audience hopes they will return, polite and well behaved, meaning well, meaning much better.

We are speaking of prison, and its inmates.

1.2. The situation of public resources within the detention framework

Thomas Louvat⁸

The deprivation of freedom is one thing. The return to freedom is another.
From case observation to the consideration of the individual.

During the period of his/her loss of freedom, the prisoner must find forms of motivation that will allow him, little by little, to build a possible itinerary in order to prepare his return to freedom. Once he has the idea, he must be able to find the necessary resources that will allow him to reach his aims. To this end a team is supposed to surround and accompany him through these steps.

It is upon society's capacity to respond to the expressed needs of the individual, temporarily deprived of his freedom, that the famous results depend. These are results expected from the heart of public opinion, such as, for example, the rate of re-offence, results that are equally expected on the political level. Indeed, good resource management and usage have a direct effect on the re-offence of individuals.

Here, we are not trying to generalise about a situation as particular as prison is. Working between Milan, Marseille and Barcelona, we have been able to exchange thoughts, using our respective projects as a starting point. These thoughts, based on experience, allow us to distinguish common problems linked to the presence of resources on the journey to reinsertion.

For example, the lack of co-ordination between principle resources sometimes produces situations that hinder and so frustrate, instead of encouraging, the journey of the motivated individual.

The official missive of prison is to change the individual and persuade him to move towards a respect for law and, that is, common order. The central question, clearly understood, is what do we mean by change? Upon change we agree, but what do we change? How? Why?

The presence of education in prison has now been established in numerous regions however the quantity and quality of these interventions often remains weak.

Education, in all its forms, contributes to the change in the individual given that apprenticeship itself changes the individual. All supplementary knowledge inevitably transforms us, whether we wish it or not.

A prisoner who chooses to begin a training process already has many experiences behind him. What resources can he rely on to better carry out his training process?

Resources and re-offences

The question of resource leads, beyond a doubt, directly to the question of re-offence. Why educate adults in prison if not to give them the tools that permit them to never return there?

Indeed the fact that a state, a region, a territorial community, a penitentiary centre decides to establish a prisoners training and finance it, with public funds, well proves a political willingness to give this detained individual another chance.

But often the distance between political willingness and the reality of the landscape reveals the complexity of intervention and the road that remains to be built in order to reduce this distance.

⁸ Thomas Louvat, teacher, director, in charge of the artistic/educational project based on theatre in the prison of "Quatre Camins", Barcelona (Spain)

But it would be too simple to stop there; the causes of re-offence are a lot more complex than that, even if we could say it was just a question of the educational work.

On the other hand, it can be said that if the prisoner is regularly followed by a team, in a centre that cultivates well co-ordinated resources, and accompaniment towards returning to the outside, he has greater possibilities of an alternative future rather than returning to prison.

When considering resources in the journey to reinsertion the first important question is this: What influences, relationships are there between the existence of resources and the possibility of re-offence?

The main categories of resources.

We can establish a non-exhaustive list of the types of resources found in the context. The resources that are listed here are those which one finds most often. One must remember of course that in many regions these resources are widely developed whilst in others they are almost non-existent.

We can outline seven categories:

- 1- Accompaniment and guidance: With regards to the centres one can note the presence of the guidance counsellor, teachers and education teams whose main role is to accompany and guide the individual with the aim of preparing him for his release. This work goes from the very desire to embark upon an apprenticeship to choosing a vocation or training.
- 2- School: This concerns the lessons given in the prison framework that aim to provide a qualification as a result. These can go from the teaching of mathematics, or of a language, to upgrading in a subject, opening the way to a diploma (school-leaving certificate or correspondence university degree). Basic classes are also given, such as alphabetisation or courses in the language of the country in which the individual finds himself.
- 3- Professional training: There are numerous professional training courses in a wide range of spheres. Generally these courses respond to the need to have a trade and they consist of theory and practice in the centres production workshops, or, penal situation permitting, on the outside.
- 4- Non-formal education: This encompasses all occasional activities but also long-term educational training. These do not lead to diplomas but they do transmit a certain number of instruments to the participants; not only in terms of knowledge, relationships, socialisation, but also permitting each individual an exploration, for example, of his own limits, conflicts, and creative capacities. Artistic practices enter this framework. This type of education permits each individuals personal rhythm to be respected as well as the allocation of a tailored apprenticeship for each person
- 5- Employment aid: This varies according to the country and region, yet remains relatively developed. Sometimes, the national employment agency directly intervenes in the penitentiary centres. When this isn't the case, the detained individual must be able to be informed from the outside which makes job application somewhat more complex. Certain countries are developing employment aid agencies that allow the employer to reduce the burdens.

- 6- Accommodation: Sometimes there are possibilities of accommodation for individuals upon release. This resource depends essentially on political willingness and the geographical framework. In certain cases, individuals reencountering their freedom have access to low rent, or even free accommodation for a specific time. But in the majority of cases, the quantity of allocated accommodation is insufficient.
- 7- External accompaniment: On the journey of a person deprived of his freedom, the existence of a bridge between the inside and out is elemental. This resource is one of the keys in the battle against re-offence. The existence of associations, professionals, and public structures that allow the individual to always find counsel, attention, a friendly ear, should be a state priority, unfortunately this is rarely the case

We witness through our respective practices that these resources are difficultly linked to one another. For example, if a country gives priority to work, one must also ask the question whether the recipient will be provided with accommodation, external accompaniment, etc.

Non-formal education resources and training.

In general, and even if today non-formal education is slowly taking the place it is due in the educational process of detainees, resources that are being developed and controlled belong, for the most part, to formal education.

The experiences achieved in certain training courses, original or experimental in the penitentiary context, are going to give rise to the need for the invention of new resources.

In the case of ESTIA in Milan, the Bollate prison theatre company is going to need, little by little, to train spectacle technicians, set decorators, actors. Therefore it has been necessary to install, around the theatre project, professional training concerning spectacle engineering. Also, in order to facilitate this work, ESTIA created itself as a social co-operative, responding to outside orders in terms of, for example, the making of props, thus creating, at its very heart, its own way of functioning economically. ESTIA is also taking on board a very important dimension, so often missing on the journey of an individual towards the outside, which is the building of a bridge between the inside and out, between detention and the return to freedom.

In Marseille, the project Images en Prison de Lieux Fictifs (Images in Prison of Fictitious Places), the cinematographic training given to apprentices at the Baumettes centre, also finds itself within the realm of professional training. A bridge has also been built allowing certain apprentices to train or, upon release, work on a film shoot. In this case, Lieux Fictifs intervenes as a relay resource between the trainee and cinema professionals.

These two experiences, light/sound/set engineering in Milan or editor/camera training, etc, in Marseille, are very significant, opening the door to a wealth of possibilities.

And yet, non-formal education, unqualifying as it is for the most part, is still denied recognition as a fundamental part of permanent adult education.

There are two kinds of responses provided by Milan and Marseille: On one hand there is the concern to endow participants with courses that are recognised by the profession, that is transmitting a craft not just the tools, and on the other to get rid of the label “activity” given to artistic training courses and to register them, once and for all, as a crucial element of the detainees journey to the outside.

Therefore, it is necessary to, beyond those that already exist, create the appropriate resources for the training courses on offer; basing ourselves on our accomplished experiences, observing the needs and creating the necessary resources at work. It is these experiences that show the penitentiary administration the possibilities for intervention, renovation, and resource adaptation so that they should be developed within education programmes initiated by the government.

Coordination and resources

It can be observed that the use of resources depends on very diverse factors linked to the political and economical choices of a state, region, but also to cultural and geographical aspects. Certain states give, for example, priority to work, others to alphabetisation and some even emphasise the aspect of repression. A state or regions political vision of the meaning of punishment will determine resource organisation.

The relationship between politicians and prison workers is a determining factor. On one hand it is the politicians who establish the programmes which determine resources, on the other it is the workers who have to install, categorize, and co-ordinate them.

Thus, through the example of Barcelona, we can state that, from a political point of view, there is a strong desire to establish and develop resources. However the main difficulty is found on location, in the centres, seeing that all new resources generate extra work or, for example, adjustment on the behalf of the penitentiary system in the development of this activity.

Here we come up against the difference between political vision, on one hand, and the reality of the sector, on the other. The multiplication of resources means that the professionals in the centres must be aware of them and know how to connect them in order to give the detainee a greater array of tools and possibilities to build the foundations for an alternative future. The creation of new resources and their assumed application often generates a work surplus for the professional. He/she generally sees this as an additional task rather than a supplementary tool to offer to the person who requires it.

Furthermore, we can say that on a political level there is often a wide gap between the wish to install solid resources and the human and economic means given to their implementation.

Figuratively speaking, we can consider resources as a puzzle, that is, a whole that consists of several pieces that are essential for its fulfilment. Indeed, if we wish to consider the individuals journey within this whole, meaning a complete and complex journey, then we must work to the benefit of the coordination between these different pieces.

In many cases we come across absurd situations such as, for example, the case of an ex-detainee who had found work yet had no accommodation For how long will he withstand the rhythm of work if he is denied a right as fundamental as accommodation?

We can state that resources develop themselves considerably even if human and economic means are still insufficient, and that the fact that resources are not considered and linked as a whole damages the process of reinsertion and thus the efforts made to fight against re-offence. The installation and management of these resources depend on different levels of administration; on the one hand the political level, as far as the choices made, the human and economic means, the utilization, are concerned; and on the other the employees who are ordained to develop and use them.

Difficulties and defects in the installation of resources

The question of resources essentially depends on the political willingness of the state. It is, therefore, subject to political changes. In a time like the one we are currently living in, the general tendency is one of security and so it becomes far easier to enter prison and more and more difficult to leave it. Priority is now focussing on repression and educational work is being left in the background.

In the political sphere, we can notice a willingness to imagine, to think about the resources by giving them form in programmes which propose to adapt already existing resources, to invent new ones and to develop, little by little, the resources network and their receptive capacity.

Yet the lack of human and economic means is manifest. This cultivates a feeling of discouragement in many penitentiary agents.

Lately policies against insecurity have not been favourable to the risks taken in research material and the installation of innovative reinsertion methods.

One can also state that, often, measures concerning reinsertion are voted for in the budget but are not, however, necessarily sustained. Thus, shortly after their installation, the means to pursue these methods, and their evaluation and continuation, hardly longer exist. This is the case in France, at the moment, concerning professional training, which could quite simply disappear.

Overpopulation, a general phenomenon today, brings with it the arrival of an administrative policy of flow, with the creation of new centres and security reinforcement

If the instructions are principally to avoid releases without sentence adjustment, the reality is different. The conditions that enable prisoners to sufficiently prepare a project, in advance, that suits them, are not available.

We can observe a scarcity of proposals with regards to the total number of prisoners.

Suggestions for a better use of resources

The main question is this: How can we use already existing resources well?

We can say through our own experiences that dysfunctions linked to the administration and use of resources in the penitentiary context, are identifiable and correctable.

We can observe:

- a distance between political willingness and sector resistance linked to the complexity of the penitentiary system
- a confusion about the levels of responsibilities between the developed policies and the prison workers
- a lack of resource knowledge on the behalf of the workers
- a lack of human and financial means
- a major difficulty in resource coordination
- the complexity of procedures linked to the administration of resources by penitentiary operators.

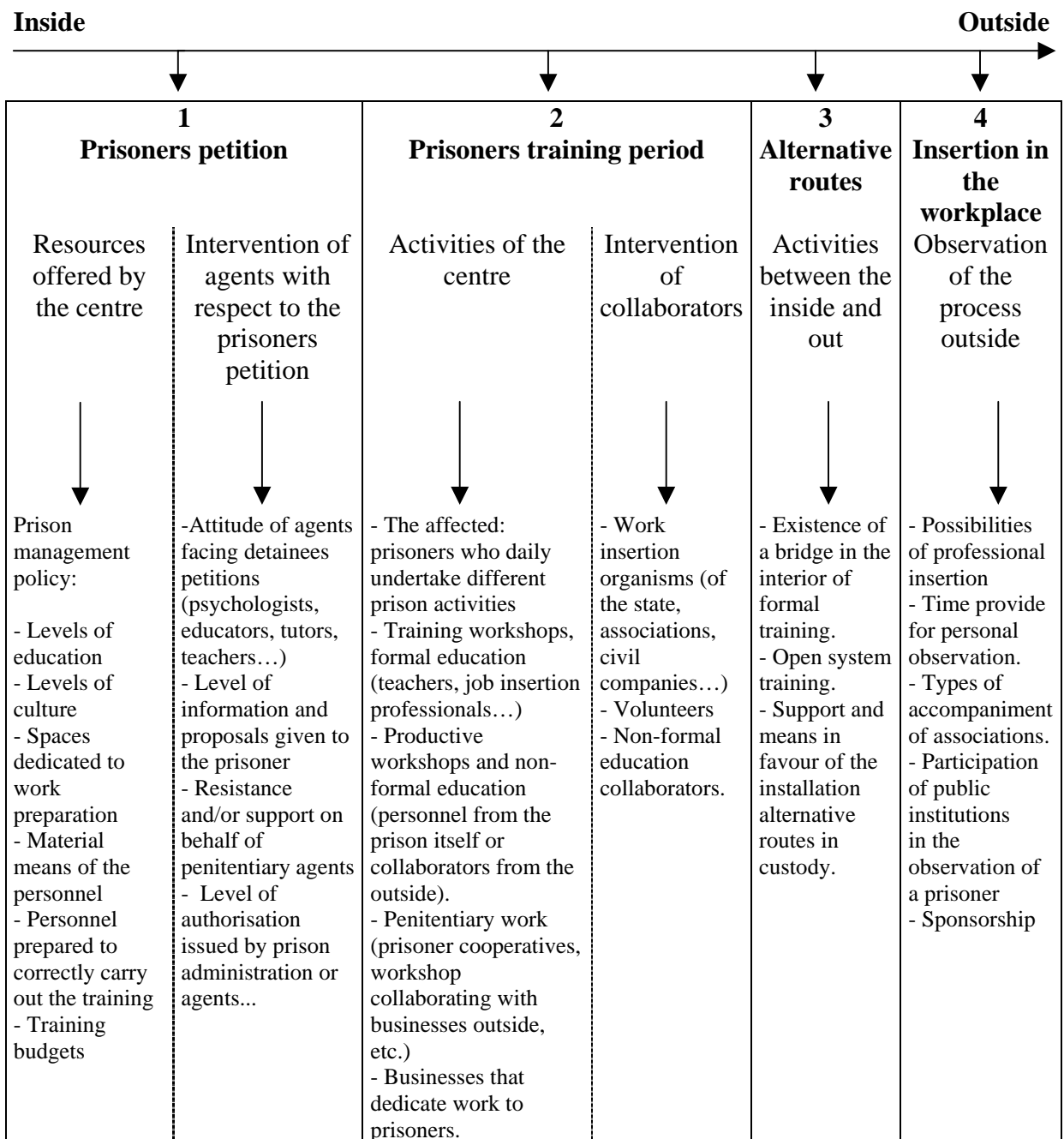
Starting from these statements, it is up to us prison education professionals to imagine the changes needed in our practice to optimise the use of existing resources, convince those in charge to carry them out; and so give the person deprived of his freedom a bigger chance of a definitive reinsertion and minimise the possibility of his return to prison.

One of the first deeds to carry out would be the simplification of access procedures to these different resources.

We could also imagine the establishment of a position in each centre whose role would be to articulate and coordinate resources, it would be the link between educational teams, inmates and resources outside as well as the inside the centre

Finally, it is up to us to imagine new resources and emphasise their need so that those in political power transform these needs into realities. Each one of us, in line with the distinctive features of the centre in which we work, and the regional and central policies to which our work adheres, must inspire the changes which will permit an optimum use of resources: Never losing sight of the fact that at the heart of our work is an individual who has temporarily between deprived of his/her freedom, and a capacity to return to a normalised life.

DOCUMENT; THE JOURNEY OF THE PRISONER



1.3. Training, motivation, change

Rose-Marie Nossaint⁹

Evolution in the research process: theoretical aspects in relation to the workplace.

The aims of the first research project I carried out in 1994 were to investigate the implications on the motivational level, of an individual enrolling and following a training course.

For a theoretical framework I choose the table offered by Patricia Cross.

Patricia Cross explores the domain of motivation in people who enrol to train. The diagram she proposed was interesting as it explores variables in 3 different fields; the personal, the mediatory, and the institutional.

The different variables on offer explore the more subjective factors, inherent in people. These variables have been illuminating because they have encouraged more precise research and more involving work with those in training.

Patricia Cross's table tried to identify the different important motivational variables, and their interrelations, in a group/public following alphabetisation lessons. This research showed the importance of self-confidence in a system of more complex variables. Research carried out used the life-story methodology among the participants. This allowed us to encounter new relations among the different variables and to show that motivation is a complex system that differs in each individual. From here stems the importance of giving a sufficient length of time for accompaniment during the process.

Later on, within the framework of non-formal education in the penitentiary environment (social skills, drawing-painting, writing workshops), I wanted to see if the same variables and their inter-relationships could help us with the work involving the training process of individuals who refused all work comparable to scholarisation.

That was possible if the individuals accepted to consider their process and wanted to work on the notion of change. As far as the penitentiary population is concerned, I was, above all, interested in the personal field and the importance of the variable "self evaluation" because I realised that this factor is often very negative on our publics/this groups level. The accumulation of school failures, as well as personal ones, added to the problem of finding oneself in prison, obliges us to work with them on their self esteem and the (re)construction of their identity through the slant of less scholarly activities.

At the time of the meeting with the different partners who form the Grundtvig project, we quickly realised that previous projects had indeed given us insight but that, with those individuals in training, we needed to deepen and work more on the notion of change and conflict settlement in their training processes.

Our encounters and experiences in prison have permitted work on these themes and theoretical research has been evolved due to our respective thoughts and on-site experiences.

Our progress has not finished and we continue to nourish the theoretical portion through the work we do daily with imprisoned individuals (it is a process in progress which is constantly evolving).

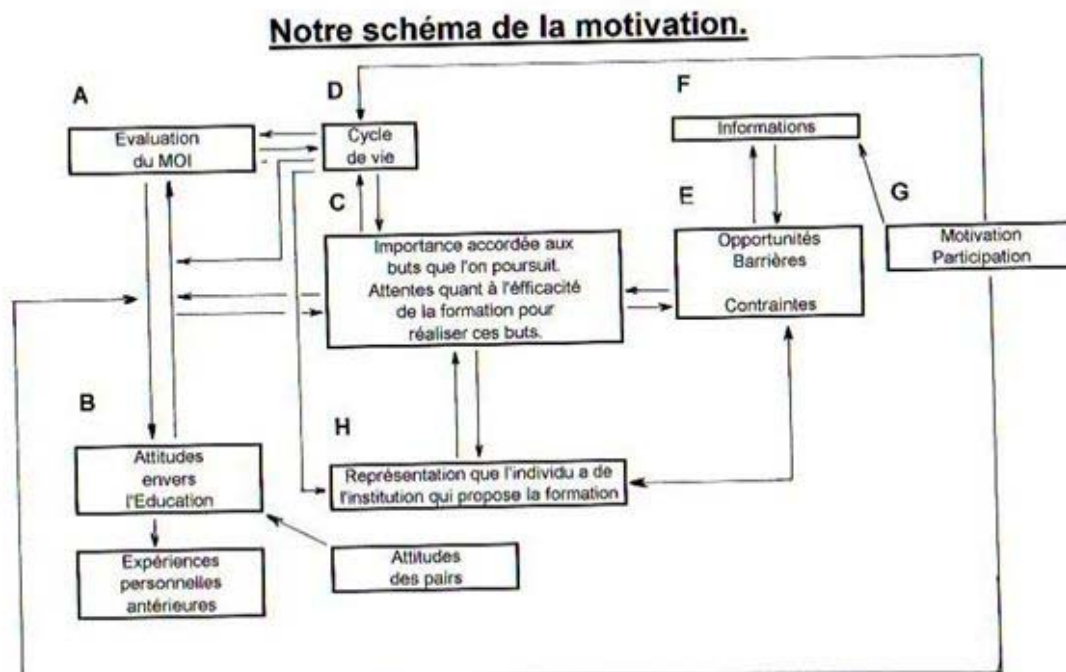
Our desire to continue the process exists in a double aim : not only to deepen the work with detainees to give them a maximum of tools for a successful reinsertion but also to demonstrate that non-formal education training modules are important and have an elemental part to play, comparable to more scholarly or professional education modules.

⁹ Rose-Marie Nossaint, in charge of formal and non-formal activities in the prison of Charleroy (Belgium), *Lire et Ecrire* Charleroy, FAFEP.

The construction of Patricia Cross's model demonstrates that an individual's participation in a training process and a reflective study of the meaning of his/her training is the result of interactions between the different variables on the grid

We can state that motivation is born, on one hand, of the interaction of variables, and on the other, of a minimum of motivation in the personal, mediatory, and institutional fields. If the field of personal motivation is weak, the mediatory or institutional field should compensate and vice versa.

It is important to state that the individuals who go through the modules of non-formal education and who undertake a reflexive study of their motivations, their skills... succeed in planning a future whose aim is reinsertion. It is also not unusual to note that these people then resume a more scholarly training to achieve their aims and find employment.



Patricia Cross Table revised and completed in line with research in the study of motivation at Jamioulx prison¹⁰.

¹⁰ **Our diagram of motivation.**

A= SELF evaluation/assessment

B= Attitudes towards Education /> =Previous personal experiences /< = Attitudes of peers

C= Importance given to aims pursued. Expectations regarding the efficiency of the training to achieve these aims.

D= Life cycle E= Opportunities/Barriers/Restrictions F= Information

G= Motivation/Participation

H= Image the individual has of the training courses offered by the institution

The relationships, between the different intervening factors, in the motivation of a public enrolling in a training process.

In the personal field :

1. A ↔ B (self evaluation and attitude towards education)

This relationship is relatively stable. Embarking upon a training process, a positive self image and self confidence generate a positive attitude towards education and vice versa.

A negative attitude of oneself has repercussions towards the education.

For example: “Training, that’s not for me, I’m incapable of learning, I never succeeded at school.”

The attitude towards education depends on past failures and successes. Success as far as training is concerned positivises self evaluation and encourages the individual to persevere with it: “Since I enrolled, I really feel I’m learning something, I’ve got more self confidence.”

Failure affects self evaluation to the contrary, which provokes a lesser capacity of the subject to use him/herself and the training courses in order to satisfy his aspirations.

E.g.: “At school I failed everything...so why take a course. ”, “I tried to do drawing last year and didn’t achieve anything, so why carry on since I’m no good at anything.”

2. A/B ↔ C (self evaluation, attitude towards education, aims)

The double arrow that links the factors A/B and C means that the training is more susceptible perceived as an efficient means to achieve important aims for a person who has already certain self confidence and a positive attitude towards education.

Inversely, if a subject who is little convinced of his/her capacities favourably perceives the assistance that can supply training to achieve a sought after aim, he is susceptible to modifying his attitudes towards education and himself.

E.g.: such is the case of a unqualified prisoner who, rebellious against all forms of education (quitting, abandoning training...), upon completing a course in sketch and painting , enrolled in the Academie des Beaux Arts when released from prison and is enrolled in a house painting day course.

3. A/B ↔ D (self evaluation, attitude towards education, and life cycle)

A/B towards D illustrates the consequence of self evaluation and attitude towards education on the life cycle.

E.g.: by following a course, the individual reencounters his self confidence, and acquires a favourable attitude towards education. This positive change can encourage him to persevere with his training and give him the means to dare to look for a job... in view of his reinsertion this can directly influence his life cycle.

On the other hand, if the training does not permit him a positive change in self evaluation and attitude towards education, he won’t have the necessary energy and will always come across barriers in his professional and sentimental situations.

E.g.: “I’ve done courses but I’ve never got anything out of them... what’s the use.”

4. C → D (aims and life cycle)

This relationship shows that the apparition of projects in the psychological field of a person can directly modify his life conditions.

E.g.: a training project can be accompanied by different changes of lifestyle. Often trainees make new friends, exchange stories and these exchanges modify their reactions with respect to other people.

“Now I clearly see that I know how to get up in the morning to follow my lessons, I’ve got a goal, I meet my friends, in class we talk and learn so many things. I’ve changed, before I wasn’t interested in anybody else, now I’m more open, I listen and give my opinion...”

D → C

This shows the effect the life cycle has on the individuals’ aims and expectations as far as the training courses efficiency in their accomplishment is concerned.

E.g.: according to whether a subject is optimistic, pessimistic, or just resigned to his/her situation (following a course, looking for a job...), the aims and objectives will or will not appear in his field of conscience. The more a person is resigned to and embedded in assistance; less possibilities will he have to express concrete aims that will permit his mobilization into action...

It also sometimes happens that a personal catastrophe on the life cycle level (death of a member of the family, a divorce...) demolishes all the projects envisaged by this person. He loses his bearings and abandons everything.

On the contrary, the period of optimism in a person who has meaning in whichever project it may be mobilises and installs a series of actions... to succeed in accomplishing his project. At the beginning, this is seen in small concrete achievements that will evolve in the culmination of the accomplishment of a more ambitious project.

E.g.: “Well at the start I enrolled in social skills just like that, to pass the time, and then we discussed a lot and did job search simulations, a curriculum vitae and all that. I saw that it was interesting and I did my own and so now I’m taking steps to go see the people at FOREM about me working when I get out...”

Intersection of the personal and mediatory fields.

5. B ↔ H (attitude towards education and image of the institution)

B → H

Attitude of the person vis-à-vis education: determines the image he has of the institution that offers the training.

E.g.: It’s not unusual to come across in individuals, whose schooling has been characterised by repeated failure, a projection of their rejection of any education, school establishment of training.

H → B

The image the individual has of the institutions offering the training can vary his attitude towards education.

E.g.: If the person finds the institution efficient in helping him achieve the aims he pursues and that this institution offers him a training to succeed in this, the attitude he had towards his image of education can evolve in the sense of an active participation in the training process.

E.g.: “Before I told myself that school and training courses were useless seeing that I’d never learnt anything. But now, I see that thanks to FUNOC, I’ve even learnt loads of things, I know how to read and I want my kids to learn as well, and I’ll even be able to encourage and help them...”

If the staff of the institution is seen positively, the training will be more attractive for the individual. On the contrary, if the staff is seen negatively, this unleashes negative repercussions for the perception of the training.

6. H ↔ C (institution images and aims...)

This double arrow represents the individuals' assessment of the institution offering the course in relation to the pursued aims and the kind of training offered in order to achieve these aims. E.g.: If the person considers that the institution can help him achieve his aims through the training offered, a mobilising consequence in his participation will occur. If however, he doesn't perceive that the institution will satisfy his objectives or help him create a project... then an inhibiting effect will unleash itself upon his participation in the process and he risks abandoning his progress.

7. H ↔ D (institution image and life cycle)

H → D

According to whether the individual has a more or less clear idea of the mission and objectives of the institution and the way they operate, he will rely on it to resolve this or that kind of problematic situation.

E.g.: in prison, an individual suffering from solitude or feeling cut off from the outside can perceive, through training, the means of meeting other people and a teacher who comes from the outside. The opportunity he perceives in this institution can be a mobilising factor in his participation if links are made with the outside for his future release...

D → H

Signifies that according to his psychological, physical, social, or professional situation, the individual will differ in his perception of the institution offering the training.

E.g.: a person somewhat removed from the realm of training will have a pretty vague idea of the institution offering the course. The distribution of information in prison is an important task for the training operators/workers. Many long term detainees have difficulty in perceiving the role of these operators if information is not adequately distributed.

At the intersection between the mediatory and institutional fields

8. H ↔ E (images inmates have of the institution and opportunities / barriers)

H → E

This relationship shows us that opportunities, barriers and restrictions are linked with the image has of the institution. This is a subjective axis through which the individual attributes, to certain concepts, the quality of opportunities, barriers and restrictions, primarily according to his image of the institution.

E.g.: workers who don't issue diplomas can be perceived negatively even though their updating lessons or cultural activities could provide opportunities to reconstruct oneself, (re)mobilise a project, give meaning to imprisonment...

E → H

This shows that the prison workers objective opportunities, barriers and restrictions will modulate the image the individual has of the institution providing the training.

E.g.: certain workers can grant prisoners a small wage to encourage study (paid by the FOREM) because they are recognised as organisations of socio-professional reinsertion. Before these allowances were given to all the prisoners, but now the legislation has become stricter and certain prisoners have lost this right. Consequently the image of the institution of some of these individuals has been modified and they have abandoned the training course.

At the intersection between the personal and institutional fields.

9. C ↔ E (aims and opportunities/barriers)

At the intersection between the personal and institutional fields, the relationship that unites C to E, and vice versa, shows that to be motivated is not enough, and, what's more, institutional factors come into play.

Their influence can either inhibit or facilitate according to the nature and effect they have on people.

If an individual finds himself at this point in the diagram with sufficient motivation and yet the obstacles in his way are too numerous or disproportionate to his means, his will to participate will not be sufficient enough to spur him on to embark upon a training process. On the contrary, if these obstacles are unimportant his participation will be effective.

But if his motivation is weak, the slightest obstacle can greatly risk discouragement. On the other hand his motivation will be strengthened as soon as he sees an interesting opportunity.

E.g.: in prison many obstacles are linked to internal functioning. During the beginning of training motivation is very fragile and if the penitentiary agents ever refuse, only 2 or 3 times, to call the prisoner to present himself at the activity, he will abandon the process and make no further demands.

On the other hand it is not unusual that certain people have a solid reinsertion project on the go and are very motivated by their training because it is this training that will be the key to their reinsertion...certain prisoners have no hesitation in complaining to prison management about the attitude of some agents so that they may be left to take part in all their classes.

In the institutional field.

10. E ↔ F (opportunities / barriers and information)

This relationship shows the more information is conveyed the more this extends to other networks of communication. It also reveals the range of influence information can have. At the start information that claims to be positive can turn out to be negative and, as a consequence, discouraging.

When attracting the attention of the public with certain advantages of a training course, one cannot hush up certain inconveniences.

E.g.: the training does not end up in certification, and so doesn't necessarily imply landing a job...

Through different communication networks, information can become negative, individual account can influence this...

E.g.: "Your training doesn't end up in a job (meaning it's useless) because I've got a friend who did it and he still doesn't have a job..."

Motivation – participation

$$G = A + B + C + D + E + F + H$$

Effect of motivation, participation

G ↔ H (motivation, participation and image of institution)

This relationship shows the effect adult training can have on the life cycle. This can be expressed by a change in status, a modification of the psychological situation...

G ↔ F (motivation, participation and information)

It is evident that by taking part in a training process, the person multiplies his sources of knowledge, easily accesses information and can use and transfer this new information to his project.

G ↔ AB (motivation, participation and self evaluation/attitude towards education)

This relationship well indicates the retroactive effect that training participation has on self assessment and the attitude towards education.

Successful participation (success in the activities) reinforces self esteem and affirms a positive attitude towards education.

“I tried to follow lessons in drawing and I saw that could do pretty things. Now I’ve decided to enrol in French lessons, I told myself why not try, seeing that I’m capable of doing things well...”

Training that ends in failure tends to diminish the probability of continuing in the future. « I took a course in another prison and I failed in learning how to read, so I don’t want to try anymore, I don’t have the need, it no longer interests me. »

G → E (motivation participation and opportunities/barriers)

This indicates the absence of participation due to too many restrictions, barriers...

“I’ve turned up, but I’m not doing anything because today I don’t feel up to it, I’ve got too many problems, my children no longer visit me...”

E → G

Contrarily this relationship unveils the positive side of the field of interactive forces.

Conclusions:

From the point of view of this analysis, one can become aware of the importance the work carried out in social skills classes and the role of the trainer within the framework of non-formal education.

It also clearly shows the importance of a place, a space for discussion where the prisoner can reflect and talk about his situation, in relation to whatever training he/she is undertaking, and work on his motivation, perceptions, his experience... When he can become conscious of his weaknesses he can work on them and reflect upon a project to find his place, his role in society...we can say that a large stretch of road has been covered. It is important allow him to look for the meaning he wants to give his future life, through actions that will help him to succeed and by inserting, short, middle and long term stages and goals.

All coherence also resides in the work of the team of people whose mission it is to help the prisoner with his reinsertion. Hence the importance of a professional trained staff that is conscious of the tasks and missions it needs to complete.

The meaning of change in people¹¹.

Here are some propositions: according to your experience you can note leads, reflections (of the students) that will give you indications of change.

1. A person who enrolls in a non-formal education module does not necessarily have the perception of a possible change. Often the initial motivation is to get out of his cell, to be in a different space where he can have some fun, and make contact with people from outside the prison...
2. The very structure of the activity will bring its own restraints (punctuality, dress code, body hygiene...), for the majority of people, these will be the first visible changes.
3. The attitude towards the trainer and the group will evolve in accordance with the trust that is created between the individuals.
4. How do people talk about their awareness of a change (positive or negative) with regards to their evolution?
5. How to approach the notion of change, of evolution, with these people, and how often?
6. How to discern that which facilitates or obstructs change?

Different types of change:

Physical change
Behavioural change
Instrumental change
Intellectual change
Change of values
Change in relationships
Change in life project
Change in “desire”, motivation
Change in SELF assessment/evaluation

¹¹ The following pages are leads that allow us to work together on the notion of change during the workshop.

Different levels of conflicts.

All change unleashes conflicts

Confrontation with ones identity

Loss of identity?

How to manage?

To put ones identity to the test transforms it

How to rebuild oneself?

Suffering of change

Different levels are to be taken into account:

- Individual, personal change
- Collective change
- Change in society

Whom is change beneficial for?

Who wants it? Who takes it on?

What kind of change? For which society?

Why change?

1.4. The body in the helping relationship

Attilio Gardino¹²

The helping relationship is based on the need – clearly or vaguely perceived – to receive help. What gives rise to this perception, is a state we normally define as crisis, which is more or less sudden negative changes in existential conditions, together with an inability to adequately cope with their solution on our own.

The term crisis comes from the Greek word "krisis" which means choice and **it is in fact a choice that the state of uneasiness entails.**

Crisis are unanimously classified under two categories:

1. Evolution or growth crisis.
2. Accidental or existential vulnerability crisis.

Growth crises involve all of us, they can be predicted, even though their evolution can not; these crises are experienced coinciding with “times of passage”: birth, from intrauterine to extra uterine life; puberty, from childhood to adolescence; youth, from adolescence to adulthood; third age, from adulthood to old age; old age, from life to death.

Accidental crises involve all of us, too; these crises are characterised by unpredictability and they can be observed in coincidence with occurrences that “interrupt”, in an unpredictable way, the normal course of existence: a physical illness, a loss of identity, a loss of meaning in life, a drug addiction, a trauma, an aggression, a rape, unemployment, imprisonment, a separation, the death of a loved one, etc.

Growth crises, better called evolution crises, have always been dealt with through rite as a social tool, which allows the group to anticipate and acknowledge/support the individual undergoing the change process which is generally painful, or simply confusing, and only occasionally in particular cases would individual support be required.

In various cases, even accidental crises would be dealt with socially through rite (mourning), with a consolatory and socialization purpose, obviously without the anticipation function.

The progressive disappearance of rites has caused these processes to move to the narrow and painful space of the individual, allowing the predictable – and for many reasons desirable – event of the growth crisis to inherit the disgraceful characteristic of the “accidental crisis”, while the accidental crisis – deprived of the consolatory and socialization rites – wore the wicked and oppressive cloth of the individual event, taking on a strong persecutory aspect.

During the Seventies, it wasn't unusual to hear – as a critical definition – “one-dimensional man”; in fact, today, more than ever before, this term should be used as we are all squashed and flattened into the only accepted existential dimension, “young consumer, quiet, healthy and good-looking, aged between 23 and 25”, and this implies, as a necessary consequence, excluding all different life phases and any kind of unease/suffering from our imagery.

This is the real dictatorship that while refusing growth crises, even more imperatively forbids and represses accidental ones; it is an *immobility of goods* dictatorship, because its worse antagonist is life, and its physiologic movement.

It would be shocking to see the well known Brand consumer suffering from lumbago, fired by his employer and under judicial investigation. This scenery could be shown only if a magic pill or a new internet connection would instantly solve his problem.

We must stress the word “instantly”, because this would strengthen the persuasion to live your life outside biologic laws, outside life itself.

¹² Attilio Gardino, psychologist, bioenergetic psychotherapist, professor.

The image of the dictatorship of self, the image with which, like it or not, we identify, makes crises feel totally unbearable, if not guilty. Growth/development crises are deprived of their physiological aspect, so that existence can be frozen into a narrow and unchangeable period of life, which forces acceleration on to the earlier phases, and a desperate resistance to the later phases. Growth and development take on the aspect of an actual pathology. Accidental crisis become curses, persecutions, catastrophes, amplifying their unpredictability, so much so that it reaches the extraterritorial limbo of the anti-life, rather than being part of our everyday world, made out of the dialectic between wellbeing and unease, which would give us a positive awareness of our own frailty.

In this dimension, illusory but jointly pursued, the simple need to keep one's feet on the ground becomes a sort of transgression, a necessary transgression, though, for social operators whose need is to be on the side of the body, the natural wisdom of life. In New Age times, this kind of statement sounds risky and ambiguous, it could mean everything and its opposite. Ambiguity is caused by the fact that the biologic, the natural, always needs a culture born interpreter, coming from the world of symbols and simulation. It means that in order to escape the dominant, unnatural image our culture offers and imposes on us, we would have to go back to nature and its foremost representative, the body, but in order to do so we have to address its cultural agent – that is, theory or theories on the body.

This way, in order to get rid of one image of ourselves, oppressing and dominating, we need to put on a new image, offered and proposed by another culture, another system of ideas and experiences, such as could be Bioenergetics...and so on.

What a paradox!

From now on, it becomes necessary to state the point of view from which I observe the helping relationship issue, which is bioenergetical, communicational, or other.

This is how I can affirm that crisis perception is inextricably tangled with unease, pain and suffering in general. Pain and suffering are not an alarm that goes off automatically or mechanically to tell us something is not going as it should, but a real psychophysical process.

I assume psychological suffering to be the product of the gap between our self image and our body reality, whereas physical suffering is a perception triggered by an excess of receptors stimuli, both on our body external surface and internal tissues; in both cases it is a signal aimed to activate avoidance behaviour.

Hence it is our inability to carry out effective avoidance behaviour that brings us to ask for help, in order to receive help with the crisis, with the choice we feel we are not able to make, so that pain will end.

We can state some points: helping someone in crisis, a suffering person, does not mean taking their place and making their decision, does not mean putting our energy in place of theirs, but supporting them in a process aimed to recover the necessary energies/resources to make the choice, the *krisis*, they need to make for pain perception to cease.

Stretching the concept a bit we could say that choosing is "solving" the pain, or that pain is the somatic expression of a barred choice, or an apparently impossible one.

Another point we can make is the belief that separation between psyche and body, between energy and voluntary or deep behaviour, is completely arbitrary. It becomes evident, then, how necessary it is, to be able to work both on the energetic and behavioural level, both on the physical and psychological level, and at the same time it becomes evident that it is impossible not to. The difference lies not in working on more levels, but in saying so and taking charge of it consequently.

Everybody does it, but not many people are ready to take charge for this unavoidable link.

I would like to go back to a suspended issue, which is psychological suffering as an expression of the distance between self image and the real body.

Not only are we the victims of an homologation process, as Pasolini would put it, that would want us to identify with a standardised and illusory image of an adult, but also our evolution, our growth, our education process, builds into us a personal self image to which we refer our identity.

The Self we usually refer to, is a constellation of symbols hung on our bodily reality by a frail thread, a thread the environment, in which we develop and live, can break, deform, or sustain; this constellation of symbols is our identity, our image or illusory being. It is also the evidence of the distance that separates us from the natural and physiological flow of existence, FROM THE WISDOM OF OUR BODY. It is evidence of how much of our vitality has had to be thwarted in order for us to become acceptable for our environment, as much as to have our real being conform to its illusory representative, our image and our body to its misshapen servant, which feeds it in silence.

Normally, this process is called education, or training. The distance between the constellation of symbols – here defined as self image, or Self – and our bodily “reality” is a measure of wellbeing: the more linear and short this distance is, the more we can enjoy our vitality; The more it is long, winded and broken, the more we will be afraid of our vitality. This distance is what Bioenergetics calls character. Self image and energetic potential are two aspects of the same reality; one determines the other and both actually express our relationship history. Image of self, symbolic function, body energy are dimensions of the same reality: character; hence to act on one is to act on the others.

Krisis as a necessity to make a choice implies a call for help when our choice appears impossible to carry out, or impossible to define.

The helping relationship is supporting when it allows, favours, induces the necessary resources for the other person to make the choice that will take him or her out of the passage situation, the situation of change that the unease or pain were signalling.

This is how the social operator gets to work on a change process, in which the most striking feature are pain symptoms, but which is rooted in the client, user, patient need to rebuild, more or less profoundly, his or her existential set up – getting in touch with their vulnerability which now, more than ever, stands for our humanity.

When we state that patient and therapist bodies are vectors of our intervention, we must be aware that the energy/communication bond is an unbreakable one in every live thing, and we must be aware that everything we do on an energetic level must not be denied on a symbolic/relationship level and vice versa. This awareness must comprehend the knowledge that the character structure and shape, a person image and identity, is a limitation for the body energetic potential, and that some choices are not accessible at present because they would alter the energetic state, the deep self image, getting the person in touch with the anguish, fear and pain against which the character works, worked as defence and protection system. The operator will have to learn the art of compromise, and use it to identify and favour possible choices, rather than necessary ones. The last image I would like to evoke, is one of the operator, who in starting a treatment crouches next to the patient, client, or user, but at the same time crouches in a crossroad made by his/her body and image, and the other person body and image. Where these roads cross one cannot tell which one of the four roads is him/her, all roads melt into each other, but we will heed all roads, if we want to help the flow of each without generating conflicts.

2.

Theatre and cinema for non-formal education in prison: experiences, methods and reflections

2.1. The sense of lack ... and the lack of sense

Michelina Capato Sartore¹³

*“One goes to the theater to see life in concord with present reality.
In real life, there is no present, but only future,
memory and the vestiges of taste,
the impossibility of simultaneous consciousness.
The desire for the present is one of the strongest sources of art,
followed by the desire to be able to stop awhile and perceive.
Theater’s greatest mystery is this,
that it isn’t reproduction but reality: present reality.”*
Béla Balázs

The processes now place for the education of incarcerated adults bring into sharp relief the tight links that exist between the different levels of intervention; to speak of the education of temporarily detained adults implies, on the cultural level, the concept of re-education.

The various proposals for education and work programs in prisons all flow, more or less explicitly, either from the concept of lifelong learning or from the much more morally charged concept of the convict’s reeducation and rehabilitation through work. The experiments conducted over the last few years have amply demonstrated the extent to which work culture, typically intense, has served to bankrupt the trajectory of socio-professional re-insertion of many ex-convicts.

Similarly, professional / vocational education and the formal educational trajectory of imprisoned adults have shown quite clearly the limits of the educational approach. Our current paradox is that a large number of prisoners are aptly qualified and yet incapable of holding down a job once set free.

It is incredible to note how many cases there are of people who have clearly demonstrated their cultural and cognitive capacities, and yet are incapable of achieving an adequate reinsertion trajectory.

It is clear, in other words, that the problem does not reside in the cognitive capacities of the inmates to master the proper educational tools, but in the entirely personal “value” that these tools acquire as they come into contact with the realities that exist outside the place of detention.

We must consequently proceed via a detour that puts into context the goals, implicit as well as explicit, that go hand in hand with the rather widespread emphasis today on courses, education, work programs, and so forth.

The very first observation we can make on this score is that the modality of the formal proposition in favor of professional education expresses a deep-seated conviction that can be expressed thus: “now that you’ve learned a trade, get to work and stop stealing.”

This is basically an attempt to overcome the concrete needs of the person spurred by the belief that with this problem resolved, all others will spontaneously fall in line, having thus been reoriented and normalized.

The paradox resides in the mutually held illusion, on the part of the instructor and of the pupil, that the problem is essentially a problem of work opportunity: both seek an instrumental, and simple, solution to a much deeper problem.

¹³ Michelina Capato Sartore, psychologist, teacher, researcher, director, in charge of the artistic/educational project based on theatre, II Casa di Reclusione of Milan-Bollate (Italy).

Even though they were led there through an illusion, the instructor and pupil have entered meaningful territory due to their relationship and their combined efforts to bring about some form of change.

The relational elements in fact become the foundation of every process of change, and we may justifiably surmise that an alliance of trust is built between the two parties, but that this trust will more often than not falter in the concrete events following the detention.

Everything points to the fact that the awareness of instructors who work in prisons and detention centers and the visible quality of their intervention is the condition *sine qua non* of every possible process of change.

I am alluding here to the motivations of the instructor (confessional, normative, factual, etc.), because this, in the end, is the alchemist's lead in the pupil's efforts to change ...

It goes without saying that the "common points" found in the formative steps are as important as the instruction given; if one can speak of teaching the love of the subject matter because one loves it oneself, we can also, by extension, refer to other aspects of the instructor's make up that will inspire the pupil not to disappoint in his or her attempt to be recognized and appreciated.

There is no place where relationships are so strongly formalized, even ritualized, as they are in a prison, where waiting and meeting periods being totally determined from on high. In such a context, each person must learn to make the most of the short time allotted to satisfy his or her affective and social recognition needs.

The sometimes hierarchic moralism found among prisoners of more egregious crimes is perhaps the most glaring example of this.

Equally glaring, however, is the discrepancy between the guidelines laid down in the "Ordinamento Penitenziario" ("Penitentiary Guidelines") regarding the rights to education of prisoners and the dignity of the human person and the reality that reigns behind bars. My point, however, is to point to the structural and cultural limits that dominate in this context, and not to point the finger yet again at the total lack of legal instruments and resources, of adequately trained staff, and of concrete projects of reinsertion upon release.

A concerted attention to the person of the prisoner or the presence of a healthy work culture in detention centers are hardly spontaneous observations: prisons afflict those under their roofs with an endemic sense of the meaninglessness of daily tasks, and if this already the case to a high degree among prison workers, one can only imagine the effects on people who, in many cases, have never really worked at all, and who for the most part left school 14, when compulsory schooling ends in Italy. As it happens, this is just in time to allow these youngsters to do a few "jobs" and, especially, to go into adolescence and its difficult search for social identity.

We note once more that in prisons the term "work," which only occasionally denotes proper formal training, gains the upper hand over every other aspect of life. This is not to deny the importance of being able to sustain oneself implicit in the very notion of work, but to indicate that it may also make all the more evident that something is lacking.

The sense of lack we have in mind is ... the lack of meaning. Yes, it is true that modern approaches to intervention in prisons are always talking about orientation, working on motivation, about reformulating the trajectory for reinsertion into society and the work force, and so on and so forth. Taking nothing away from the good intentions displayed in these approaches, we often notice a reorientation that seems to take place now and then in prison on the part of the person, as he or she clings to those three or four everyday gestures that make imprisonment tolerable and the future imaginable.

When a prisoner finds him or herself in the world, he or she needs much more profound tools to cope with the complex realities of life outside prison walls, whether in terms of work, the family, or society, in the most elementary sense of belonging to a group of people,.

There is a huge gap between the formal tools available during the period of incarceration and the actual effort to hold together the meaning of the experience upon release.

Any process that fails to change the levels of sense of the person is destined to recede into the background only to be supplanted by the person's erstwhile social skills, along with all their limitations; these skills, let us not forget, are the ones that, in one way or another, led the person down the path of crime in the first place.

When we talk about the process of reinsertion, of reformulating one's social identity, of gaining new skills and socio-professional opportunities, we take for granted that the layers of meaning associated with these capacities are not only available, but also fully cooperative. And yet, what one finds more often than not at this stage is that the lack of meaning manifests itself in such a way as to cancel out the newly acquired skills, along with the life prospects that are at that point no more than an hypothesis.

Some formative approaches and methods boast an amazingly informal way of connecting with the real experiences of the person. Among these, theater seems the most central.

In this as in other areas, it is crucial to state from the outset to what type of theater we have in mind. There are, after all, so many different schools and approaches in the theater that it may be the case that not all theatrical techniques are conducive to the process of discovering new parts or of building on one's past experiences.

The schools based on the theories of Konstantin S. Stanislavsky, and on Lee Strasberg's appropriation of them, all go by the term "method," and all have this much in common: they work out a very precise psychological analysis for each of the characters by examining the relationship between the character and the psychology of the actor.

Along similar lines, the poetics favored by the theatrical language of dance in France also resort to bodily techniques of "acting out" that are extremely useful in understanding bodily gestures, and hence emotively tied to a set of acquired behavior, on top of allowing for an efficient observation of spontaneous responses to interrelated stimuli.

Both techniques underscore the importance of underlying emotive processes, and both strive to achieve a spontaneous bridge to complexes, whether lived or suppressed.

These methods of course are indissociable from the theatrical poetics of Antonin Artaud and its emphasis on theatrical action, since for Artaud the gestures of the actor on stage are not a mere representation of experience, but acts of real presence. Perhaps this is the real strength behind the proposals for theater in prisons: dramatic action is a presence, alive and in the flesh, that is stronger than the presence one experiences in everyday life, whether in or out of prison. Contact with this living aspect of the theater occasions pleasure in the prospect of possibly being free.

Specifically, we should like to dwell awhile on the precise elements of social theater and their relationship to penitentiary organizations, putting particular emphasis on the theatrical experience and how it can bring to the fore the tools necessary for the development social relation skills.

A theater workshop provides a space where the confines are clearly established and shared, a stable yet intense space-time that promotes a gradual and constant experimentation riddled with value judgments.

A theater group's schedule is a combination of exercises, moments of meaningful communication and of learning, rehearsals, observations, relaxation and concentration techniques, improvisation games ... all of which contribute something to the end product.

The theater group needs a long period of experimentation before it can enjoy the process of putting what the members have learned towards mounting a play. During this second phase, the group, now with a new identity, acquires methods and processes of research that have even more significant links to the creative process.

The theater workshop is developed through a process of learning that is as technical as it is relational, a process that predisposes the members to relate to their work by the mobilization of their personal experience, or by experimenting with their bodies (in their emotional just as much as in their technical and performative capacities), or by poetical stimulation, or by the conflicts that emerge in the dynamic of the group. All of these are ways in which the group renders explicit and develops the expressive content of the play as well as the thematic of the singular individuals and of the collective as these become successively available during the preparation of the play.

The needs of the working group trace the red line guiding the work in the direction of materials meaningful for each of the individuals that make up the group. Further, the path taken in the theater workshop is guided by clearly defined formative goals; it reveals in this very first phase of observation a few diversified working clusters that are beneficial to the different needs and characters present in the group. The environment of the workshop creates an intense and spontaneous feeling of experimentation that is itself strongly connected to a formative trajectory that can be measured with every moment of the performance moment. And the playful atmosphere goes a long way towards guaranteeing a gratifying and concrete learning experience whose springboard is the limits and resources of the individuals and of the group.

This allows the members to devote some time to their *soft skills*: it is sometimes the case that these moments are the first time that the person allows him or herself to grow, the first time he or she truly inquires into the reason for this difficulty, or that inability to communicate, or this fear, discovering in the process a series of social and relational sensibilities and skills that are recognized and confirmed by the group.

This first discovery of the self and of a sense of “change” is promptly followed by other observations that encourage the members to persevere in their active participation, and this in turn ensures their continued collaboration and solidarity during rehearsals, their sense of individual and collective responsibilities, their honest appraisal of the results achieved at every step of the work, as well as the sound management of time during rehearsals and the efficacy of working propositions.

Everything that falls within the dynamic scope of conflict management is extremely important: although initially people may find cause for conflict in personal animosity, a variety of codes of communication and behavior (we recall here the high level of formalization typical of communication among inmates) re-channel this animosity, in a second phase, towards the goals of the production, towards a colleague’s failure to comply with his or her responsibilities or to the fact that this or that topic was never adequately resolved. Thus, without excluding clusters of animosity or aggression, it is still possible for the group to arrive at an objectification of the problems and at a shared and explicit understanding of them.

Little by little, the trusting and non-judgmental environment of the production encourages the members to share more meaningful experiences, some painful, some disabling, in the belief that they will be received in a spirit of respect and solidarity.

Several experiments with theater in prisons have been closely observed and monitored through a system of survey and appraisal, and treatment experts in the National Department of Justice have claimed that theatrical activity spontaneously aids prisoners in the process of individual change and helps their sense of belonging to a motivated and cohesive group, one that can translate the experience felt in the educational context of the theater workshop into the experiences of everyday life, all the while maintaining the gratifying relational and stimulating quality felt by the participants in the workshop.

The theatrical procedures thus suggested oscillate between the explicit needs tied to the acquisition of new social, relational, and artistic skills, and the implicit, therapeutic level that bestows anew unto the body the status of a poetic object and a creator of meaning.

This is the important level in terms of the efforts to remedy the old, and disabling, sense of the lack of meaning of one's own actions, the sense of a split in the subject and a gap between self and world. It is at this level that one begins to reappropriate, recognize, and transform the most profound meaning of existence.

The philosophical precedent here are all those attempts at bridging the gap between mind and body that followed in the wake of positivism, such as psychological theories of bodily bioenergy (Alexander Lowen), Oriental strands of thought, and the philosophy of American Indians, according to which mind and body are indeed but one object, with the body encompassing the mind as simply another one of its parts.

In this unity, bodily integrity encompasses mental, emotive, physiological functions just as much as it does the joints, muscles, and organs: bodily integrity is the vital force in its entirety, and hence also the material at the basis of the creative process.

The contexts, situations, and bodies involved in the relationship determine the different methodologies and the various levels of depth of the work.

Contemporary culture tends to play down the importance of everything communicated by the body, save for what it communicates through images.

The internal and sensible experience to the body reveals, first and foremost, a fully-developed natural defensive tendency that pushes the subject to avoid feeling pain and suffering. Added to this is the cultural notion that bodily experiences are anti-economic, almost a total waste of time.

When one works in environments where psychic and physical disadvantages abound, one is immediately made aware of the heightened defensive behavior of bodies (it goes without saying that the body of an imprisoned drug-addict displays levels of defense, or of problems, that are much different than those of difficult adolescents, of old people, of people who are therapy-dependent, of drug-free prisoners, or of the average teenager one might work with in an external theater workshop).

We recognize the principles alluded to, even though they remain indirect, or can vary depending on the level of complexity, by the difficulty in grasping the body its own role in how the subject experiences life: the information, emotions, and feelings that can be sensibly perceived are a human material innate to everything, and hence also to the psyche, and they are also the creative material upon which is founded any and all emotive or creative action.

The well being of the body is one of the basic goals of theater in prisons. Still, one should not forget that achieving this well being sometimes demands one to revisit those emotions and experiences that lie behind the chronic malaise and which has, by the by, become the obvious, naïve, and never problematized feature of the subject's life. Someone diagnosed while growing up with chronic muscle contractions in the area of the diaphragm must clearly have developed this mechanism to diminish the suffering of the body, which can breathe less. The only way to deal with the malaise and the emotions localized under such a block, the only way to help the person breathe better, is to lead him or her to experience the same difficulties anew, to revisit the same frustrations, to face the experience that triggered the muscle block in the diaphragm to defend the body from a violent experience. Touching the bottom of that experience is the only way to overcome the problem. People do not go willingly in search of painful experiences; quite the contrary, people go to great lengths to avoid these, thereby setting limits to their experience invariably causes one to feel what, from time immemorial, has been called a sense of lack or a lack of sense. The profound sense of a suppressed and disabling experience is right there, hidden beneath a banal muscle contraction ... and it is waiting to be freed so it can live again. We have no illusions that this will provoke a

revolution in the person's attitude to his or her own life, but we do believe that it can help the person to absorb this experience and to regain a sense of integrity despite the now even sharper sense of the problems, or lacks, in his or her life. More than anything, this process generates trust one needs to reconcile oneself to one's personal story and to being ready to confront one's own self and the world.

Over time, experience undoubtedly provides the subject with cognitive instruments that allow, today, for a different re-elaboration of those defenses. The important point, though, is to know that those defenses exist, and that they are not an obvious feature of one's being, like being blond or fat, but belongs instead to the world of experience rather than to the world of genetics. Here we discover yet another reason to confront all of this: oneself. Through bodily practice, through the subject's sensibility to those practices, and through the better understanding of the subject's personal limits, the body in movement communicates—at the muscular, perceptive, and emotive level—that choosing that defense amounts, initially, to bringing to the fore the same emotion that was unbearable years earlier, and that the subject rediscovers today with equal power.

Although it may seem absurd, the theater, with its playfulness, with the protection provided by the character work it demands, with its “as if” quality, supplies the subject with a simpler motivation for confronting all of this than a typical, psychological analysis. Character work, let us not forget, can do without the deontological prerequisites necessary for therapy (the person is not free to go or not go to a psychologist, but must go according to standard procedure), to say nothing of the fact that most detainees have little or no idea of what psychology and psychotherapy are in the first place ... And so there are times when the implicit psychology of the theater serves as a handy cultural bridge that helps the subject to reach the point where he or she can choose a cure. In some cases, this cure may even be the theater itself.

In the theater, we can put our problems to the project of giving flesh to implicitly analytic creative processes: in the course of production we question, analyze, choose, and experience the same cluster of problems that have come to define us as persons.

There is a certain circularity in exchanging the personal process for the creative one, but in those instances where people are really capable of lending their human flesh to the creative process, the latter gives it back to them in a more elaborate, conscious, and freer form.

That is what the theater makes possible: it puts people in touch with their intimate material, though not for the sake of that alone, but to give life to another self, to a character.

We are talking about processes with strong ties to that concept of truth in the theater, since the make-believe world of the theater depends, if the events that befall the characters are to be believable, on the actor's willingness to put his or her personal sense on stage, where it has been transformed and redirected towards a particular character/persona who is different from the actor.

When working with a group of people, I believe that it is first of all crucial to ask where these people are in terms of their relationships to their own bodies, rather than how conscious they are of themselves, that is, how mentally aware they are of their situation and condition. It is better to start with the bodily self-awareness, which is anyway connected to their mental self-awareness. One might be aware of one's own limits, of what one may or may not be capable of doing, and yet this awareness may be purely mental: cognitive and rational knowledge does not itself encompass the actual awareness of the emotions felt when at the moment one becomes aware that one is incapable of doing this or that. Living aware of one's own actions is different. The rational defense is there for those moments when the praxis, the acting, runs into the potential for suffering and setbacks.

What things determine one's inadequacy for this or that? Why is it so hard to find the strength to do them?

We may by the time we are fifty know very well why our minds cower in the face of some frustrations, or why we find it impossible to do this or that, but we may for all that still be unable to do them

That is the difference one finds sometimes between verbal and bodily therapies: verbal therapy leads to a profound knowledge of the limits and constraints of the process itself. For all the power of this intellectual process to put one in touch with the emotions of a particular condition, it nonetheless risks not being able to open up the possibility for change.

It is like someone who is extremely aware, but lacks the tools given by experience that allow one to try a different road.

This is why we are talking, at many different levels, about both individual and collective trajectories of change.

Maybe the theater is this: a process of continuous individual and collective transformation.

A collective process only exists when founded on individual processes; short of that, it is only ideology.

A group can complete a process.

The problem is to succeed in creating a group context that allows singular individuals to acquire those gains in liberty that can be recognized as steps forward, whether for the individual, or for the group.

That is what one creates in a workshop: the person who goes a little further and does something that no one has done before opens the way for the others.

One tries to bestow upon one's own actions the status of liberty and responsibility, something that may or may not happen: this can only succeed when the proposition of a greater liberty of expression and experience really corresponds to the needs of the individuals.

One must also seize the right moment when the group can recognize its own needs: a premature or tardy suggestion does not work.

These are hard needs, in terms of what they demand from the person. Each person knows that what he or she is staking in the play is their own flesh, and that they are doing so for themselves, even when the ends are theatrical.

Little by little, if the experience gives some meaning to the effort, it is transformed into expressive freedom.

Paradoxical as it may seem, the people most willing in the theatrical environment to enter into a process of personal examination are likewise the most reluctant and resistant to the idea of being taking part in a therapeutic group.

We find here a problematic already hinted at in the preamble to our discussion: why does the theater inspire one to confront emotional and physical hardships, or the sense of frustration, while therapeutic processes are so maligned by the very people who might gain the most from them?

Because the theater opens up to the world, instead of closing in on a shameful private experience; because at the end of the process there is a spectacle, and anyone can see you, recognize your effort, notice your change.

Theater is a social and collective act ... one is not alone doing it.

Here we come to the most salient feature of the theatrical experience as a genre as well as to its most potent effects in closed off environments: theater is based on the relationship between individuals that redefines a collective context within which each one has his or her role and is entirely useful.

The relationships are constructive relationships forged in light of a common objective; the norms governing the relationships are easily recognizable (this or that rule exists because it helps the work along); the relationships are visible and explicit (each person has to observe the

others and express his or her real opinion); the relationships are characterized by a high degree of solidarity (if you do not do your part I can't do mine, and the show will not go on); they deal publicly with inadequacy and effort (you saw me struggling with this or that); and they restore to the participants the meaning of effort (I saw you: you did it).

In an almost childlike fashion one revisits the path of recognition of the self that sustain and encourage the meaning of effort, and in the process one recreates a world in which it makes sense to try once more, even if it is hard to do, even if one thinks one will never succeed, even if it is frustrating, even if there is suffering in the trying, even if, incredibly, one might draw some pleasure from that, even if ...

Isn't it just such a world that we would like to live in, even if ... we are not inmates? Isn't that the most marvelous alchemy of the theater, that it can create, right here with us, a world we want to live in ... even if ... it is theater?

2.2. Theatre

Giulia E. Innocenti Malini

In order to introduce the matter of theatre as social work it is useful to unmask some of the stereotypes regarding the theatre experience. The generally shared image of theatre binds it in definite roles, spaces, times and actions: the show, the stage, the script – hence the author – acting and actors, the director, the audience, buying a ticket, customs, set. These are some of the recurring things that define theatre, but in fact they define a specific way in which human beings in a specific period set the elements of the theatre art.

These ways of practicing theatre, that represent socio-cultural and political urgencies of the moment, were structured and became established between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: the significant celebration component that political power poured as a need onto the theatre experience, the professional dimension that was more and more taking shape with regard to art in general and theatre in particular, and the newly established liberal and commercial climate that implied a coming into light of market dynamics and of the commercial component that is peculiar to artistic and theatre production. All these elements played an important role in the definition of the theatre practice of the period, awarding progressively the theatre knowledge to professionals exclusively¹⁴.

Theatre of the twentieth century, instead, was a set of multiform forces: on one hand, the nineteenth century form of theatre was imposing itself; transgressive cultural movements were ripening and bursting alongside it, in part in opposition, in part as change and transformation. In this melting pot of researches, theatre went through and was passed through by experiences, practices, disciplines that highlighted its complexity and resources. It was the encounter with psychoanalysis, anthropology, politics, revolutions, wars... Even new media development – cinema at first and television later on – that more effectively met some of the needs that used to be prerogative of the theatre, while at the same time creating new needs, was a further driving force for the theatre to fold into itself and ask the basic question: was theatre art still necessary, and if it was, what was the necessity, what was its specificity in relation to other forms of art and media?

Just as the question was asked, theatre was removed from an ideal of absoluteness and autonomous gratuitousness, an ideal for which art is worth in itself, is necessary in itself, needing no reason of being: the question was enquiring the very necessity of the theatre art, and declaring its deep meaning and social foundation.

Answers were many, and varied, but what is interesting for us is that in a climate of deep crisis and reflection, theatre found the need to go back and acknowledge its own primary matrix: ritual, feast and game; order and conventional forms, roles and space definition were put under discussion. Theatre questioned their meaning within the complex contemporary experience, not only for the individual, but for the group and the community.

Theatre of the twentieth century is a dilating one, materially and metaphorically getting out of its traditional spaces, and in doing so is transformed and regenerated, both in its material and creative processes and in its aesthetical principles, as in the artistic and expressive forms as – mostly – in its assumptions and aims. Starting from its traditional horizon (still late nineteenth century) of entertainment and escape (including the cultural-committed version) Twentieth century theatre tends to develop well-grounded pedagogical-ethical-political-spiritual ambitions, at times going as far as to make the

¹⁴ There is an extremely wide bibliography on the matter of theatre history; as a support for better clarity on historical information, we will only point out C. MOLINARI, *Storia del teatro*, Laterza, Roma-Bari 1996

actor and the theatre group into the ideal standard of human being and community of the future.¹⁵

In this process, still arduously ongoing, it became more and more clear that theatre is an art gifted with peculiar pedagogical sensitivity, rich in expressive, communication and relation resources, which could acquire a deep meaning when dealing with development.

Social work particularly, its operators and institutions, realized this potential and invested in the possibility that theatre goes back to people, beyond their professional choice or their living condition¹⁶.

If I am a poet or an actor it isn't because I want to write
or declaim poems but to live them.

Antonin Artaud

¹⁵ M. DE MARINIS, *In cerca dell'attore. Un bilancio del Novecento teatrale*, (In search of the actor. A balance of Twentieth century theatre) Bulzoni Editore, Rome 2000, p. 12

¹⁶ Theoretical, practical and education research regarding social theatre that we will refer to in this essay is the research that has been carried out for the last thirty years under the chair of Storia del Teatro at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan, that witnessed actively involved, together with Sisto Dalla Palma, many of his team members, such as Claudio Bernardi, Alessandro Pontremoli, Monica Dragone, Alessandra Ghiglione, Fabrizio Fiaschini, Laura Cantarelli, Daniela Perazzo, Francesca Gentile beside myself. Today, many members of this wide group continue their research on social theatre in other universities – particularly the Università Cattolica in Turin, Pavia, and Brescia – or in the field as operators, keeping with all the others a close relation of exchange and cooperation. For an outline of reference regarding texts on the research progress, please refer to C. BERNARDI, L. CANTARELLI (edited by), *Emozioni. Riti teatrali nelle situazioni di margine*, Atti del convegno, (Emotions. Theatre rituals in marginal situation – Symposium proceedings) Cremona, May 31 1995, «Quaderni dell'Ufficio di Promozione Educativa e Culturale», n° 2, Cremona Provincial administration, Cremona 1995; C. BERNARDI, B. CUMINETTI, S. DALLA PALMA (edited by), *I fuoriscena. Esperienze e riflessioni sulla drammaturgia nel sociale*, (off scene. Experiences and reflections on dramaturgy in social work) EuresisEdizioni, Milano 2000; G. BADOLATO, F. FIASCHINI, G. INNOCENTI MALINI, R. VILLA, *La scena rubata. Appunti sull'handicap e il teatro*, (The stolen scene. Notes on theatre and handicap) EuresisEdizioni, Milano 2000; C. BERNARDI C., D. PERAZZO (edited by), *Missioni impossibili*, (Missions impossible) monographic issue of <<Comunicazioni Sociali>>, 13 (2001), n. 3; C. BERNARDI, M. DRAGONE, G. SCHININÀ (edited by), *War theatres and actions for peace. Teatri di guerra e azioni di pace*, EuresisEdizioni, Milano 2002; S. DALLA PALMA, *La scena dei mutamenti*, (the scene of changes) Vita e Pensiero, Milan 2002; C. BERNARDI, *Il teatro sociale*, (social theatre) Carocci, Rome 2004.

2.2.1. Theatre in the process of training and change

Giulia Innocenti Malini

The reflection we develop in this chapter questions the matrix of theatre experience in order to describe and outline the elements of theatre that can be a resource in individual training and in promoting a greater social well being, with specific reference to the detention situation.

As we were saying, between common and natural evolution paths of people and groups, and theatre pedagogical practice aimed at improving the actors training, a tighter and tighter connection came to light during the twentieth century. This observation helped the many education methods and disciplines to gather, from theatre, work new suggestions and training processes. There are many examples – for instance psychodrama in its many formulations, drama-therapy, role playing, performative training.... – that revolutionized training courses as well as the very idea of education. Theatre became an innovative training experience, which could offer to adult training needs centuries of theatre pedagogy, optimizing and guiding the great acquisitions ripened within the actors and directors training schools processes..

It becomes clearer, a change within the very training paradigm, that, alongside with more traditional practices, witness a complex idea of training and evolution, that must face the socio-cultural urgency of present days, in order to develop an action on more levels, with different subjects taking part in the process, integrating pedagogy and anthropology different contributions.

What we can see today, in this moment of social change, is the increasing significance of theatre in care, education and re-education contexts¹⁷, seemingly in contradiction with the technology and science paradigm that rules contemporary culture and tries to control the change process only through rational models. While education processes appear as the expression of a form of adjustment to reality, where the process develops within a necessary continuity – as in structured education and training systems – or as the answer to an arising hardship, theatre in training and generally in pedagogic processes, seems more oriented to building reality, developing a creative approach to reality's queries.

This evidence brings us to question the art of theatre, analyze its creative processes, in order to clarify its training meaning.

Theatre has a very specific artistic statute. It does not leave behind a lasting product: the show is consumed in the time of performance. Furthermore, it is an art of presence, hence based on the physical aspect of experience, on the bodily reality of the actor and spectator, on the actual space and time. Eventually it is an art that gives itself in the relationship: it necessarily implies two roles – one does something to be watched, one watches the other doing. In the past, this made the theatre to be considered a unique form of art: absolutely contingent, not leaving behind a product, its achievement determined by the audience reaction and by the context¹⁸.

In fact, a thorough observation of the creative process shows its closeness to life, its finite nature, its unpredictability. It is an art of life, a life made artistic process, lived as a work of art, interwoven of imagery... A sort of highly specialized, contemporary, accurate focus, of the many vital processes that lead to individual, group and community development.

¹⁷ Regarding the detention contexts, please consider that a survey promoted by the Italian Ministry of Justice on music and theatre workshops active in prison in the year 2003, found that of the 206 analysed institutions (penitentiaries, prisons, psychiatric and judicial hospitals) 107 had a theatre/music workshop. Of the 54.237 detainee on December 31, 2003, 1676 were working in a theatre/music workshop. See http://www.giustizia.it/ministero/struttura/dipartimenti/scheda_provvi.htm

¹⁸ Actually a great number of essays on theatre history in fact describes the buildings, set, costumes, masks and texts history.

And this is the close tie with life that makes theatre an art for social development, and specifically a training experience for people. It is in detention, where training processes are strongly characterized by context¹⁹, that theatre highlights all its development resources. This preamble cleared; let's face more specifically theatre's own pedagogical potential.

Person as a body-mind: mimic practices and identification processes

The present contribution of neuroscience agrees on reversing the Cartesian approach and support the deep influence of body action on mind and behaviour.

It is difficult to assume that there are autonomous symbolic structures, independent from information exchanges with the rest of the body; in fact this has such an essential role on mental contents, that it is possible to reverse the classical representation of mind as an entity planning body movements, and represent a mind that is shaped by movements: every action on the surrounding environment makes for disturbances the perception of which is the basis of further action.²⁰

Scientists think there is a continuous exchange between motion and mind, and this is the reason why they hold the holistic point of view as the only one that can represent the human being in its complexity. Action is a basic element of the mind construction process. Action brings memory and emotion with itself, "it encloses a body knowledge that can only be acquired through practice and imitation"²¹ and body memory actually summarizes "in the present body a cultural past"²².

We go beyond the general value of body experience and of movement in order to try and outline the theatre acting training quality, and how the body in action on the scene within the performance system can give wellbeing and foster change, social and cultural transformation in its participants, be them individual subjects or groups.

Mimesis is definitely one of the first processes that characterize both theatre and person development. Identify with someone else, mimic their behaviour is one of the actions pertaining to the theatre experience, both for the actor interpreting a character and for the spectator, who finds in identification one of the main sources of participation to the

¹⁹ We believe it can be useful to clarify some of the element that mark the detention context with regard to training processes development, with reference to the content of previous texts in this collection.

What we are speaking about is adult and not junior training, hence a life long education and development.

It is out of common training courses contexts (school, college, university...) and in context with are not specifically educational.

It is a context full of specific social and cultural dynamics: detention, conflict, punishment, delinquency/deviance, intercultural processes, different linguistic religious and cultural references, a clean distinction between roles, the fixedness of institutional culture, separation between genders, the presence of situations of low education, the neglect of traditional school system, rejection of ordinary work contexts, difficulties in identifying a definite professional profile, background and family professional models.

It is mostly a professional training – consistently with the common idea in Italy that re-education comes from work, significantly neglecting other elements of the personal and group identity socio-emotional dimension.

The relationship between single person and group, the central dimension of group that we find in other training contexts and processes, in the case of prison takes on very specific connotation, not being structured nor supported by the institution.

For further reading on the subject please refer to: BUFFA P., *Dalla scuola in carcere al carcere-scuola (from school in prison to prison as a school)*, in <<Animazione sociale>>, XXX, # 1, pp. 62-68, 2000; *L'educazione degli adulti negli istituti penitenziari* (Adult education in prison), National symposium, Milan – January 23 to 25, 2002.

²⁰ A. OLIVERIO, *Mente e motricità*, (Mind and motion) in P. DONGHI (edited by), *Aree di contagio (contagion areas)*, Editori Laterza, Rome – Bari 2000, p. 5

²¹ *Ibid*, p. 8

²² *Ibid*

spectacular event, feeling the same as the character, living its experience emotionally, building that bridge of empathy that makes spectator and actor-character be of one kind. Likewise, imitation is one of the main elements of the learning process, and therefore of the persons evolution process, who by nature is born immature, in fact it is only by learning that the person can develop the necessary skills to survive in the environment. Among all the basic forms of learning, mimic tends to be ignored, in spite of the fact that it is one of children's most useful development strategies. Andrew Meltzoff reflections on this matter are of great interest²³. Human beings are a particularly imitative species, "mutual mimic games" played both with adults or other children their age, "provide children with specific information on their being similar to other people, and how others are similar to them"²⁴. To mimic movements helps the newly born to build an original connection between self and the other and moreover imitation becomes a mean to develop this connection, because the cognitive tool that allows to gather one's own mimic is the same through which the other mimic is perceived. Mutual mimic makes for a strong psychological and emotional bond, a feeling "in relation with". The discovery of the "similar to me" made by the newborn, starts a sequence of important evolutionary effects that "spurs the newborn to develop a sense of self and of the correspondence between self and the other"²⁵. The development proceeds from the perception of the other as similar because of the correspondence in motion, to the perception of the other as a person with whom deep similarities and closeness in intention, desires and motivation are shared.

The final evolution outcome is the concept of "person", in which the self is meant as an objective entity in a world of other individuals, and the other is perceived as having as rich a subjectivity as one's own. However, the core on which this sense of the person is built is the understanding that others are "similar to me". This being "similar to me" starts with the inter-modal equivalence of body movements that newborns use in their simple mimic games. These simple games are "natural" for children, but they work as building material for culture and the carrier of customs and rituals specific to the family and the social group.²⁶

Hence, the first evolution process that we find in the theatre pedagogical practice is definitely mimic, imitation, the development of actions that mirror the other's actions. The mimic dynamics, offered by actor's training games and actions, develops paths starting from simple spurs to situations of great expressive and socio-emotional complexity. This makes the process easy to adapt to the actual skills of the group that forms in the theatre workshop, and to contexts in great need, with minimal possibilities to take part and interact.

Theatre work that offers a way to explore, play, develop a complex mimic relation, offers the possibility to go again through the archaic and deep dynamics than work together the identity development in interactive situations.

One of the requirements of learning is reactivated, definitely one of the most ancient, given its appearance in the early stages of human experience. This belonging to origins of the mimic process as a learning form, and as the development of a relation dynamic that acknowledges me as a person when I acknowledge the other as a person, appears as particularly meaningful in a context such as detention, which seems to undermine the very foundations of the person's

²³ Ref. to A. N. MELTZOFF, *L'infanzia della mente: ciò che i bambini ci insegnano su noi stessi*, (Childhood of the mind: what children teach us about ourselves) in P. DONGHI (edited by), *Aree di contagio (contagion areas)*, Editori Laterza, Rome – Bari 2000, pp. 43 - 64

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 54

²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 62

²⁶ *Ibid*

experience of identity, spurring the individual towards a return to childhood²⁷, rather than the conformed and forced individualization of the prize giving system²⁸.

The work on mimetic processes – being like one other person – implies the development of skills and sensitivities that support the identification of self through the encounter with the other, and the identification with the other, spurring the inauguration or re-inauguration of an empathic attitude and gaze, which will make it possible to interpret the other from self only through the necessity to understand the other in his complexity: reasons to behave and react in a way rather than another have to be understood, the other has to be considered as a subject, with all his conflicting manifestations.

Moreover, transforming oneself is something other from self, using body/voice/mind/emotion to build this new character sets in motion a deep encounter with oneself: in order to transform one's voice into a child's, or an elder's, first of all we must meet and acknowledge our own voice. And this happens for any part of ourselves that we engage in the process of character development: the encounter with the other/character that we play is a dense experience of self, of one's own body identity, that is of own identity²⁹.

Creative and empathic interaction that is specific of the mimic process highlights the person identity complexity, in the encounter with the other and with oneself, hence making theatre work an experience that can gradually free itself from strict and simplifying identification dynamics that are typical of the detention context. They reduce interaction between people, polarize roles that are defined only through a paradigm of right and wrong (detainee/ward) and give rise to behaviours uniformed to meet the institution expectation, in order to avoid sanctions or to obtain privileges, thus dissimulating relationship's hidden dynamics which do not agree with the institution³⁰.

"Prison absorbs, reduces individuality to zero... every subjective, specific expression is put down in favour of homologation"³¹.

Then theatre practice in these simple and archaic practices gives back to the person a fundamental time for growth, in which to take care of oneself, to play freely and seriously with the core issue of any training process: who am I? And more: who do I want to be?

Keeping these questions is one of the significances of theatre in social work.

Body on stage

Also as important is the body experience acted in this original and theatre training course. If theatre brings to life an imaginary scene, or as we will say later, a symbolic one, the scene is at the same time real, because all actions carried out, all bodies, persons, objects, emotions, voices, time and space are absolutely real: "the basic elements of symbolic, what is offered to the eyes, starting with the origins of the society of man, is the body"³².

The body is a basic element of the theatre experience as art in presence, which makes the live action of the body-voice of the actor into a work of art. The body on stage during a performance makes clear its role of cultural object-subject, a sign as well as a biological body,

²⁷ See E. GOFFMAN, *Asylums. Essays on the social situation of mental patients and other inmates*, Anchor Books, New York 1961; It. tr. *Asylums. Le istituzioni sociali: I meccanismi dell'esclusione e della violenza*, Einaudi, Turin 1968, pp. 70-82

²⁸ On this regard please see the articulate reflection of G. MOSCONI, *Dentro il carcere, oltre la pena*, (Within prison, beyond punishment) Cedam, Padua 1998

²⁹ See V. RUGGERI, *Identità in psicologia e teatro*, (Identity in Psychology and in theatre) Edizioni Scientifiche Ma.Gi, Rome 2001, pp. 75-86

³⁰ Cfr. C. BARALDI, V. VOLPINI, *Com'è possibile essere persona in carcere: l'esempio del teatro*, (How to be a person in prison: the theatre example) in <<Marginalità e società>>, # 32, December 1995, pp. 139-165

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 140

³² F. HÉRITIER – AUGÉ, *Aids. La sfida antropologica*, (AIDS, an anthropological challenge) Ei Editori, Rome 1993, p. 115

integrating the social and personal imagery on the body, transforming it into relationship and communication.

We must realize our body is life. In our body, whole, every experience is written. On the skin, under the skin, from childhood to the present age, and possibly even before childhood, maybe even before our generation was born. The life-body is tangible. When in theatre work we say: please try and remember an important moment in your life, and the actor tries to recover a memory, that is the moment when the life-body is in a dead dormancy, even if it is moving and speaking... it is pure concept. We go back to memories, but the life-body remains in the dark.

If you allow your body to look for what is intimate, what it has accomplished, accomplishes, wants to accomplish in its heart (rather than recovering the image of a memory evoked in thoughts) it starts searching: I touch someone, I hold my breath, something is held back within myself, yes, the encounter is always there, the Other is, always present, directly, indirectly, here, now, once... and something shows, that we could call impulses³³.

This central position of the body dimension was reaffirmed and repeated by all theatre of the twentieth century, which devised actor training processes and pedagogies based on the body, on the physical actions that unveiled and explored the deep integration between body and mind. And what came more and more in light was that the theatre work, with its strong implication of the body dimension, starting and arriving point of the theatre action, putting into action the person-body, the life-body mentioned by Grotowski, into a scene where the situation is creatively and poetically explored, played, repeated and modified, can transform that situation and progressively transform the person/actor that plays it³⁴.

Theatre addresses the person-body, that is capable of deep emotions, and affectivity not only for those who see the performance, but also for those who take part in it and are transformed by the performance action and by the emotions and feelings that are generated within themselves: this is possibly the primary pleasure of the child when he comes across the theatre game, this is an element of its trans-formative power.

In order to understand more clearly the matter, we will try and adapt it into the work practice. Many methods and pedagogies for the actor dedicate training and exercise to posture in order to develop the character creation process. Hence, the actor training experience starting point is the body. That is, the actor found out, experimenting, that working on a character identity and put in action an identification process with it, implies an in depth exploration of the posture, because it is an obvious expression of the character nature, biography, tension, weaknesses, the defences it puts on, which immediately tell who the character is. But the theatre trainer is as conscious as the actor of the fact that in researching these postural elements, they will have to keep into account the postural structure of the actor. The actor will have to find out and share them with the work group, realizing, through the very mechanism applied to the character, and reaching a deep consciousness of his identity in his bodily-postural inscription.

³³ J. GROTOWSKI, *Il lavoro dell'attore. Ciò che è stato*, (the actor's work. What has been) speech at the Latin America Festival, Colombia, summer 1970, in F. CRUCIANI, C. FALLETTI, *Civiltà teatrale nel XX secolo* (Twentieth century theatre culture) Il Mulino, Bologna 1986, p. 322

³⁴ Cfr. R. SCHECHNER, *Performers and Spectators transported and transformed*, in <<The Kenyon Review>>, new series, Vol. III # 4, 1981; It. translation *Performers e spettatore trasportati e trasformati*, in R. SCHECHNER, *La teoria della performance. 1970 – 1983 (Performance theory. 1970-1980)*, Bulzoni, Rome 1984, pp. 176 - 212

Posture is closely linked with the organization of Self, and with its way to be in the world, its defences, its ability to integrate different levels of experience and different functions, as well as the capability to part, to take momentarily to pieces oneself (psychophysically). All this complex work of Self is quite recognizable in the postural attitude.

Through the organization of his own posture, the subject achieves its way to be³⁵.

The personal implication in the actor training work was under observation by the twentieth century great pedagogues that started talk about a training that was shaping not only the actor, but the human being, as well³⁶.

This intuition is the basis of some of the great training potentials of theatre in social contexts, and particularly in places of confinement. The theatre work offers a fascinating, bodily, playful, entertaining and enthralling practice, which in no way can be compared to traditional training processes offered by school institutions, towards which the person in prison often feels a strong dislike. At the same time the theatre practice will bring along a number of pedagogical and training values that spur the person on a deep level, questioning her on the live and painful sense of being in the world, on the sense of lack, and the lack of sense³⁷.

The vitality of the bodily experience that is experimented in the theatre workshop then becomes an opportunity to find an alternative to the mortification the body suffers in prison, for lack of free movement, of emotional, intimate and personal contact, of the smells and perfumes of one's life, reducing the overall sensory perception, closing the gaze within omnipresent barriers, and subjecting the person to an everlasting and amplified judging gaze of the prison wards. The person in prison is deprived the possibility to give meaning to time. It becomes empty, blurred, without rituals, in order to be filled with humdrum, senseless actions³⁸.

It is a depersonalized body, depressed, bored. A body in such a condition, in the light of the body-mind-life connection, will definitely not help to trigger significant training processes. The theatre workshop becomes a place of body liberation, the opportunity of a training process that enlivens the body and structures itself as an unescapable promise for any other training course that wants to offer a real opportunity of change.

Symbolic processes: authority and acting

Another evolution element of the theatre work which has particular relevance is those creative practices that develop imaginative metaphoric and symbolical production.

The constitutional value for the person of the opportunity to develop these practices is immediately clear if we observe their appearance in a child's evolutionary processes and the function they serve.

The child who uses reality represents, as an imaginary game, the traumatic experience³⁹, is not only facing reality discarding or displacing his desire, but through an act of primary creative ability brings to life a symbolic scene in which

³⁵ V. RUGGERI, *L'identità in psicologia e teatro*, (Identity in psychology and in theatre) op. cit., p. 173

³⁶ On this regard there is plenty of literature; among the texts we already referred to, reference can be made in particular to: F. CRUCIANI, C. FALLETTI, *Civiltà teatrale nel XX secolo*, (Theatre civilization in the Twentieth Century) Il Mulino, Bologna 1986; M. DE MARINIS, *In cerca dell'attore. Un bilancio del Novecento teatrale*, (In search of the actor. A balance of Twentieth century theatre) Bulzoni Editore, Roma 2000.

³⁷ Here I directly refer to the reflections of M. CAPATO SARTORE developed in her various contributions to this book.

³⁸ Cfr. D. GONIN, *La santé incarcérée. Médecine et condition de vie en détention*, Ed. L'Archipel, 1991 ; tr. It. *Il corpo incarcerato*, (Body in prison) Edizioni Gruppo Abele, Turin 1994.

³⁹ S. FREUD, *Jenseits des Lustprinzips*, Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, Lipzig–Wien–Zurich 1920;. It. translation *Al di là del principio del piacere*, (Beyond the pleasure principle) in S. FREUD, *Opere*, (Works) vol. IX, Boringhieri, Turin 1977, pp. 193 - 249

what was lost is created again. What the child possessed and was possessed by is generated again through a substitute that can bear no direct reference to the original meaning, but could again and freely become the object and aim of his investment, through a process of symbolization⁴⁰.

Hence this act appears as the way in which the child copes with unease, trying to recover a feeling of wellbeing, restoring creatively the former condition.

What are the features of this action, that was pointed out many times as very close to theatre and that appears to be naturally projected towards solving the situation of lack?

The symbolic activity presents itself as the primary form of attribution of meaning to experience, through a re-presentation in a form, in a performance action that is not an imitation, nor a rational representation of what it is that we lack, but something different that turns out to be very significant anyway, so much so, as to be an answer to the need, and gifted with a deep reason of being for the person who produces it and for the social context in which the action gets recognized. The symbolic action dwells right there, between giving sense and sharing the given sense, building a dialogue between individual and group in trauma induced discomfort⁴¹.

Two main theatre elements are developed in function of its being a symbolic action: the re-presentation/representation of experience in a creative form, with the opportunity to give sense through the performative action, and relationally, sharing the 'other' meaning ascribed by the performative action from subject to subject, from actor to spectator, from performance and performer to the participating community. The child who starts the game brings to the world, and hence to the relation and communication universe, his own inner experience and his emotions. In this sense, he opens himself to a creative and constructive management of his experience communication.

This game matrix, as well as the practice of symbols, is well present in the theatre work, in workshop research experiences, in the improvisation work, in the self-dramaturgy and in the detention situation they prove to be extraordinary resources.

Particularly in prison,

the convict looks for a way out from his mental scene inhabited by unease and ghosts; the theatre experience does not offer but an out placement, an inversion of terms. Even the inversion can become vital, though, if it provokes active behaviours. To become the mind of the scene, as the actor usually does, implies acknowledging other behaviours and relations⁴².

The imaginary experience that is developed in theatre action allows the person to get out of the abstract and raving convict imagination, in order to concentrate, to focus on the scene and learn again the opportunity that lies at the bottom of every artistic practice, that is creating action of communication and relationship, that can poetically transform the inner experience.

The person in prison goes back to the symbolic practice of games and exercises this opportunity to really act, that is to change a situation of passivity in facing discomfort and

⁴⁰ S. DALLA PALMA, *La scena dei mutamenti*, (The scene of changes) Vita e Pensiero, (Life and work) Milan 2001, p. 30

⁴¹ Cfr. C. TULLIO – ALTAN, *Soggetto simbolo valore. Per un'ermeneutica antropologica*, (Subject symbol value. Essay for an anthropology hermeneutics) Feltrinelli, Milano 1992

⁴² C. MELDOLESI, *Immaginazione contro emarginazione. L'esperienza italiana del teatro in carcere* (Imagination vs alienation, The Italian experience of theatre in prison), in <<Teatro e storia>>, # 16, IX, Il Mulino, Bologna 1994, p. 50

pain, into an active acting situation. In this case, the concrete development of imagery in the symbolic action, in the poetic mediation of the artistic event, becomes a real opportunity to go back to oneself and to research the deepest meaning that drives us towards experiences. Secondly, thanks to the self dramaturgy practices, a new condition is established: that of the author-actor, the actor that can be author of his own text, rather than only being the one who, with his interpretative skills of representation, gives life to a text written by someone else⁴³. People find and boost their ability to produce and communicate culture, changing their statute of users of the cultural products of others. If this recovering one's own actor and author role is always an evolutionary element, it is even more so in prison, where the person is deprived of any opportunity to produce culture. Culture passivity is on the other hand boosted by a high consumption of TV products that, as is well known, make the viewer used to defuse reaction to the stimuli produced in great number by TV programs, aimed at the viewer mind and body⁴⁴. Theatre workshop, where a creative and relational condition of reaction to stimuli is created, implies for the person and group a progressive assumption of the author and co/author role, which allows people to evolve into a condition of greater autonomy and adulthood.

A strong sense of responsibility is developed, both towards oneself, because it is me/us who is talking, the content of what is said is strictly connected with me/us, and the theatre form the work takes on is very much a reflex of my/ours poetic.

Here the group dimension gets to life, taking part in the scenic action construction, and in the other as spectator, the one who watches the show, to whom my work is dedicated. For social theatre is not only a need to say, but to tell someone: it gives back life to the one who is acting, to the quality of relationship and communication, to the other who receives and takes part in our performance.

The group or the theatre workshop experience

Chorus is the human group celebrating the image within the group, making the image certain in the relationship life, ensuring its travel in the world of the living, an historical path, the entrance to a language where semantic and suggestive relations are codified; and at the same time that the group is welcoming the image, it is giving itself to the image, grows on it, gets to the image new living space. The relationship is hence established – the irreplaceable basic dualism that will tend to reconcile the two integrating elements, thesis and antithesis that will come true in the synthesis of reality in motion – between the image creative freedom and the active responsibility of participation⁴⁵.

The theatre experience in social work is characterized by the participative dimension based on the group experience trained for the (by the) theatre: a group that takes form experimenting on theatre practice in its different forms, in a complex and extremely rich range of theatre action forms, produced by the context social and cultural elements.

⁴³ For an in depth analysis of dramaturgy and self dramaturgy please refer to the contribution of A. ROSSI GHIGLIONE, *Drammaturgia e teatro sociale. Fondamenti storici e linee metodologiche della scrittura scenica nel lavoro teatrale di comunità (Dramaturgy and social theatre. Historical ground and method guidelines of scene writing in community theatre work)*, in A. PONTREMOLI, *Teoria e tecniche del teatro educativo e sociale*, (Theory and techniques of the educational and social theatre) UTET, Turin 2005, pp. 139-179

⁴⁴ Refer to D. DE KERCKHOVE, *Brainframes. Technology, mind and business*, Bosch & Keuning, Utrecht 1991 tr. it. *Brainframes. Mente, tecnologia, mercato*, Baskerville, Bologna, 1993

⁴⁵ M. APOLLONIO, *Storia dottrina prassi del coro* (History doctrine praxis of the chorus), Morcelliana, Brescia 1956, pp. 25-26

The group and people experience a transformative psycho-physical well being, caused by the pedagogical potential of theatre action. The socio-emotional situation that is brought to life in the theatre workshop in different ways and intensities, is similar to what Victor Turner called *communitas*⁴⁶, this is the situation that is established during the liminal phases of passage rituals, in which a group of people – the recruits – who are making a transition to a different social status are placed in a dimension of otherness and suspension of the everyday dynamics. In this highly creative and subversive phase, Turner observes a closeness, charged with relationship reciprocity, untied by common rules and social conventions in which one person meets the other in their humanity, notwithstanding their social or cultural position. It is an experience that helps developing basic knowledge for the person and the group, taking them back to the group life with a load of emotional and psychosocial conscience that represents a sort of foundation to the common experience. The social theatre workshops share a similar situation with the *communitas*: unlike what happens to those watching a show made by other theatre professionals, good as they might be, who takes part in the workshop makes it a place of research on self, through theatre art practice, and brings to life a unique situation on the relationship level, a situation subversive of the usual ways of interaction, a place where meeting others means meeting them at their deepest, unique and meaningful humanity.

This condition that is established thanks to the occurrence of all the elements we mentioned, opens a time of artistic theatre research that breeds on the open and closed relationship, and at the same time generates it. In this sense the Apollonian statement highlights the close connection between image and group.

This is where the actor/spectator dynamic trains, in a continuous condition of role exchange and reciprocity, as it was in the origins of theatre and how has become contemporary theatre. This flexibility and reciprocity untie the strict role attribution – actor or spectator – that bind people one to the other, opening instead a whole field of experience and training without doubt richer and more complex, because it entails an opportunity of plurality. However, at the same time this is possible because the necessity of the two roles is kept alive and valued, as these establish the theatre experience specificity in comparison to other performances and assert theatre as an art that can exist only the basic dynamic me/you, you/us. Within the theatre workshop, both positions are experimented: do and be watched, watch who does. But unlike other times, to go from watching to doing and vice versa strengthens the relationship, leads to a situation of mutual exchange, in which another person's action is observed in a sharing way, in which we become witness, we evaluate the scenic efficacy with a total suspension of morals and ethic judgement. Beauty and poetry are to take the stage, not right, good, or true.

Who acts feels the force and energy coming from the other's gaze: the feeling of completeness returned by the gaze which welcomes the theatre gift, understanding the action meaning, returning identity and fullness, where the error is finally possible as creative and expressive research, of oneself and one's theatricality. In the workshop this distance is established, which identifies, and fills with meaning. We experience the chorus as well as the value the group adds to everyone's experience. When the work regards the achievement of a performance aimed at a wider public outside the workshop, the group action opens responsibly to a strong otherness, to which some of the creativity is offered as a gift, through the body on stage.

Theatre workshop in its various phases gives place to a completely different experience from that of detention, which tends to discourage any sort of union, and that is always casting a judging gaze on people, forming an alliance to hide behind structured fictitious identities⁴⁷.

⁴⁶ See. V. TURNER, *Dramma e riti di passaggio, lo svago ed il lavoro. Saggio di simbologia comparata*, in ID. *From Ritual to Theatre...* op. cit., pp. 49 - 115

⁴⁷ See C. BARALDI, V. VOLPINI, *Com'è possibile essere persona in carcere...*(How to be a person in prison) op. cit.

The opportunity to widen the group relationship axis integrating the prevailing and usual strength, defiance, hiding, aggressiveness dynamics, together with the welcoming, co-operation and exchange dynamics, and to dynamically proceed among these different relationship forms of the group relation, is a crucial experiment and a basic learning experience in the area of relational skills and sensitivity of which prison, notwithstanding its re-educational aims, paradoxically seems not to take charge of.

The establishment of a strong group relationship strengthens and defends the training setting that is not necessarily grounded on work or a professional project from the start, nor has to nourish on anything else.

The artistic action moves the focus on the sign/metaphor/symbol level, introducing a distance that allows the person and group to get closer to some parts of self in relation with the other, at times only tenuously on the foreground, or altogether repressed, and finally acknowledge their value.

Moreover, these practices divergence and creativity has widely shown already in other contexts its extreme effectiveness for those who are not familiar or do not like a theoretical cognitive approach towards reality, but move referring to other kinds of intelligence, just as useful in order to restore an integrated approach to reality⁴⁸.

A form of learning is developed, that values the original resources and encourages an integrated use of potential to set into action those parts that are usually idle, integrating and leaning on various forms of intelligence.

The non traditional such as theatre show it is possible to creatively re-use those elements that are usually confined to the useless, harmful, inadequate...such as the body and voice expression skills, the work on emotion, the opportunity to make into a communication action what would otherwise be a destructive action...

The resisting community: Social theatre between ritual and festivity

The elements we briefly sketched – mimetic and imitation dynamics and identification processes, the experience of the communicative body as a subject of culturally processed creation, symbolic creativity and representation, the need of relation in theatre convention –all characterize and distinguish the performative-theatre action, and they show the pricelessness of theatre in cultural and social training of both groups and individuals⁴⁹.

What we would like to highlight here regards the ritual and festive roots of theatre towards group subjects: institutions, communities, local communities.

In the present situation of the western world, the community bears specific characters; in particular it is no more a certain starting data, as much as a perspective, and a possible tension of group interaction. What we face is territory that does not inevitably signify a common culture, nor is perceived by its inhabitants as a group subject: the community presents itself as

⁴⁸ On this subject we can make reference to the important contributions of H GARDNER, *Frames of Mind: the theory of multiple intelligences*, Basic Books, New York 1983, tr. It. *Formae Mentis. Saggio sulla pluralità dell'intelligenza*. (Formae mentis. Essay on plural intelligence) Feltrinelli, Milan 1991; ID. *Multiple intelligences: the theory in practice*, Basic Book, New York 1993, tr. It. *L'educazione delle intelligenze multiple. Dalla teoria alla prassi pedagogica*, Anabasi, Milan 1995

⁴⁹ We will no go in depth regarding the description of every element that plays a significant role in the evolution, which theatre shares with other artistic, educational, entertainment, social and cultural practices, because this has been done already in other contexts. On the value of theatre as a social, therapeutic, and training practice please refer to C. BERNARDI, L. CANTARELLI (edited by), *Emozioni. Riti teatrali nelle situazioni di margine*, (Emotions. Theatre rituals in social alienation) <<Quaderni dell'Ufficio di Promozione Educativa e Culturale>> # 2, Cremona Provincial administration, 1995, EuresisEdizioni, Milano; C. BERNARDI, B. CUMINETTI, S. DALLA PALMA (edited by), *I fuorisce. Esperienze e riflessioni sulla drammaturgia nel sociale*, (Off scene. Experiences and reflections on dramaturgy in social work) EuresisEdizioni, Milan 2000; C. BERNARDI, *Il teatro sociale. L'arte tra disagio e cura*, (Social theatre. Art between need and cure) Carocci editore, Rome 2004

a “subject to be discovered”, as Branca and Colombo put it, both on account of its not being necessarily unquestionable, and because it is what the individuals build and fill with meaning with their relations. “Community as common relationships is a continuously negotiated concept, in the interaction of single residents and of the external institutions and agencies among them”⁵⁰.

The community as a sense of belonging to a community, as affinity with a place, as sharing a culture, a feeling, a tradition, a history, is for the most part destroyed as an effect of today, which is the production and consumption system, communication, care, loss of territorialization ... which are characteristic of western contemporariness⁵¹.

In this scenery, to the needs caused by disadvantaged situations, new needs add up, even in better economical situations, and they are all linked to the demand for relational goods, in the symbolic or emotional area, or in the individual emancipation sphere, as the demand for more rewarding forms of sociality, and for support in the face of hardships in asserting one's rights confronting complex social subjects and economical processes⁵².

What can theatre do when faced with this community processes dissolution, and the consequent surfacing of needs and hardships?

It can definitely become a communication of condemnation and unveil the difficult conditions in which a specific community lives, through its show performances. This is but one potential of theatre within the community, possibly even the weakest, if compared with the communicational power and influence other media can rely on.

Theatre can give rise to moments of group entertainment and amusement that can momentarily defer the harshness of life in certain institutions – such as detention institutions. But this is how theatre becomes supportive of the institutional status quo, diverting the attention from everyday problems.

On the contrary, it is interesting to notice that one of the recurring group activities which has proven effective in order to overcome traumatic experiences, big rifts, tragedies and social conflicts, hence change processes, are the very rituals and festive practices, which are the ancestors of today's theatre.

If we consider the community as a group subject, the ritual and festive action is social and cultural, hence emotional and symbolic, that the community acts in order to answer a social disquiet, or in order to prevent it, or to restore a previous situation of wellbeing⁵³. The community that links theatre and ritual experiences allows both theatre and ritual a transformative power because they enable the community to open passages in which to play creatively with one's experience through symbolical and structural elements of the culture, experiencing and exploring, changing the order of status and role, and in the end giving new life to the socio-cultural system in itself⁵⁴. During these moments it is possible to carry out a

⁵⁰ P.G. BRANCA, F. COLOMBO, *Verso una pedagogia di comunità*, (towards a community pedagogy) in *Territorio e lavoro di comunità*, (theatre and community work) (varied authors) CLEUP, Padua 2000, p. 99

⁵¹ See *Ibid*, pp. 97 - 114

⁵² *Ibid*, p. 112

⁵³ Just as the imitative process degenerates during development, starting with puberty, when the desire to imitate is replaced by the desire to be the other and have what the other has and is, as Renè Girard describes it, the ritual and sacrificial structures and specifically the scapegoat dynamics, are born as social systems in order to restrain and transfer in a controlled form the escalation of violence that is set up by imitation and reduction of differences. On this regard please see R. GIRARD, *La violence et le sacré*, (Violence and the sacred) Ed. Bernard Grasset, Paris 1972; trad. it. *La violenza e il sacro*, Adelphi, Milano 1992

⁵⁴ In order to go thoroughly into the matters we briefly introduce here, we refer to the wide contribution to reflection of V. TURNER, *From Ritual to Theatre. The Human Seriousness of Play*, Performing Arts Journal Publications, New York 1982, trad. It. *Dal rito al teatro*, Il Mulino, Bologna 1986; ID. *The Anthropology of*

significant suspension of daily order, in order to experience indefinite situations of otherness, from which we can go back to where we were with a new understanding of processes and resources, new points of view, a feeling of the possibility of change together with the forecast of risked and hypothesis for overcoming and solving problems. This is one of the most significant potentials of theatre in institutional evolution: to become a creative reflection moment, where to experience other possibilities in treatment procedures. It is definitely important that this experimental stage be followed by a praxis consolidation and a contamination between theatre elements and daily life elements.

The festive exceptionality of theatre that defines precisely its setting and makes it an alternative to what is consumed in other moments, enables, a rigid institution as, prison to welcome and support innovative training experiences. It is furthermore manifest that the theatre workshop should have specific tools and skills in order to carry out a process that in addition to taking care of the group and its members, aims to become a transformative experience in comparison to the established institutional order.

It is the slow and progressive contagion that moves unpredictably, at times moving forward, at times folding over itself, always on the border between theatre workshops and other educational and training interventions offered by the penitentiary institution and everyday life in prison. It is the possibility of keeping alive what happens in the workshop that is formative and transformative, out of there, within a system that is based on completely different principles and actions as an institution on the whole.

That is when change and training, in order to be meaningful to the person, can no longer deal only with the person and the group within the theatre group. But they will have to deal with the social subject par excellence: the penitentiary community consisting of different roles, complex and at times contrasting needs, the rules and laws shaping it, functions, markets and economies of underpaid work, cultural stereotypes defining justice and the penitentiary system, the area where the prison is, social services, companies and firms, schools... Because changing the prison institution is changing a whole cultural and social process.

Prison is a marginal leftover, nameless, disregarded by society, but at the same time it is its most significant and faithful mirror, representing within itself, often in a monstrously disfigured fashion, many of the tendencies and characters that define society. This is how prison represents a meaningful symptom of the endless tension between change and preservation, between progress and regress of the democratic issues. It still is significant to note that these conflicts, which concern the foundation of the social organization and its continuing evolution, develop around such a primeval and ancestral matter such as violence, and vengeance – even if it is legal vengeance, and suffering – even if it is legally imposed⁵⁵.

This is the most complex and risky challenge, while at the same time it is the single horizon in which the theatre intervention can move when it enters the prison institution contexts: theatre, just because of its ritual and festive matrix, can on one hand be an extraordinary evolutionary process, while on the other hand it can remain a mere celebration of the state of the art, armouring the already stiff institutional statutes, colluding with stereotypes. We have direct experience of the fact that, paradoxically, this can happen either when theatre practices are expressly celebrative, or when they are exceedingly transgressive, so as to trigger within the institution a powerful system of antibodies that end up eliminating them.

Performance, Performing Arts Journal Publications, New York 1986, trad. It. *Antropologia della performance*, Il Mulino, Bologna 1993.

⁵⁵ G. MOSCONI, *Dentro il carcere, oltre la pena*, (Within prison, beyond punishment) Cedam, Padua 1998, p. 3

The road is difficult and we proceed by sight, towards a bright but far horizon. Resources are to be found within and outside the workshop, within and outside prison, just as the countless restraints.

I need this theatre to tell me stories, and tell them just like theatre can: legendary, but looking straight in the eyes.

Because if this theatre is necessary, it is because it enables us to live what nothing else does: our difficulties in being human.

Evil.

What theatre makes happen is Passion, but passion according to Oedipus, according to Hamlet, according to you, according to Woyzeck, according to me, to Othello, to Cleopatra, to Mary, to this mysterious human being, tortured, criminal, innocent, who is me, me who is you and you everybody⁵⁶.

⁵⁶ E. CIXOUS, *Il teatro del cuore*, (Theatre of the heart) Pratiche Editrice, Turin 1992, p. 97

2.2.2. Theatre in culturally deprived environments

Michelina Capato Sartore

Theatre was the first language to lead us through the path that took our teamwork to develop non-formal educational lines within Milan penitentiary. It was more than ten years ago, the occasion arose from an offer coming from the National Health Service within the San Vittore prison, which promoted artistic and recreational activities for drug addicted inmates; from the very beginning the situation in itself highlighted the amount of communication, material, educational, and relationship needs we were to face – needs that could not be met during ordinary, formal treatments, and therefore invaded the “scene”, continuously bringing up real life and unmet needs of people within the prison.

The load of frustration we theatre operators underwent, while taking part, much to our regret, in the fragmentary institutional interventions and the frail treatment programmes and hence the typical confusion of any total institution, was more than we could bear.

But as professional actors, coming from a culture of work, we had learned to turn a limitation into an opportunity, and so we started to wonder what could be our role in a jail scenario. It took years of listening and mediation to find an answer.

Meeting the institution

On one side the institution – with its legitimate need to distribute and give a democratic (alas, utopian) horizontal shape to its interventions, to enforce a formal respect of rights and a sensible use of scarce resources – was forcing the theatre activity towards a formalization of behaviour code, and an homologation of other formal activities.

On the other side, because of its very specificity, the theatrical process cannot but collect and absorb in its didactic pathway every element that, under the stimulus of theatrical communication, offers itself naturally to the conductor; otherwise, it would lose sense and die. Existential elements arise during the improvisation to express - more or less conscious and explicit – a tangible internal conflict among the inmates, which actualizes itself in the relationship with other inmates or with prison operators. The conflict topic becomes the core of every theatre action, its very substance.

This meant answering the pupils’ needs, in everyday life, that is, leading them to understand and represent their motivational urgencies and requests, and at the same time give them the keys to understand the institutions’ formal limits. It is often seen that inmates confuse “authority” with the “authoritative father” and wish the authority to acknowledge them, mostly in their effort to change, on an experiential level. This wish is so strong and naive that it can become dangerous for themselves, because the actual impossibility of this reciprocity cannot but intensify the need to react and defy the rules in a perverse game that aims to maintain the delinquent status quo of powerlessness, where lack of power legitimates the delinquent to infringe the laws again, laws and procedures which in turn will judge and punish him.

The obvious risk for the institution is to take part, without even being directly aware of it, in the validation of deviance, rather than define other paradigms for the individual, a social sense of responsibility, and a new ability to correctly interact with reality.

Subjects for consideration, as pointed out by Prof. Eusebi (Università Cattolica, Milan), on the retribution and prevention goals of the “punishment inflicted on the guilty” could very much lead us towards other thoughts and different penal courses, which may offer a greater social guarantee.

We are hence entering a vision of prison that could subtly hint to a wider reality of freedom. But freedom from what?

From cultural depression, economic recession, the ever renewed conflict between prevention and repression? Difficult to say, yet more difficult not to.

Theatrical anarchy in the prison set of rules

Dialectical polarization is a total institution specificity: good/evil – guard/inmate – treatment area/security area – institution/third sector.

To recompose conflictual dialectics in an integrated, joint, direct and explicit vision is, on the other hand, characteristic of theatre.

This might be the source of the astonishing antinomy that sees a growing number of theatrical interventions (their nature being receptive to anarchist visions) within the total institution that is wholly controlled by rules and, at the same time, subject to the greatest personalism.

This is the set on which we, the actors, dance on the tightrope of correctness, finding a difficult balance between the call of the institution to adhere to the logic of the system (enlightened as it may be), and the claim of the inmates to counter a logic that de-structures the autonomy of the self – this is where we proceed in a third direction, mediating and compensating the two fronts, so as not to lose ourselves and the human and educational meaning of our work.

If it is true – and nothing represents it as well as a prison – that the world is a whole, that everything happens in a context, then we have to turn our attention towards the detention context getting away from a logic that polarizes in order to make things look simpler than they are, we have to look at the cultural impoverishment of a closed space that gives itself, as a constitutional duty, to “rehabilitate”.

It is not necessary to point out that, in a set-up as complex as prison is, the professionalism of institutional operators plays a role in fixing the tangible value and meaning to the penal affliction, and that professionalism is greatly affected by a lack of clarity and a shared opinion on how to interpret the high principles of the law that translate them into operative and operational targets; transparent interaction with the institution, respect of individuals, the ability to network with other operators could really change the present perception of most adult inmates, who see a repetition of the original sense of injustice in institutional communication.

This is not the place to go in depth on the psychological condition that subtends deviance, yet it is necessary to point out that the lack of consciousness in young adults committing crimes, and the feeling of reparation and compensation, if illicit, that clearly emerges while trying to explain the offence, should have us reflecting on the “fatherly” value of authority (of course this makes sense only in a larger picture in which we try to inquire about psycho-social motives, without exempting operators from self-empowerment, instead of surrendering to the world of psychological interpretation).

We will also have to distinguish a majority of women among operators, hence the intrinsic relationship difficulties with male inmates, the physiological complexity to adequately embody the quiet authority, and of course the easy refuge of “role” in its many definitions and risks of collusion. This last context can be considered a consequence of the archaic cultural inheritance which understands – from outside the whole experience – the culture of “care” only in moral and paternalistic terms.

Educational dimension – who educates who?

The first question is for people who work in such a complex context: What are the personal motives of the operator? What are the operator’s own educational needs, which of these are displaced on to the other?

Any good process of supervision should focus on the specific human meaning of the educator; untangling the confusion between one's needs and the other person's needs.

Both the *redeeming tendency* apt of some of the protagonists of education, and – on the contrary – the feeling of “*optimum distance*” *detaching from the other* instead of *getting in touch with others*, are not to be accepted as inevitable.

It would be an admission, as educators, of not being able to educate ourselves, in which case what can we give to people who are at risk, while trusting us, trusting maybe for the first time, of being manipulated again – even when both parts are in perfect good faith?

In this complex and lively landscape, communicating urgent needs, the unsaid in formal criteria, is the first step of every educational action; sheer attention to the person as a whole, with their legitimate existential condition.

Only after practising *epoche*, after entering a state of attentive suspension of our judgement, can we start to listen to the many conflicts that underlie every formal request of detained people, knowing that this is the optimal position to relate with other institutional operators too. The basic issue still is the correct way to evidence the many conflicts in play, bring them back to their possible real meaning and work in an integrated fashion on the many levels of formal and non-formal educational interventions.

Our networking skills, to share our, at times, different approaches to education, must make us able to avoid the meander of power conflicts between operators, so that we can render a better service to the users.

Those in charge of our treatments in their ministerial communications underline as a priority the necessity to integrate different levels of interpretation and to create integrated reintegration courses.

This is where we start promoting the ability to compose rather than oppose different methods, acknowledging the formal educational processes their cultural and instrumental meaningfulness (professional qualification courses, primary or secondary studies) in order to acquire skills that can be later spent on the job market, and to define or redefine the socio-cultural and professional identity; and acknowledging the informal educational processes their ability to support and lead individuals through those pathways of values and meaning reassessment, which provide the necessary context to the newly acquired skills, in order to actualize the new cultural horizon.

It is often said that an increasing number of people have, over more than one period of detention, attended many courses and acquired a professional qualification, but then, upon returning to the external social professional reality, they could not cope; the large majority of them says: “I couldn't find a reason to bear all the strain!”

Of course, we could attribute it all to a lack of “work culture” on these individuals' behalf or on the fact that prior to detention they found a very easy way to solve economical problems, through the quick risk of crime – but if we keep listening, a whole new set of suggestions arise.

To understand again the elements of social and relational conflict of people in prison, their operational incapability, their ambivalence towards protection, their manipulative attitude towards their environment, the seduction demand, everything calls for continuously reworking the relationship between action and its meaning, and quite a firm capacity of value restoration. And it is evident what a strain this kind of request puts on the tight institutional schedule.

Hence the need to envision a larger horizon, where we can optimize internal communication, (develop a habit to) share projects over personal particularism and face objectively each individuals' responsibility defining clearly the intervention boundaries.

In the relationship with imprisoned people a non-formal educational approach is with no doubt more welcoming than other, more codified ways to deal with an inmate for purposes of observation – that is, at times, “looking forward to getting people out of prison sooner rather

than getting out better”; it is utopian to believe that people who depend on your “role” to get out would really tell you their problems rather than showing you how they had changed and understood, and that they can cope (because this is what they are expected to do).

Informally... (non-formally)

In an informal environment the exact opposite occurs; the discretion that follows the remarks about difficulties that can arise during a theatrical improvisation or in the minutes – never enough – spent in informal “words” after rehearsals, allows problematic relationship mechanisms (cunning, denial, very ambivalent acting out and so on) to emerge for later analysis, and these mechanisms can and will have to be accepted and worked out.

In this process the non-formal activities, often linked with creative and physical activities spontaneously put into action, constitute a great richness for the observer, and can supplement other educational, psychological, and formative perspectives, taking into account its specificity and refraining from the reductionism that is a way - in every total institution, be it detention or psychiatric - in which the fear of “loss of control” carries out a “power” which grounds its actions on fear of the unknown and the other which it will refuse and try to normalize, or at least appear to.

Within this range of consideration, the tangible activities our team defined in more than 12 years experience constitute a project aimed to social and professional reintegration using both formal and informal tools.

A work in progress

At first imprisoned people get in touch with the project through the basic theatre laboratories; this apparently recreational dimension allows an initial contact without excessive care for behaviour, it also favours a flow of communication on the meaning of truth, on expressing drives and spontaneous reactions (acting out), on expressing emotions linked with, often repressed, past experiences and it supports a new non- judgemental attitude, dealing with emerging problems at the same time.

This quality of group communication will often stimulate people to continue with activities aimed to further skill acquisition.

Thus the project can divide into professional courses for theatre, music or cinema technicians, and in some cases even in training for social theatre cultural operators.

At the same time non-formal educational group activities are prompted, and in cases in which there seems to be a real willingness, we can suggest a psychological support program, which aims for a better contact with reality (always remembering that detention invalidates a proper therapeutic process, lacking a basic condition: freedom and responsibility in the choice of the course of elaboration).

Furthermore, some of the inmates after technical qualification training courses can join a social cooperative as working members supplying technical services for theatre and cinema shows.

Of course, such a wide range of actions, is no simple task to manage, and the team has to repeatedly compare opinions within the group in order to find a shared, unambiguous answer to every single inmate who might have a tendency to separate each intervention from the whole, and to place operators on opposite fronts, trying at times to manipulate cross communication between operators, in order to protect himself or to create a chaos which will prevent a clear understanding and a correct management of the problems the group is facing.

The shift from non-formal activities (basic theatre) to formal training courses (technical qualification and employment) to psycho-educational processes (group or individual) makes for a complex educational relationship; this complexity finds its legitimacy again when - back in the theatre - we take part in the staging of a show.

Theatre and its shared discipline

Sharing responsibilities, managing resources and skills that came to light during the training, and putting them to work in an experience such as staging a theatre show, is as close as we can get to the complexity of “normal” life; it requires putting into practice the newly acquired skills both professionally and in the individual and social relationships.

The theatre process, like all other activities dealing with human beings and their experience as a whole, makes any change and new acquisition very clear because it is a constant work of representing, in explicit form, the conflicts and obstacles one meets in action: the actor is indeed “the one who acts”.

The meaningful trait many imprisoned individuals attribute to the communication method and to the wide range of interventions that compose the educational project, which makes formal and non-formal education complementary, is mainly referred to two elements:

- Clarity in communication (direct communication), the inclusion of every experiential topic or personal problem in the training process, and their active experimentation.
- Sense of individual and joint responsibility felt as a requisite for the good outcome of artistic work.

In a place such as prison, which restricts the actions of temporary inmates confining them in strictly coded rhythms and behaviours, the informal experience – be it theatre or any other experience widely connected to non-formal education – becomes a privileged area of action and self-perception, a learning process which does not take instrumental acquisition apart from its experiential meaning, where error, confusion, difficult emotions, are not only accepted, but are the privileged object of the experience of self, and of the elaboration of an individual pathway, of “knowledge” which for us means “Taste like yourself”.

Going now to a thorough map of the project activities, we can define the project net with the following branches:

- Basic theatre courses
- Professional qualification courses (theatre operators and technicians)
- Work reintegration programs
- Psycho-educational counselling for social and professional reintegration (a minimum of two years prior and two years after getting out of prison)
- Cultural planning and production
- Management of an in-house theatre at the Milan prison, which is open to the public
- Management of technical activities (stage designing and setting, sound and light service, video production) for e.s.t.i.a., a social cooperative established in 2003 which currently employs 18 inmate associates and 9 external members.

Such a wide range of intervention comes from the awareness that the “rehabilitation” process, due to the fragmentary character of actions, the complexity of many institutional competences (controls, liabilities, freedom limitations) becomes a difficult task to manage for an adult who is close to getting out of prison or just has.

The fact the project can deal internally with every step of intervention, making the interaction between inmate and external reality easier, represents that very wholeness principle, that resetting of all conflictual elements which are often the greatest obstacles to social and professional reintegration, and could even be a reason for relapse.

More than a choice for crime, these relapses should be considered as an inability to integrate professional and social relationship aspects within a landscape in which the radical importance of being able to give sense to the previous experience and the work ahead of the person, is continuously reaffirmed.

As in every good theatre work, the main element of the story is conflict management, and not conflict representation which often only discloses nothing but the lonely world of justification.

2.2.3. What theatre?

Building a standard

Michelina Capato Sartore

The effectiveness of a training standard is fixed by its being able to reach stated goals, and consequently by the value of employed equipment, technologies, knowledge, professionalism (know-how).

The passage from theoretical definition to actual achievement marks, in terms of effectiveness, the need to take into account further elements, such as the context in which one works and the available material resources, which are essential variables of the intervention success, hence of its value. These statements highlight how it is impossible to produce a single standard of training intervention useful in any kind of possible situation. The territory width and its consequent social and institutional complexity that form the project horizon give rise to the choice to produce an operative plan with regard to the described situation.

The commitment to define the links between context, resources, activities and achievable results is aimed to determine the immediate definition of actual consequences that the variance between objective reality and training offer can produce, increasing the use, flexibility of this tool, so that it can definitely take on a modular character.

This will guarantee adaptability to different operative situations and will favour implementation in time and institutional relation that is often required by innovation.

The standard inscribed in a systemic logic cannot consequently be read in mechanical terms, so that subtractions, fixed by the above mentioned variance, between actual reality and training standard, will not possibly be reduced to a simple mathematical operation, but they will need to be the product of a critical reading of the standard, which will entail the subtle skill to understand the dynamics that make the parts exert their influence on the system as a whole.

Thus, the training operators will be able to carry out a formal negotiation with possible customers, regarding the aims and products/results that can be realistically figured, together with the necessary subjective interpretation of the product that in the theatre sphere cannot but be desirable.

Basic assumption

Theatre is the closest you can get to life, the filling of its fabric is the same as of the existential experience.

Explicit behaviour and implicit motives represent the everyday work material for the actor: pupil actors are hence asked to expose themselves starting from their behavioural and psycho-emotional material.

In order for this exposition to bring significant learning, it's necessary to define methods and praxis that are suitable to the detention context we operate in; to the culture of the imprisoned group; to the training of the institutional operators, etc.

The path of the research of a standard starts with the elaboration of two lines of analysis and observation:

1. An ideal standard of intervention, detailed in its operative sequences, on which basis the boundaries and criticalities due to the detention context will be subsequently highlighted and processed;

2. A piece of work based on a time line which will enable to identify the significant knots of the change process of people in prison and to define again their plan of “acting outs”, needs, demands, expectations;

Together with these two lines, which should meet in specific points of junction and interrelation, there will be explicit indicators that will enable to describe, as objectively as possible, the process of change in the imprisoned person, in its most significant and exact passages (see Patricia Cross’ table).

The integrated elaboration of what is stated above means to awaken the prison operators to a more thorough level of observation, which will enable to go over the current methods (mutually manipulative) that occur and mark the relation between imprisoned person and operator of reference, nullifying any actual opportunity to favour a process of significant change for both subjects involved.

We chose to begin with a definition of modular standard theatre intervention in prison.

<p>STANDARD PRECONDITIONS</p>	<p>METHOD</p>
<p>A – BASIC MODULE</p> <p>No users selection (non acceptance of prison logics)</p> <p>Reception: 1 month (2 weeks reported)</p> <p>Starting group: 40 people, self-selection up to 25</p> <p>Hosting: 3 people</p> <p>Hosts' training 10 years activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice and dance theatre actor's practice • Skills of <u>creative suffering and creative conflict</u> <p>Mark the space between daily ordinary and extraordinary (sacred):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wholly dedicated space • Rules for pupils: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Clothes for working laying on the ground</i> - <i>Take charge of own body (do not give in to host, remain responsible and chose what to do of your body)</i> - <i>No use of drugs in the theatre</i> - <i>No physical conflict with people</i> - <i>Inform absence</i> - <i>Share relationship problems with group (warrant that what is said stays in the theatre)</i> • Space protection • Group management of space upkeep <p>Put the group together</p> <p>Build a relational space based on trust between institution and prison population:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-patronage-based trust relationship; clarify the demand chaos • Take them to the here and now and keep working on the here and now (use of words as defence to physical presence) <p>RESPECT</p>	<p>See Italian Ministry of Justice text</p> <p>Non-judgemental behaviour</p> <p>Participative leadership</p> <p>Main topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Put Frustration to work - Conflict acted with fairness <p><u>Hosts focus on:</u></p> <p><i>do not ask what crime; accept persons the way they come; do not accept patronage behaviour; make implicit demands clear.</i></p> <p>Define group agreement Different kind of agreement depending on workshop offer and group members</p> <p>“We are here now to work with you, you are here now to work with us ”</p> <p>RESPECT basic theme</p>

<p>B – GROUP ACTIVITIES START</p> <p><i>1st meeting</i></p> <p><u>Entrance greeting</u> – welcome – give time to people to get there – invite them to take their time and get ready for work</p> <p>This is the moment to highlight (if present) any first level of resistance and its aim.</p> <p><u>Invite participants to take their place in a circle</u> Brief verbal presentation of work, few necessary rules, room for questions. In circle, participants and hosts introduction.</p> <p>Agreement definition is postponed to 2 weeks later, minimum time of participated experience.</p> <p>Ask people to follow work directions, until a state of anxiety comes out (I'm not used to moving anymore; other people are watching me; I broke my knee and I can't, etc)</p> <p>The state of anxiety is normal: all professional actors are anxious regarding their performance. Ask the person to look for physical and emotional comfort. No indication is compulsory; it is just a clear invitation. When the exercise is too difficult, at the beginning can be adapted to the individual. In a further work phase more significant efforts will be required; everything depends on the clarity of the agreement with regard to shared goals.</p> <p><u>1st goal</u></p> <p>Enable people to feel accepted and listened to as they are; at first there is no demand for change. The possible process of change can only start from a clear statement of the concerned party.</p> <p><u>Relation games:</u> Let oneself fall into someone's arms Falling and being supported, etc.</p>	<p>Observation time (20 min.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do they do • Where do they take position in space • Chatting with others; getting physically ready; goes out to smoke, etc; • Respect of indication given before meeting (right clothes; shoes etc.) <p>In the first phase members get to know each other; inform that the “getting to know each other” phase will last 2 weeks, after which time the agreement is defined (if someone needs more time the welcome phase is protracted to one month). This is a problem with the institution, which requires an agreement from the start: but it is the course that will define the chance to make an agreement. If the pupil comes to the theatre to meet with friends and is not interested in the work after two weeks he is asked to leave his place in the list to someone else.</p> <p><u>Trainers' awareness</u></p> <p>An “outsider” in prison represents many things; demands are many and reach immediately a level of intimacy caused by the context – not by how good the trainer is or anything. Trainer's awareness of own motives to work in prison.</p>
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<p><i>C-PHYSICAL TRAINING START</i></p> <p>Open diaphragm respiration (from mouth) Listen to pains and chronic contractions through small exercises of muscle relaxation, alternate with muscle stretching. Imagine breath fills the body and maps all localized sensations Lamentation game (who laments the most) Ask a partner to do something for you (small massage in aching parts)</p> <p>First physical contact</p> <p>Touch quality (listening hand, grasping hand) Touch oneself to help breathing and relaxation take care of one's own body. Muscle relaxation session Articulation opening session Sound opening session Opening games</p> <p>Feet Massage Grounding Walk Articulation Foot dance</p> <p>Games to heighten the energy level Run in space Speed games Group games Exchange dynamics</p> <p>Emotional connection Breathing and voice Guided vocalization Free vocalization Give voice to a sequence of movements Feel the movement and vocalize it</p> <p>Stretching session</p> <p>Being able to pay ATTENTION</p>	<p><u>Body observation</u></p> <p>(Reich; Lowen)</p> <p>Trainers observe zones of closure, freezing, contraction; hypo or hyper energy and their localization. Areas in which movement is fluent, jerky, impossible (joint blockage, injury).</p> <p>Willingness or immediate refusal to get into helping relationship.</p> <p><u>The problem of physical contact in prison</u></p> <p>Listen to psycho-motor difficulties, emotion (voice) and movement coordination ability. Notice and support explicit skills No judgement on difficulties, only shared observation of difference/uniqueness of each body.</p> <p>Observe “grounding” Discharge excess energy into the earth Pelvis intersection Walking posture (weight ahead, aback; upwards; knees discharge etc.; Freedom of movement, connected and disconnected</p> <p>Observe small reactions to physical and relational stress</p> <p>Observations: Voice quality Shyness and histrionics level Public and intimate voice From breathing to sound Body-voice connection split</p> <p>push on openings</p> <p>ATTENTION work theme</p>
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D- EXERCISES	FIRST DYNAMIC SUGGESTIONS
<p><u>Leading and following</u> (2 people) Form a couple of people who do not know each other, one suggests an improvised movement listening to music (later on it will be in relation with a work subject), the person who follows tries to make the same movement at the same time. The movement intentions have to be the same, emotion and quality of movement can vary; rhythm and direction in space can not.</p>	<p>The only way to adequately carry out the exercise is to let oneself go to an empathic listening of the movement leader (it is much more difficult to follow than to lead; being able to lead well depends strictly to the acquired ability, to follow keeping listening)</p>
<p>Chorus improvisation Same dynamic as previous exercise, But people (at least 18) are gathered in three groups with three guides. The followers can go to follow another leader, explaining theatrically their choice. Improvisation rules: Listen to music (adhesion or contrast) Notice full and empty space Go on whatever happens during improvisation, including accidents</p>	<p>The chorus dynamics is much more complex and allows more explicit levels of interaction to emerge. The person can avoid carrying out the exercise instruction – it is interesting to notice how the person avoids it, through which substitute behaviour.</p>
<p>Work themes Invite to suggest a theme for the dual or chorus improvisation Adherence between theme and expressive choice Theme development dynamics Theme contradictions Acting-out Reread improvisation Keep elements and structure them in new improvisation</p>	<p>First foray in the participant's spontaneous material Highlight implicit or deliberately hidden themes and exhibition code needs Support complex dynamics that enable acting-out that can be useful to let out meaningful “discrepancies”</p>
<p>What is a work theme and why does it get selected? A suggested theme often tends to offer a definition of self that is public, and serves as a front; On the contrary, improvisation material for their very nature tend to come up in a less controlled way, hence this process spurs the contradictory, split, discrepant behaviour to emerge.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">I said something but then I did something else. Why? I believe something but then...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Maybe I don't know</p> <p style="text-align: center;">At last a doubt, a question</p>	<p>Discrepancy Priority elaboration core Extremely meaningful in identifying the perceived need of necessary change in behaviour and emotions. Discrepancy moments are almost never clearly perceived during the initial phase, they are defined as loss of control, meaningless. It is only an average period of work and observation of other's work that they are acknowledged as meaningful events which need to be understood, for they suspend the belief of consistency of one's own behaviour and cannot delegate anyone else to take charge of one's acting out.</p>

UNDER CONSTRUCTION	
<p>Structured improvisations towards a scene (choice of work themes towards the theatre work; The choice is directed in agreement with personal issues on which it is possible to work)</p>	<p>From improvisation to evaluation of emerging materials; starting to chose and “keep” “good” material</p>
<p>The choice of a theme or of a theatre work implies the evaluation of available material within the actors and their likely encounter/conflict with the character dynamics.</p>	
<p>Choice of character:</p>	<p>What is there of mine in the character? Why do I choose a character like that one? What does the character have that I don't?</p>
<p>What is the poetical world in which my character moves?</p>	<p>“Displacement”: The context of the theatre work and the conditions in which the character moves invite me to displace my behaviours in another world; In the world of the theatre work I can find out my behaviour is very much different. Spontaneous widening of the possible range of behaviours in different contexts.</p>

The problem of language

The foundation of every communication act, free from the self-referentiality need of the person who acts the communication towards those who listen, lies on the necessity to adapt the structure of the act on the listening and understanding possibilities of the conversation partner.

At the same time, it is important that this “adaptation” does not trigger a process of reduction or simplification of signified and signifier.

A good communication, during a theatre workshop, should open a wider possibility of enquiry and support all attempts, even incomplete, to give new significance; possibly the best attitude can be traced back to evocative intention of the word, so that these new suggestions can start to take place and create new articulations on the horizon, quite stiff at times, of the narrow beliefs and logics of people coming from complex and deprived paths.

The detention context makes a massive and multi-functionally charged use of words: words fill the empty time of prison, they keep within its self narration the tie with “life before and after”; in the repeated tale of one's life the “personal history” is more and more fixed, in order to justify, answer, defend, enclose as many people in that internal prison as it finds in the real prison in its objective materialization.

The linguistic and cultural poverty adds up to the communication codes of the “prison culture” and takes imprisoned people to move in a territory where the word judges or defends but seldom describes or enquires; and if for a moment we pause to consider the methods of educational practice, mainly acted in the “interview”, single evaluation tool of the treatment and of the course, the “power of the forced word” becomes fully clear.

How can we then not be squashed by these words, like stones, that stop the meaning on the lips or on paper in a single, fixed and codified definition?

We then have to “displace” the language formula, in order to escape that process of solidification that assigns one single meaning to one sign to give back to the word that complexity which reopens it to density and uncertainty, in every intentional verbal act.

The good use of similes, of allegory, of metaphor, allows a “placing” that brings necessarily along with itself that “suspension of judgement” and that attempt to escape the cage of logical derivation that alone can enable the beginning of a new articulation of meaning.

The “research of a simile” allows a small new birth in “naming things” and activates a creative act that gets close to reality and opens the possibility to understand in more directions, rather than closing it in a single definition.

Moreover, using the formula “it is just like...”, “as if...” the listeners themselves have to integrate the simile in their horizon of significance, opening it, indenting it, keeping it uncertain.

This is how we start to give back to signs their ambivalences...

Just as the concept of “discrepancy” used to express the possibility to open a new small place in the acting out (be it bodily or verbal or, very often, just in between) and to let this emptiness “be”, the metaphor allows an opening, a hiatus as well.

The ability to let these “empty spaces” breathe, to legitimate them, and to retain anxiety (that almost all the time make these openings come together with an immediate need for answers and words to close them) represents the simple principle of loosening that stiff and motionless world of “beliefs” that we can directly see in the detention world.

This is how the stimulation process begins to proceed by juxtaposition, by approximation, by analogy and contrast always offering to the “question” the legitimate time for active waiting, for searching...

Rather than closing it immediately in the haste of a “good answer”.

Be it the body expressing itself, or the thought made word, or the free voice; be it memory telling or be it imagination, be it real life or life within the theatre, our attention is called by those moments of suspension, of weighty silence, of apparent void, by those fine cracks that allow us to see a thickness and a space that evoke small epiphanies.

2.3. Cinema, change, prison

Letizia Buoso⁵⁷

What is the relation between image and change?

Up to what point can creation and interpretation of audiovisual images activate and recreate identity and culture?

We will start by identifying image qualities in the Western world, nowadays: what relation is there between them and our everyday life, which questions does this scenery pose for us, what emergencies.

Starting from the resulting picture, we will define the first necessary keys to an artistic project dealing with image development, in a training environment, in an informal context.

Hence we will refer to the specific video and cinema experience carried out at the Marseille Baumettes Prison: a universal laboratory that abolishes contact and over exposition to image flow while at the same time offering the highest appeal to people's imaginative activity, in the special dimension of memory, projection and personal phantoms.

What happens when we take the audiovisual image in the prison context? What image can we take in? What image can be born of, and with, people living in a condition of confinement? Where and how is it possible to release it?

Starting from this picture, we will try to figure out what are the possibilities and with what efficacy we can trigger change processes through audiovisual images in relation to the prison institution: what can be developed in the specific space of prisons in Western Europe and what processes are set off in an exchange relationship between inside and outside prison.

Image in the Western world, today.

Referring to the present situation in the Western world – both Europe and America – Régis Debray uses the word 'videosphere'⁵⁸: the images that surround us and follow us everywhere, everyday, and our irreplaceable background noise. With images we work, study, spend our spare time...

Today, everything is a screen or equipped to become one. Art theatres: cinema, theatres, galleries. Telecommunication: TV, radio, mobile phones, video mobile phones, PCs... in every private (home) or public (offices, shops, stations, roads...) space.

We all watch images and listen to their sound: either as a choice or as a necessity; for work or personal interest.

Image and sound access technology costs are becoming comparatively low, hence widely accessible: we all use, enjoy, buy and operate these devices – and with them we make images and sound go round.

We all think we can record image and sound; we can organize and share them easily, because we have tools and supports to shoot, edit and show them between friends/family or upload them on the web.

We live in a seemingly democratic broadening of chances to produce, release and share audiovisual films.

The relationship between collective images, individual images and representations seem alive, flowing, in a kind of dynamic balance where each individual and every group can act and be incisive.

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⁵⁸ DEBRAY, R., *Vie et mort de l'image*, Gallimard, Paris, 1992.

Not many places in the Western world have a designed project to reduce access to audiovisual images and their fruition: prisons are an example, and a few other institutions which are mostly completely institutional.

When in this context the institution allows images, back come, with renewed force, the questions: which and how many audiovisual images? To whom?

Which images?

Not all audiovisual images we access in everyday life have the same implications and technical characteristics.

The most frequently released and the most seen/listened to by the majority of people daily, are electronic images, coming from television, including and absorbing, more and more often, film images.

Here it is necessary to focus on the respective characteristics. In order to tell them apart, it is useful to pick out three matters the image practice presents us:

- *Technical* matter: how is it made? Which supports, what materials, which format? Which exhibition place? What apprenticeship?
- *Symbolical* matter: what meaning is transferred? It is a *hyphen* among what things? What relationship does it activate?
- And a *political* matter: on behalf of which authority, under whose surveillance, to what destination?⁵⁹

Film image.

Let us draw a map of film image characteristics, defining it as the image coming from an art operation⁶⁰, printed on film, and for which a cinema is the appointed place, arrival point and accomplishment of the whole generating process⁶¹.

We start from celluloid images for an historical reason: video and virtual images, mostly released on TV and computers, came in a later time⁶². So that, starting here, we can focus on modifications this change imposed on the statute of audiovisual moving image, on the image practice of production and fruition.

Here we will not look into the difference between commercial films and auteur films: we will discuss characteristics and whole potentialities of the film image.

From a technical point of view, the film image is the image printed on film while shooting, which will be then processed, then is developed, edited and printed: it is the result of the light impression that one or more spaces, living or non living beings, shot by a camera, leave on each frame while it runs in the machine, and then of processes of segmentation, compression, rarefying, colouring and reassembly carried out with editing and master production⁶³.

⁵⁹ *Ibid* p. 87

⁶⁰ Debray defines the artistic operation of image creation as the act “of a craftsman saying ‘*T*’: Revealing to the public, personally, not the tricks of the trade or the apprenticeship rules, but their role within society as a whole. They could even do nothing with their hands – as is the case today with the ‘communication artist’, as long as they *tell*, and *write*: this is how *I see* the world” Please refer to DEBRAY R., op. cit. p. 185.

⁶¹ We refer to film art as we have known it in its first century of history. On this sujet, please refer to PRÉDAL R., *Histoire du cinéma. Abrégé pédagogique*, CinémAction, Corlet, 1994, Italian tr. *Cinema: cent’anni di storia*, Baldini&Castoldi, Milano, 1996.

⁶² Today a lot of films are digitally shot and made of virtual images, but in this paragraph we mean to draw a picture of the most widespread characteristics of films, on which is therefore based and developed the whole theoretical thought that analyzes the film image process of creation and fruition.

⁶³ For a description of the film creation process please refer to BIGONI B., DE FALCO C., DE MARCHI B., *Farefilmnovantasei. Ontogenesi del cinema*, Euresis Edizioni, Milano, 1996.

The image is, since 1928⁶⁴, combined with a soundtrack recorder on a magnetic support, transferred to an optical support and synchronized with the video frames. Every second of shooting or projection equals 24 celluloid frames.

In order to obtain a specific image (with specific composition and light qualities, with chosen actoral output) and its sounds, and then compose it in a whole film, cinema makes use of the work and cooperation of a number of hands: one or more scriptwriters, production secretaries, directors, camera operators, directors of photography, sound engineers, production designers, costume designers, make up artists, electricians/carpenters, actors, composers, film development engineers, editors, print engineers⁶⁵.

In addition to these, there are other figures taking care of the whole production (particularly during pre-production and shooting: producers, inspectors, runners, assistants...) and distribution (advertising and sales, press office).

It is very rare that one single person should embody all of these skills. Cinema – whatever the production and distribution budget may be – is the output of a team work⁶⁶: done in group (step by step, groups of people put their presence and skills at the common goals disposal) and by groups (the film goes from one stage to another, divisions and hands pass on their finished job to others; only director and producer follow the whole processing continuously up to projection in the cinema hall).

In the film creation process, from the very beginning, the spectator is implied as well: producer, artist and distributor will consider – each one in accordance with their own needs – the matter of the work receiver, and they define their actions starting from this among other things. A film might not get distributed, might have no audience, but cinema is in itself a visible work of art, that is carried out – from the very beginning - through supports seen and reviewed by the production crew, a work whose accomplishment is to be released and watched by the audience. One of the questions directors – first audience of the film - ask themselves while creating the storyboard is what position to put the audience in.

In the projection hall, the film is run through a projector: light passes through the celluloid frame and the image is projected on a large screen, while sound comes out of a dedicated audio system. The audience, in the dark auditorium, watches and listens to the film flow.

More than being the outcome of a great technical apparatus, the released film reel is the actual synthesis of a creative process giving shape to imagery.

Each choice, toward the achievement of an image and its sound, calls for a conscious creative action. And the more the commercial needs constrain the artistic work⁶⁷, the more the artists are forced to develop a process and a synthesis that allow giving shape to their vision within the film.

⁶⁴ PRÉDAL R., op. cit. pp. 94 ff.

⁶⁵ Simplifying, these are their tasks: scriptwriters create the subject and script (on this matter please refer to AIMERI L., *Manuale di sceneggiatura cinematografica*, Utet, Torino, 1998), directors give shape to the vision of the script written story (establishing camera angles, shots, takes, camera movements, edits a director's cut...), directors of photography create the light and qualità of colours for the images the director designed (on this subject please refer to STORARO G., *Writing with light*, tr. it. *Scrivere con la luce*, Electa/Accademia dell'immagine, Milano, 2001), editors put together images and sounds in a narrative continuity. (on this regard please refer to ONDAATJE M., *The conversation: Walter Murch and the art of editing*, tr. it. *Il cinema e l'arte del montaggio: conversazione con Walter Murch*, Garzanti, Milano, 2002).

⁶⁶ And this is even truer for people working in the many phases of film processing that usually work in close cooperation: preproduction, shooting, postproduction.

⁶⁷ Cinema is one of the most expensive forms of art: for costs of materials (celluloid film itself is extremely expensive, which is why one tries to be the most effective while shooting a scene, so not to repeat it and in order to optimize film use) of set up, of machinery and overspecialized work performances of every person involved.

Representation of a world on film is born out of the view of the artist⁶⁸ on the Other and is achieved in relation with the Other.

Quoting Serge Daney⁶⁹,

What is visual concerns the optical nerve but is not an image. Condition sine qua non for an image is otherness.

Artists require “*inspiration*: creation work⁷⁰” carried out in interaction between themselves, their internal world and the external world: a knowing, understanding and creative relationship, an inner dialogue and a dialogue with other people, animals, objects, spaces...that originates other relationships and is composed in an image that is Other.

It is a form of action that aims to an increase in attention and in relation quality. And a use of time that is not an everyday use.

Film processing is comparatively brief and densely scheduled: on average, a few days to a few months⁷¹ to organize production, go through the script, scout locations, do the casting, set up the location, rehearsal, shoot and edit.

A process that implies an extraordinary amount of attention on the part of everyone, a depth and a focus, a mutual openness, a will to deal with the unexpected, an operational effectiveness that are rarely kept throughout everyday activities – and not easy to keep in the long run.

All people involved in a film develop an extraordinary relationship with time:

Production is looking for an audience for the auteur, and this can take time. [...] A work has an audience – people who voluntarily take the trouble to go to a theatre⁷², and are willing to dedicate some of their time to images.

The experience of time the audience goes through is a period that has points in common with real time, but that can speed up and slow down, change in density as the artist consciously suggests. The image, printed on film, stops the subject time; image editing and film running during projection reactivate time, creating a new one: time of the world printed on film, time of the audience relating to projected images⁷³.

Cinema develops and suggests a language of time⁷⁴.

Cinemas' advantage is the time it can lose. Its best chance lies in slowness, pause, those precious idle times without which ellipsis and glimpses would lose every effect and meaning. Cinema image embraces ... cumulative time. A good film builds up periods in which it is a pleasure to go and live – a kind of life within a life, a shelter, a home open to all⁷⁵.

⁶⁸ Saying artist we mean not only the director but all artists involved in the film processing: script writer, director of photography, editor, composer...

⁶⁹ Serge Daney is quoted in DEBRAY S., op. cit.. By Serge Daney on this subject please refer to DANEY S., *Ciné-journal*, Cahiers du cinéma, Paris, 1986, tr. it. *Ciné-journal*, Fondazione Scuola Nazionale di Cinema, Roma, 1999 and other works, collected in *Cinéma, Télévision, Information*, Aléas Editeur, Lyon 1991, tr. it. *Cinema, televisione, informazione*, Edizioni e/o, Roma, 1999.

⁷⁰ DEBRAY R., op. cit., p. 173.

⁷¹ Depending on format (short, medium, full-length) and on production needs. Even feature films are seldom processed for more than one year.

⁷² DEBRAY R., op. cit. p. 250-1

⁷³ COMOLLI J.-L., *Voir et pouvoir. L'innocence perdue: cinéma, télévision, fiction, documentaire*, Verdier, Lagrasse, 2004 tr. it. *Vedere e Potere. Il cinema, il documentario e l'innocenza perduta*, Donzelli, Roma, 2006.

⁷⁴ On this subject please refer to DELEUZE G., *L'image-temps*, Les Éditions de Minuit, Paris, 1985, tr. it. *L'immagine-tempo*, Ubulibri, Milano 1989.

⁷⁵ DEBRAY R., op. cit. p. 259.

It is a period that recreates the experience of the person who is getting in touch with images, both in terms of plot development and of intellectual growth, and in terms of sensory perception and affective experience, and in terms of backgrounds, desires, memories that compare: of imagery that is communicated.

Thus every image becomes a relationship process among various subjects, that:

- Chose the pro-filmic (a subject in a space and in a time, and their specific qualities: flesh and blood, or bulks, lumps, concretions, lights and shadows⁷⁶), shooting conditions (camera, lenses, set, lights...), shots, view (what is included or out of view, for how long), materials, technologies used to treat them, the composition of a progressive narrative sequence⁷⁷
- Chose investment to carry out and release all of the above
- Chose to take time and share it

Spectators take with them, within the theatre, their bodies (edited images run during projection take shape on the spectator's eye and brain, because of the retinal persistence), their emotion, their background, their imagery (born out of individuality and out of belonging to a specific community), their overall identity, that will talk with the film's identity.

On a symbolical point of view, we can say that

A film is a supplement to things [...] Cinema talks to us about the human world, but this art with a vocation to realism calls for a filtered chaos, brought to measure by a point of view, by a framing, dialoguing, cutting and editing subject

Recreated in the relationship with a second subject in film and accomplished in the relationship with a third subject watching.

Even when realistic, documentary, cinema image “breaks the looking glass⁷⁸”: frames the world, it gets it “embalmed⁷⁹” in order to give it back to life, works at it and recreates it from its own image. Through them it puts the world back into the world, within the tension between filmer and spectator.

The actor, filmed (meaning both the film subject and what remains of it on film) and the spectator exchange questions, tensions, imagery, meaning, through the frame, light, focus, and most of all through the “cathartic distance”: the accomplished image, – organic yet distant from all subjects shaping it – is offered to the audience, to communities circulating it, and embodies a new experience for everyone. It is offered as a new reality fragment dialoguing with the existing and the one to come.

Spectators can welcome or discard the film image, during projection, in a condition of active abandonment, which allows a dialogue between their perceptions, their individual imagery and the one of every subject who took part in the film, as well as with the collective image of the relevant community they belong to.

Film image is hence ‘a bridge’ between people and worlds⁸⁰.

⁷⁶ *Ibid* p. 176.

⁷⁷ For an introduction to cinema language please refer to COSTA A., *Saper vedere il cinema*, Bompiani, Milano, 1995, CASETTI F., DI CHIO F., *Analisi del film*, Bompiani, Milano, 1990.

⁷⁸ DEBRAY, R., op. cit. p. 255.

⁷⁹ Debray refers here to the above mentioned Gilles Deleuze works. DEBRAY, op. cit. p. 239.

⁸⁰ On this regard please refer to AUGÉ M., *La Guerre des rêves. Exercices d'ethno-fiction*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1997, tr. it. *La guerra dei sogni. Esercizi di etno-fiction*, Elèuthera, Milano, 1998.

Speaking of *power strategies* it is manifest how what is said here implies a whole range of tensions.

Cinema is an economic art. In itself, cinema products are crossroads of financial interests: money invested in its production, money made from its release, influences coming from marketing, growth or decrease in power for the people involved in the process and life of filmmaking.

Being – in shape and content – the vehicle of a quest for meaning, it constitutes the means to diffuse signs and tensions recreating the collective and individual image, confirming or regenerating the social order and its symbols going through it and potentially subverting what exists.

As it is shown by cinema's first century of history, the coming of a structured steady film industry – such as Hollywood, for instance – pushed the production and distribution houses to focus on these aspects and their possible influence on social relations, on behaviours, choosing film themes, stories to be told and their form with regard to these issues⁸¹.

Likewise, interests of great production houses and of political or economical groups (mostly the dominant ones, but at times even of those minorities that had enough economical power to apply pressure), have more or less convened, arranging to support one another in order to produce specific films, or censoring others that were being produced⁸².

Or, on the contrary, various movements and great characters, who explicitly asked why films are created and critical writings on cinema are released, and decided to develop original theories and praxis⁸³, centred on the reflection regarding the nature of representation, of the possibility of a language and a dialogue implied in film and its showing, taking care of not making it a tool of mass conditioning, but rather a means for participation and questioning.

What is TV image?

From a *technical* point of view, TV image is born⁸⁴ as electronic non-permanent scanned by the camera and sent via cable to a TV set with a small screen and amplifying sound system. During its history, the source of electronic image has changed and – thanks to video and digital technologies – the image is now the result of data combination, it can be permanent and can travel via satellite.

It is not an art image; it is a mass communication image. In some cases (such as documentaries or fiction which ideation and production are cared for as they are in film production) it can have the same quality as an art image, but this is not where the origin of its function lies: it was born as a telecommunication tool.

At first the video camera, inspired by the movie camera optical system, would electronically scan tiny shreds of the framed image, using an electronic beam which read the image line by line, from left to right, composing a “light/dark” data parcel (parallel to the on/off, or 0/1 of the binary system), and would send it in sequence via radio to a receiver, that would decode data using another electronic beam (for writing) which would sweep across a single line, every other line at a time, recomposing the image. Sound would be reproduced using radio technology.

The short scanning system (equivalent to 25 frames per second) allowed creating a sequence

⁸¹ On this regard please refer to BURCH N. *La lucarne de l'infini. Naissance du langage cinématographique*, 1990, tr. it. *Il lucernario dell'infinito*, Pratiche, Parma, 1994.

⁸² One instance among others is the relation between film and propaganda in the USSR, or in the USA during WW2, or lately during McCarthyism. On this regard please see PRÉDAL R., op. cit..

⁸³ On this regard, think for instance of the French *nouvelle vague*, and of similar movements all over the world. For further reference refer to PRÉDAL R., op. cit..

⁸⁴ On this regard please refer to GRASSO A., SCAGLIONI M., *Che cos'è la televisione. Il piccolo schermo fra cultura e società: i generi, l'industria, il pubblico*, Garzanti Milano, 2003.
e GRASSO A., *Storia della televisione italiana. Nuova edizione aggiornata*, Garzanti, Milano, 2004.

of images with a quicker pace than cinema, providing an optimum image representation. In order to transmit radio waves the frequencies which allowed a wider range of data transmission were selected.

Technologies developed very quickly⁸⁵: Audio-video supports and devices (cameras and recorders) that use one permanent audiovisual track were improved.

I will here briefly recall some of the video support characters:

- 1) Image and sound on one track;
- 2) No need for chemical development, hence no development laboratory (a film reel takes one to two hours to develop);
- 3) Very low support cost;
- 4) It is possible to transmit the image at a distance (via satellite, whereas the film reels had to be sent via plane)⁸⁶.

Professionals implied in the creation and circulation of television programs – just as the ones implied in Cinema – deal with planning, production and broadcasting of a programme. It is again a team work, done by the group, through a chain of handing over of information from devising to checking the efficiency of the show (through market surveys measured against the popularity rating). But it is a smaller group, and a nimbler job.

By and large, we can say the production work is commissioned or selected by the management of a television broadcasting station. It could be carried out with internal resources (financial, professional, material resources; set, lights, scenes, costumes...) of the TV station, or external resources could be involved (subjects that – usually advertising their products – invest their funds in the TV station; production houses and agencies providing news, images, films). The production of a show involves one or more authors (authors, journalists; choreographers, musicians...) directors, cameramen, sound and light technicians, console and mixer operators, set dressers, speakers/presenters, actors, specialists or generic workers without specific professional qualification, as guests or studio audience⁸⁷.

The TV program manager, press office contacts who communicate and advertise the programmes, the network, the TV station, are all involved in broadcasting the TV show.

The show reaches its audience via the TV set: at home, at work, in shops, in train stations... There is no longer an appointed time, a different place from that of the everyday activities – a cinema theatre, for instance – instead, every place where a television set can be placed and can be switched on.

Television, just as cinema, takes into account its audience: being a communication means, though, it establishes a different relation with the audience. “Communication is index-linked on diffusion, which cannot be the *raison d'être* of *creation*”⁸⁸.

At the beginning, television – mainly European television –

In a public service of broadcasting stuck in an indissoluble bond to the lack of available channels and a top down control of broadcast programmes, on a patronizing basis⁸⁹

⁸⁵ On this regard please refer to GRASSO A., op. cit.

⁸⁶ DEBRAY R., op. cit. p. 226.

⁸⁷ Authors create the show schedule and contents of every speech, the director chooses how to organize cameras and shooting plans, console and mixer operators (or, later, editors) supervised by the director, take care of the succession and progression of scenes, while recording or broadcasting.

⁸⁸ DEBRAY R., op. cit. p. 250.

⁸⁹ Please refer to MENDUNI E. in the foreword to POSTMAN N., *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, Viking Penguin Inc., 1985, tr. it. *Divertirsi da morire. Il discorso pubblico nell'era dello spettacolo*, Marsilio, Venezia, 2002, op. cit. 7.

It had a tendency to supply informative, educational, and entertainment programmes⁹⁰. But as the private commercial broadcast took off, first in the USA and soon after in Europe,⁹¹ a brand new quality of programmes started, and marked all European and American Television:

In the houses of Americans, and then of everybody else, the television brought the *entertainment*, a style based on relaxation and fun, as well as on passion and feelings that gradually enveloped all other television offers, enclosed as fossil flies within the colourful amber of (moderate) continuous enjoyment. This is when the television became for the first time a public arena, taking over parliamentary and representative institutions, and bending the expression of political ideas, as well as the very administration of common welfare, to the shortened, fun, sensational pace of television's conversation⁹².

Even tele-information inherited these same characters. Even cinema, compressed in a television compatible format, included among television programs, is broadcasted following the program logic rather than its inner logic⁹³.

There are material and formal characters of television image today that are common to various programs, and mark all audiovisual offers:

- Video image is no longer material (the track light left on film) but a signal (a combination of information on light and colour or – in the most extreme and sophisticated of virtual image – a combination of mathematical data): in order to be seen, it must be read by a head, decoded and recreated with light impulses. It is not a piece of the world. If cinema is a supplement to things, a film is [from the start] a duplicate of things⁹⁴.
- Video and digital support allows a great wealth of time for a single shooting, and many shootings, at a very low cost. In terms of quality, it gives way to the matter of;

Exorbitant inflation of available images, hence a serious risk of losing value (as influence and affluence are in inverse proportion)⁹⁵.

- Video support can be seen and broadcasted in real time: the time to prepare and accomplish a shooting is altered (compared with cinema it is decreased almost to zero) which often goes with a decrease in time used to reflect on how to process the image, in work to transform it into a film, in time used to prepare and broadcast it to the public.

In fact, if we think of the investment on work preparation for image achievement, with regard to the illuminating technique, TV has a tendency to disregard the light and shade effects and the chromatic and expressive use of light.

No need for Henry Alekan or Claude Renoir. We can juxtapose fleshless silhouettes in a juiceless, flat space: without “vertigo”. Cinema, a “body expression art”, just as dance, [...] gives a sort of sensor-motory pleasure because of the physical, “warm”

⁹⁰ Please refer to GRASSO A., op. cit.

⁹¹ Please refer to GRASSO A., op. cit.

⁹² POSTMAN N., op. cit., p. 8.

⁹³ Televised cinema image loses a meaningful portion of the frame image: it is pressed and scaled cutting two lateral bands out of the film frame. The television program pace has rhythmic needs that overcome the film and modify its times: the most obvious example is the advert break. But on a wider scale, the film becomes but a piece of the puzzle within the television stream, and as such can be cut and broadcast in shorter or longer pieces, or even in the shortest clips that work for the stream but not for the integrity of the film.

⁹⁴ DEBRAY R., op. cit. p. 256.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, op. cit. p. 227.

relationship that vision creates between the player body, and ours. Bodies on a television set are images, social shadows or interchangeable signals, utopian, without a focus or a place. Fleshless bodies, with no lines of attraction or love motions. The eye here cannot penetrate the space; it slides over abstract surfaces, from one volume to the next, in a relation which is no longer physical but merely optical and geometrical⁹⁶.

Bodies on television are often half length and almost exclusively seen frontally.

Frames and fields that are shot are extremely simplified, do not create depths the eye can explore⁹⁷ but contacts, a drive to touch immediately the filmed subject and leave them soon to be replaced by the following ones. “There are no more close –ups, because there is nothing else but close ups” (Daney)⁹⁸.

In terms of quality, a less designed, less processed image can give us the impression that what is happening is represented more swiftly, hence more truthfully, but it could also be less formally accurate, and become less synthetic and exact, more simplifying and exploitable.

Its immediate broadcasting possibility implies the abolition of distance [too]. [...] Now everything is now, to postpone a visual or written piece proves idle, because what has been seen, being instantly, does not require any particular apprenticeship or talent. [...] with the introduction of light video, the illustrator as an agent of visible, the writer or journalist as agents of the story loose their leading role, to the advantage of the presenter, through whom events happen. Immediacy of video constitutes the economy of field depth and time. Direction, and its mosaic of screens, becomes [now] the place of command of memories, hence, partially, of reality as it is lived and perceived. When the reality of an event has as the objective standard *the coming of its track, the event becomes that very track*⁹⁹.

Shooting is no longer a creative action in which subjects declare themselves as such and accomplish an act of art, the development of a view, interaction, dialogue and well though proposition of an imagery to a subject acknowledged as such as an interlocutor. Nor –the journalistic enquiry almost having disappeared as a genre – is there any longer a research of an articulate and complex documentation on what is real to be shared. The stream of images exists more in an accumulation of exciting impulses, an unceasing stratification that tends to build thickness rather than depth. It is more like making fragments of reality or film into audiovisual sequences that the audience can acknowledge as curious, captivating, and fascinating. It is the process of creation of a synaesthesiac stream that has as a primary object the production of pathos, rather than knowledge and profound understanding (in cognitive terms, and of emotional intelligence)¹⁰⁰. “TV favours contact over content and sacrifices reasoning¹⁰¹”, at the level of a single image or of a narrative fragment, made of many images. Paradoxically, TV image does not question reality any longer: the world is used as an endless source of available images and sounds to create a *continuum* valid in itself. And in as far as it can make a viewer/listener stop in front of itself.

⁹⁶ *Ibid* p. 258.

⁹⁷ This changes the relationship with space and landscape as well: “the relation in which art would embellish and spiritualize Nature and then compete with it, has become the *entering of television*”. DELEUZE G., in DANAY S., *op. cit.* p 11.

⁹⁸ DEBRAY R., *op. cit.* p. 258. on this regard please refer to the above mentioned DANAY S., *Ciné-journal*, Cahiers du cinéma, Paris, 1986, tr. it. *Ciné-journal*, Fondazione Scuola Nazionale di Cinema, Roma, 1999, pp. 69-73.

⁹⁹ DEBRAY R., *op. cit.*, p. 227.

¹⁰⁰ The most useful instrument for this function is sound. On this regard please see DEBRAY R., *op. cit.* p. 229 and CHION M., *L'audio-vision. Son et image au cinéma*, Editions Nathans, Paris, 1990, tr. it. *L'audiovisione. Suono e immagine nel cinema*, Lindau, Torino, 2001, pp. 153 and following.

¹⁰¹ DEBRAY R., *op. cit.* p. 275.

Even cinema becomes a useful tank of images: a film is no longer a complete work of art, but a sequence of video and audio elements that must be put in the continuity of the whole stream of transmission. And there is nothing to prevent its disarticulation, the cut and re-edit in order to allow TV stream to run at its best, to make it interesting, diverse – but always flowing – with regard to colour, rhythm, sound, thought provocation, aesthetics, and emotions.

Everything feeds the TV, even TV itself. More and more often programme images are drawn from other programmes, in a sort of TV internal monologue, that no longer concerns the viewer, no longer questions him, but only faces him and asks to be interiorized.

Television image does not build a dialogue, does not involve in a conversation the spectator, his identity, his imagery. It exists in spite of him. And it does not nourish exchange with the collective imagery: instead, it takes its essence to the collective imagery and imposes it, rewriting the collective imagery. Interaction between individual imagery, collective imagery and TV images is reduced to the choice of consuming or not consuming the amusing stream, which goes on even when the set is off, and goes on being transmitted unceasingly, offering (imposing) itself to ever increasing parts of the world population.

Television aims at being always interesting and understandable for anybody, even for a few minutes at a time, in a fast mix up of individual and collective imageries, and representations. And it has to remain the same in longer time sequences.

The television discourse is usually organised in fragments ranging from 8 minutes to 45 seconds, time fragments that can shrink again and again up to ‘sound bites’¹⁰². Its rules are ‘diverseness, novelty, action, movement. Never linger on any subject, character or problem for more than a few seconds at a time. Small is beautiful, avoid complexity, remove shades, excess of detail will make the message unclear, the visual (and sound) stimulus will take the place of thought, precision in the use of words is out of date’¹⁰³. This is how a broadcast can ‘offer a wide variety of subjects, asking minimal understanding and giving great emotional gratification’¹⁰⁴.

Videosphere bans duration, is not afraid to see images or transmissions chase each other away, because only the instant is real (to its eyes). [...] Nothing can be explained nor discussed, nor breathed in. Clip and cut, clash and flash¹⁰⁵.

The spectator can bathe in the audiovisual stream, pick what he likes, even without a particular reason, no need to focus, no need to grant any form of deep presence or attention: zapping.

The spectator makes use of the stream for his fleeting pleasure, to be constantly updated *in real time*, to dull his senses and consume images and sounds. He absorbs or turns down, does not hold memories or revise. He has got no time nor means for that: Because a track will take the place of the previous one with the same impact.

Even the broadcaster does not think of the spectator as such, but as a client, consumer of entertainment services, and potential consumer of products explicitly advertised during breaks.

He usually relies on market surveys to chose the images he offers¹⁰⁶ (be it entertainment and/or information) and uses survey tools to rate popularity in order to sustain or cut down

¹⁰² FRACASSI F., *Le notizie hanno le gambe corte*, Rizzoli, Milano, 1996.

¹⁰³ POSTMAN, N., op. cit.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ DEBRAY R., op. cit. p. 259.

¹⁰⁶ Television is a mass communication audiovisual stream and “communication is indexed on *diffusion*, which cannot be the *raison d'être* of creation” which is the key to find meaning in the cinema image. On this regard please see *ibid* p. 250.

investments on programs, in a kind of ‘media Darwinism’¹⁰⁷: a program with a substantial audience is produced and broadcast for months and years, otherwise it might be interrupted after one show only. He does not leave out the consideration of his financial supporters (usually linked to product sales or influential political groups) on the contrary; he shapes the programmes organically to the products – and values – they offer:

A chain operator (be it private or public, the latter aligning to the former) sells a public to advertising agents. That is why he states ‘the audience is our only judge’. For instance [...] a product has *consumers* who will make their choice with the remote control, without leaving their couch¹⁰⁸.

From a *symbolic* point of view, television image is not a ‘bridge’ among people and worlds: it presents itself as a copy of reality that has the same value as reality itself, feeds itself and verifies itself. It has a tendency to replace reality because it creates an equation in which what is visible is real and what can not be visualized does not exist¹⁰⁹. And it colonizes minutely individual and collective imageries, desires, needs and dreams, with exact targets and marketing strategies. It is in itself the Symbol: just the symbol of itself and of everything that serves its reproduction.

It does not offer a relationship based on exchange, comparison between imageries and recreation: does not offer a view, but a must¹¹⁰. It establishes what can be seen. It sells it, and will index every relationship on the rate of consumption.

The equation of the visual age is: Visible = Real = Truth. It is a ghostly ontology, of the order of unconscious desires: but a powerful and structured desire, enough to align its symptoms in a real new order. We are the first civilization to believe a machine authorizes us to *trust our eyes*: the first to equal visibility to reality, to truth. All others, up to a minute ago, thought image prevents view. Now it is proof. Representation cannot be refused. Now, as the market is more and more determining the nature and boundaries of tangible representations, while industry puts it through media, the equation is transformed into: not to be seen = unreal, false, not valid. [...] only what has a market will be considered real. Translation: the audience is our only judge¹¹¹.

From the point of view of *power strategies*, the television audiovisual image is born out of the crossroad of pressures in favour or against social control, through the creation of a visible imagery, which is imposed by the struggle of subjects aiming to increase their economical and political power (in a landscape in which, presently, big corporations rule political groups¹¹²) and is subject to marketing laws.

If in the Western world it is now possible to create and watch audiovisual products with relative ease, it is because the price of technology that allows to produce them is within the reach of a wider portion of the population (which does not necessarily entail a higher quality of image and sound, because the diffusion of technology and supports is not matched by

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, op. cit. p. 241.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 251 e 254: “Television programs do not belong to the appeal order, but to the targeting one it aims at a target, a market niche to settle in. The indeterminism of a work of art is hence replaced by the determinism of products, magic is replaced by sociology: Or, the risks of night with the light of day. The reasons why for a TV program is reception, because the value of a message is measured against its listening rate”.

¹⁰⁹ DEBRAY R., op. cit. pp. 300-1.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*. p.258.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 300.

¹¹² On this regard please refer to CHOMSKY N., *Power and Terror. Post-9/11 Talks and Interviews*, Seven Stories Press, New York, 2003, tr. it. *Dopo l’11 settembre. Potere e terrore*, Marco Tropea Editore, Milano, 2003.

diffusion of the necessary culture to use them knowledgeably), the real challenge is on diffusion channels¹¹³: In order to own a broadcasting station, to appear there or make one's images appear there – that is, being visible – in the media market and large scale retail trade small investments are not enough. On the contrary, it is necessary to have great capitals, structures and infrastructures, huge influences, which only a few subjects dispose of among public subjects and even fewer among private individuals¹¹⁴

What are these image implications on our lives?

The nature of images is both in a virtuous and a vicious circle with what we make of them, hence with ourselves. It is changing us daily. But we often lack consciousness of these changes, together with the ensuing sense of responsibility, and hence of action. There are at least three points of view we can assume in order to understand the implications the images on screen have in our experience, today: individual (private, personal) interpersonal (close relationships) and social (the community: from the one we belong to, up to the whole community of the human being).

Individual level.

The pervasive audiovisual image we are surrounded by, changes our body and our psychological development with it, and our mental models. It changes our language. It transforms our personal imagery, in a tension between the individual level, the collective level and the unceasing stream of representation.

If in order to go to the cinema we still have to walk in the real world and consciously take a dedicated space to watch the images (we go out, chose a theatre and for the short time of the showing we willingly let ourselves go in the dark, our vision and hearing alert, our mind and imagery open), with a telecommunication screen we tend to lose consciousness of space, of our body and of the way we build a relation with images.

In front of the audio and video stream that flows on screen, we have a tendency to become passive and sedentary, shut in ourselves and in our daily spaces (home rooms, but now even train station packed with commuters...) in a seemingly apathetic abandon of our body, which at the same time reacts as deeply and as unperceivably to light and colour impulses. And it still reacts when we allow only a short and superficial adhesion to sounds and images, changing, unsatisfied, while we go from one channel to the other or while we move, walking past and away from the sound and light source.

Television is usually perceived as a one-directional conductor of audiovisual material, it would be useful that psychologists should perceive it as an extension of eye and ear to the place where images come from¹¹⁵.

In front of television, under the continuous stimulation of electronic bombing, brain activity can go below the minimum of a brain at rest: "alpha waves associated to the trance state increase, and the beta waves, associated with rational thinking go flat¹¹⁶". The metabolic rate decreases dramatically with a clear connection with the development of fat body mass and with the percentage of obesity.

¹¹³ On this regard please refer to RIFKIN J., *The Age of Access*, 2000, tr. it. *L'era dell'accesso*, Mondadori, Milano, 2000, pp. 22and following.

¹¹⁴ On this regard for instance see DEBRAY R., op. cit., pp- 274 and following, and CHOMSKY N., op. cit.

¹¹⁵ DE KERCKHOVE D., *Brainframes. Technology, Mind and Business*, Bosch & Keuning, Utrecht, 1991 tr. it. *Brainframes. Mente, tecnologia, mercato*, Baskerville, Bologna, 1993, p. 22.

¹¹⁶ On this regard please see the studies on childhood quoted in GRASSO M., *È vietato uccidere la mente dei bambini*, (Do not kill the mind of children. Media, show, information and children – second international meeting) ed. Centro Studi Giovanni Calendoli, Padova, 2000.

Solicitation through image and sound has immediate repercussions on the neuron organization level, on cognitive processes and on a psychological point of view: it shrinks to nothing the distance between stimuli and reaction, does not allow the necessary time for elaborating information at the level of conscious mind, spurs sub-muscular elaboration, enhances physiological excitation and decreases understanding, decreases levels and quality of attention, gives rise to a regressive pleasure¹¹⁷.

Therefore, television images and sounds do not only stimulate the superficial structure of our conscience, but rather its deep structure: activating our ability to develop new and adequate mental structures and models, they transform us.

The language changes: the number of words we use is decreasing¹¹⁸, the syntactical articulation is reduced, and silence is cut down (almost to disappearance).

In this sort of reversal between figure and background, the world does not surface from the silence nor does the image surface from the background, but worlds and images become the background from which we all need to cut out a piece of silence and emptiness in which to meet oneself¹¹⁹.

As for the images lost in the stream, worlds go through the same path, we no longer recognize them, we are under the impression we could use them all and to serve the same purpose.

No experiential exchange with others is forcing us to check sounds and images and take into account the value of shades, articulation, and depth.

We all tend to think in dual opposition terms. We change the information organization processes, the structure of memory, and the articulation of thought.

We become repeaters of a collective monologue which is always talking to say very little.

Deprived as we are of the possibility to not see and not listen, we recognize our sense organs as organs of our lack of freedom, because we are left with no place in a world we are widely supplied with, but with no chance to experience it. Unable to tell the difference between reality and appearance, each of us builds a private world starting from the world we are relentlessly supplied with, so that even the slightest introversion will lead to nothing but finding at the bottom of our soul the same stuff that flows on our TV screen¹²⁰.

Imagery changes. Media have a tendency to take the place of the mediation that takes place in relationships¹²¹: putting us in front of the framed subjects (who often speak directly to us¹²²),

¹¹⁷ For further in depth information on this regard please see DE KERCKHOVE D., op. cit. and Paul Virilio's work: for instance VIRILIO P., *The Information Bomb*. London: Verso, 2000. Italian edition *La bomba informatica*, Raffaello Cortina Editore, Milano, 2006.

¹¹⁸ Following a choice of higher communication efficacy or censorship, the number of words used in telecommunication is decreasing daily. In this way, the semantic field of words is changing: specific words are let down in favour of universal words, which are loaded of a number of possible meanings. In consequence, when words are used, the thought behind the sentence they are in has to be made as easy as possible to be figurative, and superficially and quickly understandable. On this regard please refer to CALVINO I., *Six Memos for the Next Millennium - Lezioni americane. Sei proposte per il nuovo millennio*, Mondadori, Milano, 1993, pp. 66 and following.

¹¹⁹ GALIMBERTI U., *Il rumore del mondo*, in *D Donna* newspaper insert of La Repubblica, October 28, 2006, p. 506.

¹²⁰ GALIMBERTI U., op.cit..

¹²¹ AUGÉ M., *La Guerre des rêves. Exercices d'ethno-fiction*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1997, tr. it. *La guerra dei sogni. Esercizi di etno-fiction*, Elèuthera, Milano, 1998, p. 27.

¹²² And often it is not the filmed subject that speaks to us, but another audio, edited over the image, to a further effect of disarticulation and denial of the relationship between image and reality. On this regard please see CHION M., op. cit.

the screens create an impression of exchange when in fact there is only a contact¹²³, an impression of biunique relation that is in fact just an imposition of data, and they spur us to sink in ourselves and to focus on a heightened perception of our own mental and psychological activity under hyper-stimulation. Our fears, desires, ghosts become exponentially more and more powerful¹²⁴.
The personal imagery imposes itself¹²⁵.

Interpersonal level.

Through screens we can get in touch with any thing, place, and living being, always. But we cannot get into relation. Every data becomes irrefutable; every perception of the other cannot be verified by the impossible experience of being with the other.

Folded into ourselves, closed in our private spaces, we watch and let flow internally – on our mental screen – an image of the world, more and more instant (hence without history), ubiquitous (hence without geography), bodiless (hence without resistance, without dialogue). Nothing bounds us anymore: there is not even the alternation of day and night anymore.

Through infra-red magic, nights themselves become nights without night, shadow. Visible and invisible, in and out of range: I would easily say that cinema had intuitively entered into a sacred pact between light and shadow. This pact has been broken by tele-reality.

Our actions have a tendency on one hand to narcissistic withdrawal and, on the other hand, to voyeurism.

From analysis to contact, from encounter to projection onto the other: our behaviour changes all unbalanced towards our need and desires that move us; our perception changes, together with the way we deal with our emotions that now overflow in a constant emotional excess.

Definition of self identity is not born from otherness in its whole substance, but from the absolute gaze that can be cast upon it, from the access to its image and sounds, and moreover from control upon them.

Our gaze spies, controls, and overcomes the image of the other, or is subjected to it in a maze of images that represent him, mirror him¹²⁶, take his place.

The relationship is indexed only on control, or violent conflict: the other exists because he is the object of my gaze, or he does not exist; cannot and must not exist; must be made invisible. No discussion, no shared reconfiguration.

¹²³ “Once the visual memory of an individual used to be limited to the wealth of his direct experiences and to a restricted repertory of images reflected in culture; the chance to give shape to personal myths used to be born in the way the fragments of this memory would combine in unexpected, striking matching. We are bombarded today by such a quantity of images that we can no longer distinguish direct experience from what we have seen for a few seconds on television. The memory is littered with bits and pieces of images, like a rubbish dump, and it is more and more unlikely that any one form among so many will succeed in standing out”. CALVINO I., *op. cit.*, p. 103.

¹²⁴ The first and most complex study on relation between cinema image and unconscious is METZ C., *Le signifiant imaginaire. Psycanalyse et cinema*, (The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema) Union Général d'éditions, Paris, 1977, tr. it., *Cinema e psicanalisi*, Marsilio, Venezia, 1980.

¹²⁵ “The unprecedented development of information media, gives us the impression that history is going faster. The development of transportation means gives us the sensation the planet is shrinking. And in the measure in which each of us is directly called upon by information and image, in the measure in which media replace mediations, points of reference become individual and singular: to each his own cosmology, but also, to each his own solitude”. AUGÉ M., *op. cit.*, p. 27.

¹²⁶ Television, unlike cinema, creates and feeds the mirror. On this regard, please see COMOLLI J.-L., *op. cit.*, pp. 570 and following.

And the quicker and harder this happens, the more the tele-reality will paradoxically hide the process: “it hides showing¹²⁷”.

Between telecommunication screens, “one’s soul becomes conformable with the soul of the other¹²⁸” and all souls tend to shape on forms and contents of television sequences, in the sign of a logic¹²⁹, of impulse, of excess.

Now, cinema remains

A public place in which everyone feels *alone*; in front of the television set, that everyone is watching at home, everyone feels *everybody*. Cinema is not on first name terms, but has a tête-à-tête with the audience, television in on first name terms, but speaks to masses¹³⁰.

The cinema spectator’s loneliness takes him back to a social dimension, because it requires him to be in touch with his loneliness, to make his body act and react in a dialogue with complex images (not to be conditioned), to leave open and porous his individual imagery, to keep it active in meeting the collective imagery. Television tries to remove the sense of loneliness: to fill any space, any void, to remove it. In front of the television, everyone is a solipsist.

Going to the cinema with someone is a personal treat, whereas switching the TV on is a solitary impersonal pleasure.

[...] Art can create an influence whose echo builds up with it; television creates intermittent audience that leaves no trace¹³¹.

Finally, it is remarkable that the actions which resist this drift at times translate into as absolute and violent a claim to identity:

Modernity can lead to dissolve or make abstract the image of the other (which is the best way to break the dynamics of the couple identity/otherness), but the reactions it generates can be omni-comprehensive, can exclude and alienate. Particularism on one hand, integralism and totalitarianism on the other, all take part in what Georges Devereux called “support” or “class” identities, in the logic rather than sociologic sense. Devereux saw in the development of these collective and exclusive identities the sign of a forthcoming collapse of individual identity.

This offers us the starting point for a reflection: until the dialectic between identity and otherness works, a statement of belonging to a collective cannot be conceived as exclusive of other belongings, or as exclusive of an individual identity. But this dialectic can be jammed by the modern technologies dissolution effects, as well as by the hardening and icing effects of the withdrawal on exclusive belonging. The relationship with the world can stiffen or become virtual, thus rescuing identity from the test of otherness. This is how the circumstances of solitude are set, together with the risk of creating an I as fictitious as the image the I has of others¹³².

Social level.

The stream of TV images charms and drowns groups, asking their members - united in sharing the homologation – an assent which does not reopen discussion, but offers collective

¹²⁷ BOURDIEU P., *Sur la télévision*, 1996, It. tr. *Sulla televisione*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1997, p. 19.

¹²⁸ GALIMBERTI U. op. cit.

¹²⁹ “Audiovisual is idiovisual. The image thought is not illogic, but alogic”, DEBRAY R., op. cit. p. 265.

¹³⁰ DEBRAY R., op. cit. 255.

¹³¹ DEBRAY R., op. cit. 255.

¹³² AUGÉ M., op. cit., pp. 29-30.

emotions always a bit larger than life, frivolous, amusing, scary or shocking, which will feed the shared emotional excess. It does not call for action (and change), but an unceasing, indeterminate movement: Adjustment, not crisis.

Reassured (even more after being functionally scared), fulfilled, isolated, the TV spectator is induced to homologate, inure, build relationships based on consumption rather than confront. If a conflict has to be acknowledged, it will be set on the criteria of binary opposition, simplified and emptied of meaning.

As the spectator is motionless, acquiescent, passive, closed in his internal space and his home, likewise, more and more shows are set in

The interior. The home, the studio, the loft, the appartement, the room, the toilets: “at one’s home”, between one, there is the television. There has always been the television. That’s what TV tells us, inculks in us: we can’t escape the TV. All seeing. Panoptic delirium of the rulers¹³³

From the closed space we spy someone in their intimacy, which is no boundary for us other than because it can hide briefly the object of our observation. We exercise power:

It is the compulsion for confinement that ones sees flourish everywhere – be it that of the cramped Loft or an island. From a deluxe ghetto or whatever kind of space the rich and privileged can recreate in an experimental niche – the equivalent of an initiation space where all laws are abolished. It is no longer as necessary to protect a symbolic territory as enclose oneself within ones own image, to live promiscuously with it in a niche, in incestual complicity, with all the effects of transparency and reflection/return image that are those of a total screen, and no longer having any relation to others other than image to image¹³⁴.

Hence, social control takes the place of the shared individual or common experience, of dialogue: control from who manages the images on subjects who make them, on objects who are represented and, most of all, on subjects who consume them. The consumer is under the impression to be able to control the tele-reality, in fact is controlled by it.

This is how our ecosystem changes: today’s western society has a tendency to structure itself (and structure the whole world) as a global village: an apparent democracy, controlled by image broadcasters and money aristocracy (more and more an oligarchy): A society where public space is reabsorbed in economical space; Where socio-political disparities are emphasized by the image control, where emotional shock reaffirms consent and calculated instigation of fear and disquiet preserves it¹³⁵; In a severe ideological drift, which deprives images of the vitality cinema bestowed upon them:

A TV addict is a controllable sedentary, while a cine-phile is an uncontrollable wanderer. Good television reflects the audience, good cinema breaks the mirror. [...] Ideological, hence narcissistic device, television affirms a belonging [in a whole process of collective breakdown]. A promoter of physical and mental escape, cinema takes us from our roots [and gives us back to ourselves]¹³⁶.

¹³³ COMOLLI J. L., *op. cit.*, p. 570.

¹³⁴ BAUDRILLARD J., *Télémorphose*, Sens&Tonka, Paris, 2001, p. 32.

¹³⁵ DEBRAY, R., *op. cit.* p. 274. On this regard please see MONDZAIN M. J., *l’image peut-elle tuer?*, Bayard, Paris, 2002 e COMOLLI J.-L., *Voir et pouvoir. L’innocence perdue: cinéma, télévision, fiction, documentaire*, Verdier, Lagrasse, 2004.

¹³⁶ DEBRAY, R., *op. cit.* p. 255.

What issues arise?

In this scenery, the key issue is being able to acknowledge and interpret the whole audiovisual offer in its complexity, and our way to build a relationship with it.

Images, unlike words, are accessible to everybody, in every language, no need for preliminary knowledge or apprenticeship. And information technology links the tower of Babel's every floor, Beijing, New York, Cape Town. But when the screen goes off, we still have to access to the inner glance that prescribes every visible universe. This access can be granted only by language and a symbolic translation¹³⁷.

If our language is emptied of its meaning, if symbolic is twisted into self-referential, authorless image idolatry¹³⁸, we need to go back to awareness of the profound image of representation, images, and the vital relationship between identity and otherness¹³⁹.

Every ritual activity aims to produce identity through the acknowledgment of otherness [...] The social link the rite creates must be thinkable (symbolized) and manageable (established); on this respect the rite is mediator, maker of symbolic and institutional mediation that allow the social actors to identify with others and stand out, all in all to mutually establish bounds of meaning (social meaning).

Two remarks on this regard: when a rite blockage arises, when there is a deficiency of symbols, a weakening of mediation – of cosmologies or intermediate bodies as Durkheim puts it – that is a slowing down or suspension of the identity/otherness dialectics, the signs of violence appear. Second remark: new communication and image techniques make the relationship with the other more and more abstract. We are used to see anything but it is not sure whether we can still look¹⁴⁰.

We must reactivate the activity of the gaze as a chance of relationship, and therefore the awareness of the gaze. We must reveal the practice of image making and spreading, with relation to identity of involved subjects.

If it is no longer as difficult to access technologies, it is difficult to access knowledge, capital, power that are needed to practice gaze, to synthesize it in images and make them transmissible on a wide scale (out of one's home, one's neighbourhood) to make it known and shared.

If we do not pay attention to the change we – in our bodies, our psyche, in our interpersonal and public relation – are living, the change risks to be nothing more than an unaware conditioning. A debasement of human experience, between individual alienation and collective breakdown, in the sign of exploitation, of an economic drift without ethics, replenished with violence and insanity¹⁴¹.

It is in socializing these tensions that we need to find new practices of awareness and action. Here the technical and symbolic issues, together with the issue of power relations defined by Debray¹⁴², state each as many questions and urgencies.

¹³⁷ DEBRAY R., *op. cit.* p. 296.

¹³⁸ Ibid, p. 245.

¹³⁹ Please refer to AUGÉ M., *op. cit.*, p. 9: "...It is the new regime of falsehood that afflicts today's social life, that taints and seeps into it to the point that we must doubt it, its reality, its sense and categories (identity, otherness) that constitutes it and defines it".

¹⁴⁰ AUGÉ M., *op. cit.*, pp. 17-20.

¹⁴¹ GALIMBERTI U., *op. cit.*

¹⁴² Please refer to DEBRAY R., *op. cit.*

Which practices are possible?

First of all, we need educational practices that train to audiovisual image complexity and therefore to an ecology of the image, through the possibility it has to stir change.

In the last years some subjects have developed, such as image pedagogy¹⁴³ (cinema images are used as the key of education and training processes) and mediology¹⁴⁴ (images are read and understood starting from the three issues fathomed here above).

New laboratorial approaches to watching and making cinema are under development, approaches that aim to produce individual wellbeing, which often does not coincide with an exhaustive professional training, but aims to improve understanding. Where this is the case, together with technical and technological knowledge, the profound symbolic and political meaning of creating an audiovisual image today is shared: this happens for instance in audiovisual and cinema laboratory processes.

The laboratorial approach is more significant where forms of contact (and – on the contrary – of separation) with audiovisual images are the more extreme. We are referring to laboratories in these contexts where the effects of ingenuous contact with images have to deal with daily over-exposition without accompanying: for instance, children laboratories¹⁴⁵. And obviously this applies to all non specialist groups.

On the other hand we refer to prison institutions: where – for instance in France – there is a total subtraction of audiovisual images and as much an ingenuous and unaccompanied approach on the part of inmates, when audiovisual images are reintroduced.

What is a cinema laboratory?

A cinema laboratory can be a space, a time, a group in which images and sounds are read and produced. And its aim can be to put back sounds and images into the deep relations in which they are (hence to develop awareness) and make precise choices regarding every variable of this complexity (hence to take responsibility).

To summarize schematically, we can set the audiovisual image in a triadic relation map, in which each element is in reciprocal relation with both the other elements. And every relation is organic to the other and modifies it:

- Relation between filming subject, image and spectator
- Relation between filming subject, image and filmed subject
- Relation between filmed subject, image and spectator
- Relation between image, individual imagery, collective imagery¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ AUGÉ M., *op. cit.*, p. 28. On this regard please see L'EXCEPTION, *Voir ensemble. Autour Jean-Touissant Desanti. Douze voix ressemblées par Marie José Mondzain*, Gallimard, Paris, 2003; AGOSTI A., *Il cinema per la formazione. Argomentazioni pedagogiche e indicazioni didattiche*, Franco Angeli, Milano, 2004; MOTTANA P., *La visione smeraldina. Introduzione alla pedagogia immaginale*, Mimesis, Milano, 2004 e MOTTANA P., *L'opera dello sguardo. Braci di pedagogia immaginale*, Moretti e Vitali, Bergamo 2002.

¹⁴⁴ In France there is a solid and prolific work tradition in this direction, rooted in the *Cahiers du Cinéma* and in those philosophers, anthropologists, critics, authors who constantly matched the production and circulation of films with theoretical texts of constant exchange and dialogue, of analyses of works and their implications.

¹⁴⁵ On this regard please refer to the proceedings of *È vietato uccidere la mente dei bambini. Media, spettacolo, informazione e infanzia - 2° convegno internazionale*, (Do not kill the mind of children. Media, show, information and children – second international meeting), congress that took place on September 11, 12 and 13, 2003 in Abano Terme sponsored by the G. Calendoli Paduan research studies centre, Istituto di Sperimentazione e Diffusione del teatro per i ragazzi e i giovani.

¹⁴⁶ “Collective imagery and memory build a symbolic whole referring to which a group defines itself, and through which it reproduces through generations in imaginary ways. The whole of collective imagery and memory shapes individual imagery and memories. ... it is a source for narrative works (comments on rituals, shamanist tales, epic poems) sketched by more or less autonomous makers... Each creation, with its more or less collective sociological form, as is the case with colonization or cultural re-creation, or a more or less individual literary-artistic form, can in turn have repercussions on individual imagery as well as on collective symbology.

- Relation between production process, creation and diffusion of images
- Relation between technical issue (material means and related knowledge), symbolic issue (meaning and activation of relationships) and politics (as a sign of power relationships) of images
- Relation between individual, group, society (at the level of the group between the laboratory; of the group with the institution/community of reference; of the group within the institution/community with the outside world)

Every subject that is involved is a knot that lives all these levels of relation and elaborates them into his action. Every image – imagined, produced, watched, released, shared – takes shape from all these relationship processes that are triggered.

Each one, hence, works on the verge between himself and the other: between individuality and otherness, where each is different from and synchronous with the other, in a chance to take risk¹⁴⁷, confront, build a critical relationship, and enter in possible conflict.

The laboratory can first of all offer new boundaries, within which a space and time emptied of sound-image is created in order to be consciously filled: a place of temporary silence, in which one is no longer swept away by the daily unceasing buzz of sounds and images and where one can be chosen, isolated, acknowledged.

This way, relations can go back to be characterized by listening and confront, between individuals and between individual and group.

Therefore, the laboratory repairs, allows a reflection and growth of awareness, both on an informative level and through the achievement of a new experience. And supplies a protection that allows to take risks, because it does not remove nor mystifies complexity, but puts it in the very centre of the action of imagination, reading, production, achievement, distribution of sounds and images. Hence it organizes the action of people who lead and take part in the laboratory.

Remembrance gets out of burning obsession to become memory, mysterious yet approachable, often readable. Acquisition of tools for reading and achieving the work becomes the occasion for a grip of conscience of one's identity, of a reformulation and of an action plan that will reanimate progressively the whole group and the world beside the group.

Pretence goes back to be an occasion for language development: And for building different angles and points of view on the world. Even if the film has a documentary aim, it does not leave out of consideration the taking of responsibility of a point of view: of the carrying out of a speech that faces a truth, always contextual, offered to the other to be shared.

To frame something goes back to being an attentive operation, of composition, of meaning attribution, of dialogue with the framed subject and the world outside the frame¹⁴⁸, the offer of a path from surface to depth and back. Let the film roll – hence the images pictured one by one in each frame – and edit them, points again to the subject of the value of connection

We put forward a hypothesis: that in consequence, any drying up of one of these sources can affect all the others. This is the risk we are taking today because of the war on dreams". AUGE M. *op. cit.*, pp 58-59.

¹⁴⁷ "Situation plurielle, précaire, changeante, où il y a du risque et de la perte; où le désir se decouvre égaré. Transformations, déplacements, détour et retours", COMOLLI J.-L., *op. cit.* pp. 116 and following.

¹⁴⁸ The French language helps us to get closet to the responsibility the framing and focus activity entails: to frame is *carrer*, framing is *encadrement*, close-up is *serrer*. They are all terms specific of the military language, disciplinary calls that make clear the potential of violence involved in including or excluding of an image from our gaze. And therefore they are key words in militant critic and research. On this regard please refer to J.-L. Comolli in IMAGES DOCUMENTAIRES, *Filmer en prison*, 52/53, ed. Images Documentaires avec le concours du Centre National du Livre e le soutien de la Scan (Société civile des auteurs multimedia) premier trimestre 2005, p. 45.

between images, between sounds, of mutual position, of the dialogue between them and the language born out of this dialogue¹⁴⁹.

The image always produces a change in the maker and in the viewer. For change to be generative and not only conditioning, we must go back to the root of the synthesis the image carries out: we must restore all the richness of individuality facing otherness.

Everyone has a world of images inside of himself, because he creates them and because he is permeable: ideas present themselves in the form of images¹⁵⁰ and we all have imagination, desires, projections, ghosts, fragments of memories, insights, we all watch and listen ... It is not a matter of choosing between commercial cinema and authorial cinema, between good cinema and bad television, to bar digital image and go back to film: it is a matter of acknowledging what images are around us, and why. Understanding what relationship we have with them. Not to bar or censor them: rather, to be able to choose among them. Quoting Baudrillard, it is a matter of recognizing the image that does not break the mirror but imposes itself as a substitute for reality¹⁵¹. Recognizing the complexity of the image, of the processes that are activated to make it up, to make it shareable, shape it, diffuse and enjoy it, puts us back into full action (getting out of the common simplification that states that watching is only passive and making image is the only way to be active), calls us to a choice, hence to always be aware, whatever our position in the chain of creation-fruit.

To recover the operational dimension of the contact with images awakens us, gives us back to mystery: puts us in relation with the other (object, space, people, force field, models of relation that are not written in advance nor fixed by light or word, authentic ...), in active listening, continuous dialogue between interiors and exteriors that tend to recreate (even in conflict), balance and evolve (between the interiority of the individual and what is around him, between his participation to a group, a society, and the wider environment and collective imagery).

Working at this quality level, the group gives value and meaning to the exchange of symbols¹⁵²: The reversible exchange between identity, worlds, through actions and permanent signs that are the synthesis, the symbol of exchange and cooperate to reinforce and recreate identities, pacts, and possibilities of action between involved subjects. Reactivate the symbolic exchange and consciously considering its value takes us back to the principles of creation, to the mysterious land where life and death coexist without exclusion, just as good and evil confront each other, give origin, put into shape¹⁵³.

Today more than ever, in a volume of globalised conflicts, world domination processes and death denial¹⁵⁴, going back to work on *imago*¹⁵⁵ in all its complexity (as much historic as symbolic) it is an act of giving back to human beings their human dimension and active

¹⁴⁹ On this regard please refer to COMOLLI J.-L., *op. cit.*, p. 295.

¹⁵⁰ On this regard please see CALVINO I., *op. cit.*, pp. 93 and following.

¹⁵¹ 'I'll not be your mirror!': BAUDRILLARD J., *Le crime parfait*, Éditions Galilée, Paris, 1995, tr. it. *Il delitto perfetto. La televisione ha ucciso la realtà?*, Raffaello Cortina Editore, Milano, 2006, p. 154.

¹⁵² In order to deepen the subject please refer to BAUDRILLARD J., *Mots de passe*, Département des éditions Fayard, Pauvert, 2000, tr. it. *Parole chiave*, Armando Armando, Roma, 2002, pp. 21 and following.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ On this regard please refer to BAUDRILLARD J., *Le Pacte de Lucidité ou l'intelligence du Mal*, Edition Galilée sponsored by the Ministère français chargé de la culture – Centre national du livre, 2004, tr. it. *Il patto di lucidità o l'intelligenza del male*, Raffaello Cortina editore, 2004.

¹⁵⁵ The history of image in the western world, as the history of the word that describes it, comes from *imago*, a wax mould of the face of the dead: "the dummy of the dead is the corpse [...] This *imago* is an iperbody, active, public, radiating. [...] we oppose to death decomposition the *recomposition through images*". On this regard please see DEBRAY R., *op. cit.*, AUGÉ M., *op. cit.* pp. 22 and following and VERNANT J.-P., *Figures, idoles, masques*, Julliard, 1990, tr. it. *Figure, idoli, maschere. Il racconto mitico da simbolo religioso a immagine artistica*, Il saggiatore, Milano, 2001.

citizenship. The symbolic level is hence tied up with the level of power management within communities, and unfolds and reveals again its wholeness.

Therefore we can state that a cinema laboratory can trigger a wealth of change processes.

It recreates language, consciousness of words and their meaning. Naming goes back to being a creative acknowledgment. Language and thought are reborn, which allows confront, exchange of imageries, in a sharing of knowledge and memory, which originates a personal recreation and becomes social recreation.

It enables to train and work (even paid).

It spurs to develop group work strategies, and strategies to work within the group.

It puts us back into history and geography.

It enables to acknowledge social tensions that are at the core of our communities, and the complexity and meaning of our personal actions in the world.

The individual changes in relation to image, and vice versa, creates new, exact and weighty images, in a now virtuous circle (even if marked by the conflict and difficulty to stay in the process). The individual changes in relation to himself and to the group, recovering the choral dimension of existence and making that regards him on a personal, interpersonal and social level in a broad sense.

Cultural change and identity assertion are constructs, processes [...]. There is no identity statement that does not define relationship of otherness and there is no culture that can live without cultural creation. Reference to the past itself is a creation act, and we may say of mobilization¹⁵⁶.

Therefore it becomes very significant to think of such an activity in contexts that bear extreme characteristics with regard to human condition and image positioning, such as, for instance, is prison.

This collection of papers documents the experience of Lieux Fictif in the Baumettes prison of Marseille, in order to represent the complexity of the laboratory practice developed along the years.

Briefly, the cinema laboratory in prison has to face an institution that communities produce on their territory and define as an isolated, separate place. Where the contact between the closed space inside, and open or closed spaces outside are limited, ritualized, or forbidden (and memory is disfigured, imaginative dimension springs up, to the disadvantage of the level of reality verification). Where special and architectural characteristics mark the contact with the body and with the imagery, and interfere with interpersonal relationships, at the level of actions and affection¹⁵⁷. Where the organization of everyday activities is regulated and gives a rhythm to everything: body, background, interaction. Where power relationships are displayed with force and violence and relationships tend to be mainly conflictual.

The audiovisual laboratory within the prison puts under discussion the boundaries the institution strengthens: boundaries within the prison architecture (organized on a specific plan aimed at simplifying spaces, which isolates and redistributes power following a defined hierarchy), boundaries among inmates (on an individual and group level, acting on distances between bodies, and boundaries of perception, of knowledge, of affection, of experience, bringing them towards images again, and transmitting the images they created through the prison TV channel...), and boundaries between prison and the city (area, country, and related

¹⁵⁶ AUGÉ M., *op. cit.* p. 26.

¹⁵⁷ On this regard please refer to FOUCAULT M., *Surveiller et punire. Naissance de la prison*, Gallimard, Paris, 1975 tr. it. *Sorvegliare e punire. Nascita della prigione*, Einaudi, Torino, 1976 and 1993.

communities). It changes models of contact with self and others, with consequences on learning new information, on experiencing new possibilities of relationship¹⁵⁸.

The laboratory uses cinema and TV technologies and techniques to enable swift movements and easy access: hence, most of all digital and video technologies. In this way it reactivates awareness of essential differences between means, supports, image practice: differences that do not disqualify one or another but define exact boundaries when they are worked with, re-proposing forcefully the issue of relation between form and content, aesthetics and ethics¹⁵⁹.

In the end, it deals with positioning the image and circulating the film, within the laboratory group and further, in prison and in the world outside those walls.

¹⁵⁸ In the Marseille prison there were illiterate inmates who learned to read and write in order to develop their research, to draft their play and its decoupage that learned to watch, produce and edit catalogue or personally produced images creating original and autonomous films (short, full length, or medium length films).

¹⁵⁹ For instance, the laboratory uses light cameras and digital editing systems with the exact aim to create images with the complexity of film cinema image, avoiding the dull mystification that tv electronic image tend to bring out. On this regard please see the interview Jean Luc Comolli made with Caroline Caccavale, José Cesarini and Jimmy Glasberg in IMAGES DOCUMENTAIRES, *Filmer en prison*, 52/53, ed. Images Documentaires avec le concours du Centre National du Livre e le soutien de la Scan (Société civile des auteurs multimedia) premier trimestre 2005, pp. 73 and following.

2.3.1. “Cinema in prison” in the French experience

Image-individual-institution

Caroline Caccavale¹⁶⁰

Introduction

The Audiovisual Training and Expression Workshops¹⁶¹ are installed in a space of 350m² known as “the studio”, inside Marseilles prison.

They are open 5 days a week, 6 hours a day, and engage an average of 12 prisoners a year. The duration of the training course can last from 5 to 18 months according to transfer or release date of the trainee

Two work groups split the week:

Two speakers from the outside develop a creation project (short, medium, or feature length) that will be shown on the outside with the agreement of the Penitentiary Administration. Another two speakers develop a programme project that will be shown on prison cell televisions through an internal television network, with the agreement of the Head of the establishment.

Since the existence of these workshops “Ateliers” (1997):

- 12 creation projects have been made and shown on the outside;
- 10 programmes have been made and broadcast on the internal channel.
- 15 filmmakers, directors, video artists, received in residence in the “Workshops”
- 7 trainees have continued, after their release, an audiovisual, technology, or theatre training program and have found work.

This action enters within the framework of the Cultural and Training Policy in the Penitentiary Environment.

The principle is to receive a cinematographer, director, video artist, in residence at the Workshops for one or more years to carry out an artistic experience with those prisoners participating in the program; most of the time this takes a cinematographic or video-graphic form and as the theme is normally related to the personal process and research of the visiting lecturer.

Examples of subjects proposed as a starting point:

- Autobiographical cinema / time and freedom.
- Video art / representations of imprisonment in all its forms.
- Cinema and intimacy/ the relationship between the filmer and the filmed.
- Cinema and interiorism / sublimation and profusion.
- Cinema and minimalism / metaphor - in/outside the prison.
- Cinema and theatre / Person -character/ fiction-reality.

¹⁶⁰ Caroline Caccavale, director, producer, founder and coordinator of the "Ateliers de Formation et Expression Audiovisuelle" in the prison "Les Baumettes", Marseille (France).

¹⁶¹ The Audiovisual Training and Expression Workshops at the Marseilles Penitentiary Centre receive the support of the Regional Administration of Penitentiary Services, the Regional Administration of Work, Employment and Professional Training, of European Social Funds, of the Regional Council PACA, of the Municipal Policy of Marseilles and the Regional Administration of Cultural Affairs.

The Cinematographic Research Laboratory Lieux Fictifs (Fictitious Places) receives the support of the General Council of Bouches du Rhône and the Regional Council PACA.

With the help of Système Friche Théâtre

- Cinema and memory/ Video archives and narratives...

Culture and training

The work used in the training process of the “Audiovisual Workshops” puts apprenticeship and knowledge in the centre of the experience. The pedagogical dimension is registered through the act of transmission and experimentation.

Going beyond a simple technical apprenticeship, the trainees experience, above all, the making of a film (cinematographic or televisual).

Here to take on the experience of cinema with others is a lot different than explaining what cinema is, or making a film about prison. It's a question of place. There is no longer a teacher on one side and a pupil on the other, a filmmaker and a subject. Here everybody, that is the cinematographer and the prisoners, finds themselves at the centre of the project.

In a place like prison, audiovisual and cinematographic training cannot limit itself to learning a technique; it must implicate itself in a work project, in a culture. A technique learnt but not mastered, unfeeling and aimless, cannot be of great use.

The technique is not an end in itself, it is a necessary tool that one must master in order to apply it to professional project.

In the cinema professions, the technical positions require a very deep and specific knowledge. In the time available to develop a training course in a detention centre, to engage in a qualifying training is unimaginable.

Nonetheless, a pre-qualifying training is not an “inferior training”.

If it doesn't go deeply into technical specifications, it can approach them sufficiently enough to unite them in a work project (the making of a film or programme).

That is why it is important that the cinematographic or televisual experiences formed in the workshops result in a creation. The understanding that the prisoners will have of the project and all that they will have lived through will reinforce itself in the last stage. That is why the broadcast is so important, be it inside the centre (television programme) or on the outside (film).

This creation (film or programme) is not a product; it is the sensitive imprint left by the lived experienced: A human, pedagogical and artistic experience.

This part of the apprenticeship thus forms part of the field of informal education.

This field adapts itself to the sensitivity, the personal journey of each of the participants and cannot be assessed through one analysis chart only.

An open plan in a closed space

This action about “image in prison” has been able to develop and appoint itself because it has been thought out as an “open space”. Within this particular plan and specific space Image professionals are invited regularly to embark on a period of work, creation and exchange,

The restraint they are given from the beginning is to work from the prison by implicating themselves in a creation project not only as co-author but also as actor and technician of the imprisoned individuals.

One of the first difficulties a trainee will come across is how to share his cinema desire with the other. At the start of the process, the desire, the motivation that brings the detainee to the “Workshop” is far removed from that which the filmmaker will engage in the project. The job that will take up most of the filmmakers (coming from the outside) time is that of transmitting his cinema desire to the participants.

The welcomed filmmakers can freely propose a script and work plan Lieux Fictifs. Most of the time, it is the artistic administration of the organisation who invites a filmmaker according to his professional journey and experiences.

Different dimensions of cinema are what we propose the filmmakers should put to the test of the prison.

The act of filming , time, memory, movement...these are elements of cinema that we confront in this place with the prisoners so that narratives emerge, identities reveal themselves, bodies recompose, and individuals review (re-envisage) themselves.

Here the word “re-view” is revealing in its meaning. To build an image that one may show again on the outside, an image that may be looked at.

Prison, it is the place where one loses ones identity, where one is no longer visible from the outside, where the self image no longer exists.

In cinema, the moment of waiting for the reel to be developed, before one may watch the filmed images (the rushes), is called “the dark passageway”. Prison time is a bit like that waiting, “that dark passageway”. To reveal an image of oneself, to reconstruct in some way another identity, not only to hide oneself, to go unrecognised, but also to better see oneself and be seen as what one is and what one can become.

Extract of a trainees testimony:

“Our identity, our personality, is diluted without any duty of protection, be it that of the Penitentiary Administration, really being able to do anything about it. All we have is time to question ourselves and, as was my case through many stages, to re-envisage ourselves. There the use of image presents itself as a reconciliation attempt with oneself and the outside.”

In order to be able to imagine this “open space” in its duration, the quality of the work place is primordial. The “studio” setting is a space recognised for its function by the institution. Apart from the centres’ own rules, that both prisoners and trainers have to respect because the project takes place within the institution, this space also proposes its own rules. It is important that the prisoners are conscious of these additional rules exist beyond those of the institution and that they also depend on the collective demand of the common project in development

At Baumettes we have this quality of workspace. The 350m² studio has been conceived according to its use: to film images, editing, projection, and collective meeting and work space. This place, whilst being under the authority and surveillance of the institution, remains autonomous in its functioning. It is politically recognised by the institution.

The absence of surveillance personnel inside these spaces is an essential element. In the studio, one is still in prison, but for a while, one finds oneself in a space that exists for its own use beyond the surveillance workings of the institution. This “among others” is a vital space for reconstruction, a protected space, a space of freedom in a place of maximum restriction.

Each participant (prisoners and outside trainers) must be aware of the fragility of the existence of such a space within prison. It is important that they become responsible for this place. The autonomy that each one must have in the project makes them a little more responsible.

This autonomy gives him more rights but also more duties and obligations.

This studio space at Marseilles prison is also a symbolic space.

This dimension can certainly not be duplicated. And as such this situation deserves to be analysed because it gives meaning to the project.

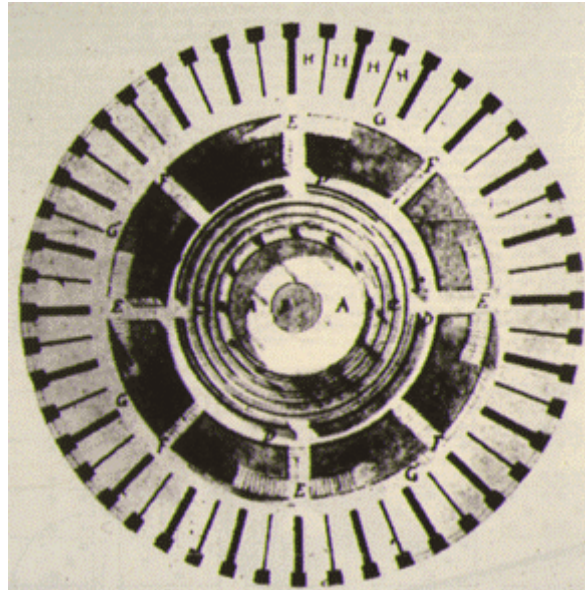
This meaning concerns itself more widely with the question of « image in prison », beyond this specific place.

Prison is time, but it is also an architectural space conceived to control, manage, and restrain the body. The studio has been built within the old walkways of the high security quarter.

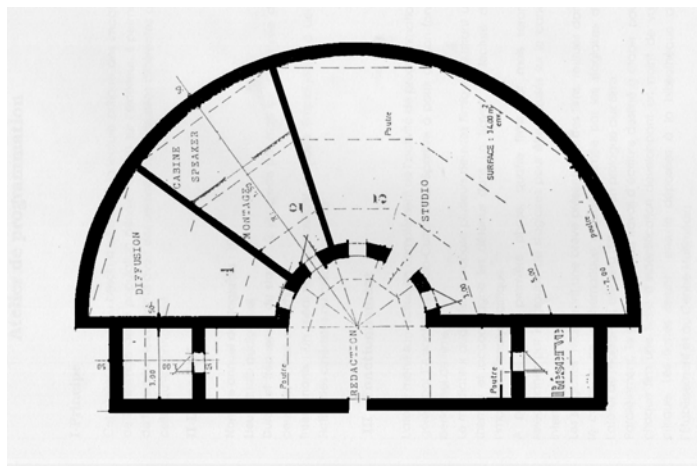
These walkways were distributed in a panoptic form, i.e. from a central point that opens a field of vision permitting total visibility. Each isolated prisoner on the walkway can thus be

seen and controlled by a guard placed on the central point. This architecture is linked to the question of viewing. The audiovisual studio, built in the same space, reverses the point of view proposed by the disciplinary institution

In the studio it is the group of prisoners who has the power to view from a central point, which controls its own transgression (opening and closing of doors within the workspace, red-lights prohibiting the access to the studio when filming). This powerful symbolism in this place also affects the trainees' behaviour.



Benthams' Panoptic



Plan of Baumes Audiovisual Studio built in 1998

“Power” disassociates functions; the prisons' power is founded on the disassociation of the function of seeing to that of being watched.

To make images in prison one obviously questions and relocates oneself in relation to this power. In this sense of relocation, we produce an act of transgression in this place. It is

necessary because it allows development and movement to continue in a place that freezes things, beings and their possible evolution.

The penitentiary institution is, by its own function, incapable of producing the least transgression.

Art on the other can only exist through its capacity of transgression. The co-existence of two objectives, that of the prison and that of the artistic experience, can seem improbable. It is therefore the acceptance of these different objectives and the quality of transgression produced by the filmmakers and cultural trainer that will permit creative work to be developed with the prisoners.

The principal set by Lieux Fictifs to welcome different image professionals in the studio system avoids shutting the cinematographic experiences up in a dogma, a method of writing:

As many personalities, as many different encounters. As many cinema questions, steps, processes, systems, scripts, directions, distributions of space, thus opening the boundaries between people: theatre, cinema, television, video, plastic art...

No writing method can truly be duplicated.

On the other hand, each project, each laboratory nourishes the next. Certain prisoners, having participated in one project, find themselves in the one after. They then inspire a true dynamic and sometimes a critical point of view which opens other perspectives in the work at hand.

The general idea is to freeze nothing. Only a general framework is set with some bearing to the inside.

Also set from the beginning are the conditions of project scripts that involve the prisoners in the process, the number of participants, and the place and frequency of work.

The rest isn't controllable and must defy us, happen by necessity. In this overload of restrictions, the form must feed itself.

Things must develop in their own rhythm, while stimulating themselves, with a fine quality to watch and listen, incessantly opening new horizons ... Making progress on uncertain territory, with no prerequisites, not forcing yet provoking cinema situations, and observing the reactions.

To constantly seize the accidental, unexpected, in the moment. To never submit to, but to be sufficiently open to continuously put things at risk.

Creation and the changing process of the individual

Since the creation of the Workshops, we have worked in multiple forms, genres, durations...short, medium and feature length films, video installations, programmes, documentaries, stories, theatre...Each project has been produced with the aim of broadcast.

Be that through the internal prison channel or projection room, or on the outside through festivals, meetings, cinemas...

Despite these different artistic approaches, we can notice some common situations that make sense in each of the projects and the recurring script writing procedures that constantly accompany these adaptation processes. These elements do not form part of a dogma or method but are ways that open and strengthen the meaning of this artistic, pedagogical, and human encounter in prison.

“The mirror image”

An image, be it even documental, is already part of a story.

It is the peculiarity of the image to be, at the same time, both likelihood and a part of us that escapes us, that is no longer completely us.

In the “Workshops”, this relocation allows the actor/filmmaker/co-author the capacity to look at this image of himself and accept he no longer possesses it.

The different processes of writing, filming, directing... that develop throughout the cinematographic experience, will allow the prisoner to live this detachment, to be able to look at himself as himself and as another, to be able to risk and surprise himself.

To film and be filmed is not an anodyne act.

During the process, he becomes aware of the value of the image, of his power, and capability to help reconcile himself with his own image (photographed) and with the image of the outside (projection-broadcast).

“The audiences’ place”

The audience of a film is understood, here, as someone who is involved in a cinema exercise, and who is not just left in a passive situation facing a spectacle. This is a way to put the participants into the place of an active spectator.

“Space-time”

Prison is a “space-time” that determines orientations: inside-outside/ before-after.

Not only these orientations, but also the space-time rupture with the outside world is particularly bewildering for the individual.

To make cinema is to mix up the passages of time and space because the space that is produced is neither coherent, nor continual, nor rational. It is labyrinth of space that links normally fragmented notions.

To make cinema in prison is to give oneself the authority to link not only the inside and outside, in the mixture of edited images in the film, but also the past and present at the time of filming and the past-present of the moment of the films projection.

Relocation

The notion of relocation that we work with corresponds to that which occurs between the individual in his daily reality and the character-actor of a story or a more documental written piece.

There is also the gap between the real space and the fictional space, in the film, which can culminate in the construction of a set, the introduction of exterior images...

This dimension is also reinforced by a return journey process between the individual and collective dimension. This process is provoked and accompanied by the trainers.

- The personal narrative of the prisoner and its connection in a universal dimension.
- The memory of each one and where it can be registered in the collective History.

This relocation takes place both through the proposition of film or script layouts, and through the screening of films, archives and other materials (photos, books, comics...) that connect the participants to the collective memory.

The choice of the material shown and the proposed or provoked layouts are made according to the general direction of the resident filmmaker.

The cinematographic experience will cause each participant associated with the project to develop new skills, new eruditions, new knowledge, and knowledge that has already been attained yet remains unused, almost forgotten. Some of these facts cannot only be very complex and call upon high levels of thought and reflection, but also very technical in relation to the reality of their educational level.

If these facts are integrated, and above all accepted by the prisoners, it is because they directly linked to concrete actions, to a piece of work. They are also given meaning on the inside of a collective project.

The success of the group project, that reunites outsiders and prisoners, depends upon each individuals work.

Something that always surprises the participants is the work relationship that is created between themselves and the outsiders. This work relationship is based on exchange, reciprocity, equality and also the demands and responsibilities of everyone. These human relationships are completely foreign to them.

This new relationship will rock the idea they have about relationships and will oblige them to put their position to question, even the idea they have of themselves. Some of them more or less resist this idea; they don't want this authority or power relationship to change. Even if they denounce it somewhere, it is in this relationship that they have built their identity.

Thus it is a new work, learning, and human relationship that they must apprehend.

This putting to question also concerns the outside interveners who sometimes find it hard to relinquish a power relationship in order to feel respected.

The artistic experience represents a double unknown for the prisoners, mainly because art is foreign to them, but also because the dimension of the experience of art as the meaning of experience is completely unheard of to them.

Here it is necessary to make the experience of what cinema can be (physical, sensitive, theoretical, practical, technical experience) an experience where one learns while doing and being directly implicated with what one is.

There are different stages that intervene in the process. The first is devoted to the deconstruction of settings:

1. The vision they have of teaching and the relationship between those who know and those who don't, but also the position of feigned passivity to active transmission;
2. The image they will have of the outside intervener, an image stimulated by their multiple demands for help linked to their situation and which find no response at the heart of the institution (priest, social assistant, psychologist, health etc...);
3. The perception they have of Image which is reduced to the televisual monoform or commercial cinema replete with stereotypes, action and violence;
4. The interpretation of the opposition and transgression they place on the act of delinquency does not allow them to become aware of their level of "over-integration" into the consumer and show business society.

This first stage of work often ends up entering the area of conflict. It is a moment that provokes the most disagreement, the most exchange.

This crisis always differs according to the intervener and the initial framework; it usually arises just after the second month of the project.

This critical moment is difficult for certain participants, for the group who enters into conflict at that moment and for the intervener who is often unsettled.

It corresponds to the post-deconstruction of settings and habitual bearings. This dynamic forces them to question their position and relationship.

At that moment they name their fear in the face of the unknown. The project seems blurred to them, inaccessible, immaterial, they can't get a clear vision of it but they feel they will need to get more deeply involved and they predict it will produce deep changes. It is, thus, the period of crisis.

After the conflict comes the start of the artistic project (the moment when the prisoners take hold of the project ; the proposition of ground rules on behalf of the filmmaker according to the personality of each individual, their experience and their new positioning).

It is also the moment of the construction of places and desire. If there is no desire, after the conflict, there's no problem.

It's also the moment where collective projects demands are put into place, that of the intervener and that of each of the participants.

In these different situations speech has a central place.

At this stage of the project the cultural structure Lieux Fictifs, which is also the producer of the film or programme, undertakes more formal contracts with each of the participants;

- Contract of image rights (authorising the distribution of ones image on the outside, specifying the duration and type of exploitation that can be made) ;
- Contract of co-authorship (it is systematically established by a lump sum, on the other hand it does not dispose of the SACD or the SCAM in case of the works' commercialisation)
- Contract of work in accordance with the technical part of the work. (*This is only established if the work is commercialised*).

It is important that the status of each of the participants is considered contractually as it would be on the outside.

Extract from Stéphane's' testimony (former trainee)

"We really got involved in the training when the intervener told us stuff about himself. If he wants stuff from us he has to talk about himself. Whether he comes from the best schools or the underworld, he has to tell us about himself.

He got to give us a little. We give him; he has to give as well...

If he didn't talk about himself, we'd ask ourselves who is this guy? What's he doing here? He talks to us, he tries to worm our secrets out, and we talk to him about our life and he gives nothing from his, who does he think he is? The judge sent him or what? (Laughs)What we need is an exchange. If there is exchange there's a relation of trust that settles in and the more we talk things through, the further we go. He's interested in our stories and we are interested by his, by his knowledge. The goal of the training course is to end up making a film, a finished product. We've got things to say, and he knows how to put these things in their places so that we can make that film. So it's about complementing each other.

He helped get our point of view across, on screen. Before being a cinematographic adventure, it's a human adventure."

The construction of the person in the group and the community

To make cinema in prison is to work about social stereotypes: transforming the audiences' point of view who are no longer just watching a prisoner. This step is an evolutionary process on the social level.

What kind of spectator are manufacturing?

The evolution process is at stake on three levels : the first being individual ; it is that of the prisoner who participates in a cinematographic experience, getting involved with the

construction of a self image, in a recuperation of identity, in a risky situation, to re-envisage himself, to obtain dignity, to build a journey.

The second level is that of a group made up of an ensemble of prisoners who participate in a project, outside interveners who propose and accompany the experience and the Institution that represents the body in which the experience takes place.

The last level is that of the community when the film is shown on the outside. This moment becomes particularly important because it is there where the director (external intervener) and the group of actors/co-authors (prisoners) take on an artistic and social responsibility with the community.

How to work in a cinema laboratory in prison?

In order to answer this question, one must be capable of taking into account the particular context in which he enters (the prison) in a given moment, in a particular time in history, in the evolution of society and different Institutions.

The importance of the process not only concerns the group of prisoners but also all the levels of the context. Meaning the filmmakers who intervene, the Institution in which the process is being developed enveloping the personnel who work there...it's a kind of integral process which is no longer just about "making cinema" but which must also give another to meaning to ones' own existence.

What kind of cinema is necessary in this context?

In this context it is, above all cinema itself that we must examine, before prison, because here we take cinema from possibility to necessity. At the beginning we make the idea of making cinema possible for the prisoners, but progressively this idea must become, for them, a necessity to find a place in their own construction.

In prison, more than anywhere else, we learn that things are not true or false, good or bad, but complex. It is therefore necessary, through this social cinema laboratory, to make a kind of reciprocal contamination between cinema and the social context.

Cinema permits the restoration of something of the group, the community, in a society that individualises existences and isolates individuals; creating, in this way, a new kind of pathology and delinquency. The public one finds in prison is, in the main, disconnected from the notion of collectiveness, community, and society. Its' ignorance in relation to collective history is very important.

To undergo the "cinema experience" is clearly understood as the undergoing the experience of a collective art at the time of its production and distribution. It is also an experience of creating relationships between people, of linking bodies, thoughts, and emotions.

The transition from "I" to "We" is part of the work process. It is necessary to think about ones' place, to understand oneself whilst relocating ones' history onto the scale of the history of ones' environment, near and far.

The motivation of the external interveners, (all professionals, artists, filmmakers) and their choice to come to work within this framework must register itself in a personal and professional journey, here it is not a question of chance; they must be able to transmit the meaning of their presence and their desire for the encounter.

Extract from the testimony of Philippe Tabarly (director of photography and filmmaker/intervener since two years ago on the Programme project)

"Where to start considering his project? What light to give him to keep him away from the reach of traps such as that of the "creator in prison complex" or the drifting into the utilization of the trainees?"

To me the starting point is particularly concerned with the quality of the relationship we decide to embark upon with the trainee. It seems to me that the sensitive thread that we weave

“the work” with depends on our capacity to be connected to a “person” and not a character, a person who from his position as a prisoner escapes us in a particular fashion. It is therefore necessary to accept working with this particularity that starts with someone who escapes us. This way we produce films “with them” and not “about them”. Moreover the utilization of the other arises on the outside and particularly in the penitentiary universe. This difference is pretty big because it poses the problem of what one puts of oneself into a relationship one weaves with the other in order to film. And to film, precisely, rests fundamentally on the action of recording « a relationship. The late critic Serge Daney used to say “there is only image there where the other exists”..

“The first question that comes to my attention, my viewpoint, situation (in the sense of being situated) seems to me to define oneself in this inexhaustible questioning. What position am I defining? What position am I delimiting and inventing? Since it will resist the diverse pressures and take on a new form with suppleness of rigidity, according to the viscosity, roughness, and fluidity of the «said» situation that is imposed upon me.

What consistency should my presence in the prison workshop have?

To define my position, to find it, invent it, and to be, also, in accordance with this position, demands a real deconstruction of what I do with my private knowledge, intimate, individual, and a unanimous knowledge. This situation invites me to relocate this “knowledge”, this “aptitude”, in a “zone” of common re-cognition, a zone that becomes a laboratory of life in which everyone can find a place. In this place, in this situation, this intimate relocation becomes public. It is carried out with prisoner trainees who are also “born” to something that escapes them, by accepting to be put to the test, through what we propose them;, their own “aptitudes” which dissolve them.”

The relocation of the human experience towards the artistic experience and the possibility of passing to the group, but also with each one of the individuals, a moral and social contract, are essential. Even the fact that the encounter be situated outside of the exterior space-time and also the daily prison space-time, creates an ideal situation, for everyone (including the interveners) to put oneself at stake, examine oneself, share ones’ political identity in the sense of belonging to a community , and to become aware of freedom. The situation facilitates the time needed for in depth examination. Time that even the artists themselves often feel they never find on the outside. Some have even be able to say that “it was perhaps the last place where we could take time out to think together and at the same time it was without a doubt a luxury, a paradox, or an immense necessity to take this time in the heart of a prison.”

Prison is time. One is condemned to time. This time can be destructive or, if the person decides to and has the means to live it, it can be paradoxically constructive. This experience is an encounter in penitentiary time.

The expression and the need to be in the world are, in this place, a vital urgency. In prison the lack is perceptible. It is a time of stopping, where one no longer races against time. In this place it is difficult to flee, one has to confront it or forget oneself and risk annihilation.

Extract from Philippes’ testimony (former trainee):

“In fact the specific thing about prison in comparison to another restricted environment, closed space, is that there the restriction is very strong. You can’t leave prison, you don’t have the choice. And so you can’t cheat, it’s difficult to cheat in prison.”

This statement clearly brings up the question of the “meaning of punishment”, of prison in the heart of society, of art and culture, but also, inevitably, the question of the meaning of citizenship in brief on the outside, and scrutinizes the current democratic reality, social compartmentalization, and the rapport with knowledge.

The invited filmmakers’ progress needs a strong involvement and a capacity to be attentive to the prisoners to be able to accompany them in the creation process; by confronting the restraints of prison and the desires of the personalities, the initial proposition will be transformed, or rather deformed. The filmmaker must then accept letting his role enter crisis and accompany the mutation. Some prisoners in the group will be brought to the position of co-authors, actors whilst others who are less involved find their place in more technical dimensions: photography, sound, assistant editor. What is essential is the constitution of a group and that whatever places the prisoners occupy, they are responsible and involved in a way that they surpass themselves.

For the majority of the participants, the experience really constitutes an outstanding moment that allows them to recuperate their self confidence, to resist potentially destructive effects of imprisonment and to find ways of giving their punishment a meaning. If, for the majority, their participation is the chance to “re-view” themselves on the condition that they sincerely invest themselves there, for those who really want to get out of a marginal way of life and delinquency, the journey through the workshop can be decisive in succeeding in changing their path and this is understood by those who don’t wish to introduce themselves professionally into the audiovisual industry.

Nevertheless if the workshop permits them to give meaning back to their citizenship, to recuperate trust, to leave behind a perception of the world and society that is too often negative and dualist by going a little beyond the rancour they feel towards all that, and yet it is necessary that they can rely on exterior relays upon their release to accompany their progress. It is also necessary that their word and sincerity also be taken into account, understood. Now the number of re-offenders provokes more and more the lack of involvement and attention on behalf of the social services and the judges dealing out sentences.

The never-ending conflicts that exist in prison are in some way brought to the “studio” in the workgroup even if the participants make a great effort to leave them behind, helped by the fact that the workplace is a different space-time and that the relationships and identities are different than in detention: it is a space of freedom in prison. The return journey, between the prisoners’ identity that often protects prison violence and the re-conquest of their identity of just simply being a man, creates a tension, a gap that is difficult to bear but can be made positive and used within the body of creative work. What is a source of conflict (which is which really?) if not a source of reconciliation.

At the same time, the experience that is intensely shared, its human nature, creates solidarities that the prisoners believed impossible before having started the course (the credo of the majority of the prisoners : no friendship is possible in prison, nor true mutual help, it’s each to his own).

The collective work creates a certain form of transferring knowledge, of circulating meaning and thought. Creating thought together draws people closer but the rapidity with which it can rock these intimacies towards violent conflicts is astonishing and denotes the ephemeral character of solidarities or emerging friendships which, once the experience is finished and the penitentiary universe regains the upper hand, come undone. This is a reminder that the harsh

law of the prison reclaims its rights as soon as it closes around itself but doesn't stop each participant remembering the richness of the experience they have shared.

Elsewhere in this game of identities at work in these comings and goings between the prison world and the universe of the creation project, he who is insincere is quickly unmasked: a lot of the finally relatively positive conflicts (if they are well managed) stem from a demand of exactingness, from a judgement that some have about the involvement or non-involvement of the others. Other conflicts equally come from the difference of environment, age, culture; there also there is a fragile balance between the positive aspect that these differences have in the body of the project and the negative aspect if these conflicts do not succeed in being overcome.

The artistic experience relies, above all, on the expression of each participant (this expression can take on different forms according to the cinematographic project), which requires the filmmaker to start from what these people are. To work scriptwriting in this way, is to go looking for the other where he is, and then to bring him progressively into the workspace, into the staging or into the scriptwriting

It is a work of relocation that obliges the artist get very close to the other. So close to the detained person, he can intuitively feel all that's at stake at that moment, inside that person. Nonetheless he must quickly relocate that tête-à-tête and take that which was provoked at the very depths of their being into the space of the making of the film. If this relocation doesn't occur, one takes the risk of losing one's way with the other; in a personal relationship that cannot, therefore, succeed; or even in a savage psychoanalysis that can be dangerous. It is necessary to bring the materials found with and within the person to the scene, to the territory of the film. Thus they are return journeys that will feed the work of creation, and will feed the final work life.

The artist holds a privileged position in the communication, observation and understanding of the other, of the sensitive mechanisms that dwell in and operate him. It's for that reason he can obviously perceive the changes that occur within the person. Unfortunately, once the prisoner returns to face the institution, he puts himself back into an arranged scene where it is difficult to see his reality, his deepest truth.

There is often a lack of space for dialogue between the artist, the institution and the prisoner. During the artistic work, these heartfelt states are not formulated by words; things remain informal, unsaid but shared by everyone. All of this is very fragile and can escape us, disappear. If at that moment of the artistic work you name whatever it is, you kill it.

And so the right moment must be found to name the things lived within the experience, to put some words to it, the right words. Often this cannot be done at the same moment of creation, it often happens on a shifted timescale.

The changes that are produced in a prisoner involved in an artistic experience also act on his behaviour and his physique (the body changes). The grasp of trust, the autonomy, and the discovery of diversity, the aperture of thought and of the desire to form part of the world physically changes the individuals. More sure of themselves, they gain a facility of language, they affirm their choices, they are more open, more tolerant, and above all they recover their desire, which is synonymous to life. They also perceive that dignity is something which is taken, which is risked and not something one waits for, something given.

They become more autonomous beings, more active and critical.

They can take a look at who they are and at what they are living through the relocation operating in the artistic work process. They aren't reduced, closed in a fixed image, in a

branded identity (the hoodlum, the dealer, the suburban rebel, the thief, the drug addict...), they exist beyond all that, as men, and for some of them this is quite a discovery.

They also learn what generosity is without, as it were, despising it, it is no longer suspect. I just give, with no interest, and I can also receive in return. These notions are badly taken in a prison culture.

The institution perceives that between the interveners and the prisoners a relationship is established in which it has no part. This is one of these reasons why it doesn't always understand it. The difficulty lies in making the institution understand that it can use the materials developed in the artistic process because it is also a process of individual change.

Art is always perceived as its' finality, as the artistic object and not as its experience

Who has been able to observe the making of a film, from writing to shooting and to editing?

Who has been able to see and feel the process in which the artist evolved?

Who has been able to feel himself?

Society is always urged to face the finished work, the cultural product, as a public or a spectator. When the latter are active, they also undergo a process of transformation, because they also contribute to the experience from their place as spectators.

For that to occur, it is necessary that the film be sufficiently open to leave them this place. If not they will only consume.

2.3.2 From the place of the spectator to the place of the actor/co-author

*Laetitia Martinet*¹⁶²

Imprisoned people don't maintain a different relationship to image than the majority of citizens on the outside confronted by the flux of daily images offered on cinema and television screens. This incessant omnipresent flux that resembles a giant supermarket of stereotypes is characterised by the absence of ethical and philosophical orientation, the negation even of thought and singularity.

Inside just as outside, the spectators, even if they recognise the obscenity, superficiality demagoguery of many films and audiovisual programmes, are not, however, capable of resisting the captive power of the screen like consenting victims. Many of us confess to "consuming" the television nonsense but only a few of us have the tools, the time and even the desire to stand back and think about our relationship to images. It must be said that, like any act of freedom, to place oneself facing the images, to learn to watch, to find pleasure in a relationship with films that escape standard codes demands an effort and obviously a journey of initiation.

Aesthetic judgement and artistic sensitivity are not innate dispositions, they are learnt, experienced and in this realm, nothing is fixed; our judgement evolves with our life journey, the evolution of our way of thought and behaviour.

In prison like the outside, the spectators are more often taken by the images rather than being really penetrated by them. However, on the outside, there are other intellectual entreaties that permit the seen images and their thought anaesthetising effects to be relativised. In prison, the television is the only window opened to the world outside. So, the relationship the prisoners have with the screen is the same they had, without a doubt, on the outside except that it is exacerbated during imprisonment and unfortunately reinforces the dualist vision of society they have; individualism to excess and the aspiration to consummation which for the majority are determinant elements in the reasons that brought them to prison in the first place.

Sometimes, that which is seen on the television heightens the disgust the imprisoned people feel in relation to society and their share of injustices. Television and cinema produce a form of symbolic violence that often borders on the cynicism of the image of our contemporary societies

Even if television has provided a (relative) calm to imprisonment competing with sedatives, it indeed provokes perverse effects as well. Youths imprisoned early on, after many years in prison, are liable to believing that the world and society are reduced to what is shown on television through its broadcasts of tele-reality and big budget blockbuster films

Impotence; an exacerbated feeling of the imprisoned spectator.

Consummation; a single action set into motion in front of the diversity of offer, an action that permits the filling of the void of "sentence time", in order to forget, to forget oneself in a way.

Hypnotised; a state of sleepiness produced by the abusive consummation of this new anti-depressive.

For all these reasons it seems inconceivable to run an image training course in prison without dirtying oneself with this question of the position of the spectators.

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Since the outset of the project, reflection about the spectators' position has played an integral part of the pedagogical progress at work in the Workshops. To be attentive to our relationship to images, our ways of perception, is to already get to work on making an image, understanding the creative process that leads to the writing and making of a film.

Even if forms and methods of work have varied from one year to the other according to the singularity of the developed projects, a common denominator does exist: to permit the trainees a hold of awareness of their position as a spectator and of the process of projection and broadcast at work in the relationship with a film.

Whether the film is good or bad is not the question here; it seems urgent, even, to leave behind this kind of judgement that claims that some films are respectable and others are not.

The question is not so much knowing if a film can be classified as "art and essay" as knowing what happens on the conscious and unconscious levels between the film and its spectator. In front of a film, a spectator won't react the same way as another; each one interprets, receives the film according to his images, his past, his life experience, his intellectual baggage. That seems obvious, yet we still need to be aware of it and to be able to name it and transmit to others what happens in ourselves when we are in front of a film.

This is thus the only way of resisting the show business steam-roller, extremely well analysed, thirty years ago already, by Guy Debord (cf. *"The world of show business"*/ «La société du spectacle» by Guy Debord).

Give the spectators the means of awareness of the exchange that goes on at the emotional and intellectual level with the images. This conscious hold, for everybody, is not spontaneous but it is the only way to give dignity "of thought" back to the status of the spectator and to that, whatever kind of production it may be, rubbish or masterpiece they find themselves watching.

It's not necessary to install an art house cinema dictatorship where every film must contribute to the debate; or even demand that each spectator be able to give an in-depth analysis of the films with the aesthetic criteria of academic codes or that of a film critic. It is rather more necessary to find the way of not remaining mute in front of images and to connect a dimension of individual perception to a dimension of meaning shared by a community. So, whatever the films or images may be, they don't just embody a pleasure but also an engine for thought and action, desire of knowledge and human encounter: this encounter existing as much on an intimate level as it does on a collective level.

To make this effort to find the means to share images is to offer a system so that the uninitiated spectators can penetrate into the specificity of cinematic and audiovisual language. It is to this search that Lieux Fictifs devotes itself within the framework of the image pedagogy process offered in the workshops.

A specific work about the position of the spectator is carried out on several levels which don't necessarily exclude each other (they can be found in the same project):

Several levels:

- **Group life:**

The work of the workshop is a collective work, a team work, even if moments of individual work are necessary. The group didn't exist before the project; it builds itself progressively with moments of conflict, acute tension as well as moments, on the contrary, of communion and exchange.

The interveners cannot directly brave the tensions the trainees set against each other and they cannot act as mediators of conflict resolution, these conflicts often not having much to do with the work of the workshop.

Their role, on the contrary, is to extract the substance of these conflicts in order to move them to the only legitimate place where the intervener can act and facilitate the formation of the group: the place of cinema and image. In this way, for example, the intervener can identify what causes problems in terms of images and values and he can propose that the group watches a film that deals with the problem in question. And so, indirectly, the groups' tensions are relocated to the body of work "to be done together" and are diverted from their negative and destructive aspects.

- **The work of writing and production:**

The time given to the writing of a project of creation must be up held equally by permanent return journeys between the exchange about films and the writing of the project itself. In the workshops context, the writing does not stray beyond the classic rules of script writing. To each project, and according to the personality of the trainees, a specific writing process emerges progressively, from a method presented by the interveners. The main stages: script writing, filming and editing aren't relevant to the framework of the image practice workshops in prison. Whether or not a training and qualification dimension exists the facts of the problem don't change. The boundaries between these stages, which in a professional environment tend to unfold successively, are a lot more porous in the work of a creation in the workshop; permanent return journeys between one and the other feeds them and permits them to assert themselves. To outlay a practical filming method participates in the work of script writing just as watching a film does.

At the time of a collaboration project with the Regional Centre for cultural research and action of Valence, the project proposed to the trainees had as a starting point the choice of a film that had deeply affected each one of them. It was starting from this work of analysis to name the nature of the traces that had left an indelible mark on their imagination that a writing and filming method was able to be drawn up to culminate in the creation of a short film. This method did not only permit entering into a process of self understanding from the analysis of the identifications and projections that one weaves a film together with, but also it permits entering into the question of specificity of cinema language, into the aesthetic questions which, if they were approached from a classical teaching angle they would be repelling. To engage in a work of remembering a film which has greatly moved us, is to enter in a process of creation, formulation, identification with the nature of ones' own sensitivity. From the spectators' singular experiences and the methods that allow them to be named and transmitted, one can give rise to many kinds of materials which participate from the work of self research to the work of cinematographic writing.

What is essential is to transmit the fundamental idea that all creative work is the materialization of a journey and the experience of the journey is as important as the finalisation of the work. To see a film, is also a journey that our internal mental landscape permits us to go on, in a different way each time.

The idea is not impose the interveners' cinematographic references onto the trainees but to find a meeting point and a method where theirs and ours can be exchanged.

How do we live with images, how do images live on in us?

These questions can concern the spectators as much as the authors by sending off the first to the process of interpretation, and the latter to the process of creation.

The spectator memorises the images, puts them in relation to what he is: a human being involved in different stories with his own personality, experiences, hopes, desires, dreams...in other words with all that which has something to do with his search for inner truth.

The author-director inevitably works from the images that haunt his imagination, even if these images don't systematically have a precise form and appear to be more of an intuition.

Whilst making them aware that to watch a film is already to interpret it, the trainees will learn that the meaning they give to a film belongs to them and is linked to their own life experience. This exercise leads them to taking the risk of finding themselves in the position of author. Even if not all of them cross this path, this first stage will allow the majority of the trainees to locate their relationship with image and to measure the difference between the notion of author intention and the notion of spectator interpretation.

The act of filming proceeds as much from a physical urge as from a theoretical intention and it is in the agreement between the two that we find the gesture of creation

At this point of the apprenticeship the difficulty the trainees generally have in avoiding all current audiovisual language codes that constitute, for the most part, their only reference, will be revealed.

Everything that doesn't pertain to these conventional codes is for them inevitably "off the mark, false" and in particular the expression of the interior which according to them can only be expressed with special effects or sophisticated technical means such as those used in classic audiovisual or commercial cinematographic productions.

To write a script is to imagine a film and so visualise it. Even if this vision is more or less precise according to the authors, there is always an impassable gap between the mental representation of a shot, a sequence and its production. If this gap, due to the difference in nature of the mental image and the filmed one just as much as the technical restrictions imposed by the machinery, seems obvious to the initiated, it is quite the opposite for the profane. It is within this gap that the creative process comes into play and it is precisely this putting into perspective that will make the object from the production project.

The trainees ordinarily have a very linear vision of their project, which seems quite normal taking into account their inexperience.

The work system must allow them to be able to experiment, by themselves, the gap which exists between the mental image and its' production, between the ideal film and that which finally becomes possible at the time of filming and editing. For each shot and sequence, a true research journey is undertaken.

To make a film was to obligingly embark upon a work of research and reformulation of intentions whilst adopting a critical posture throughout the length of the process.

Extract from a public intervention by Marc Mercier at the time of the conference "Proof by Image" organised by the CRAC of Valence in 2003 (Video critic - Director of the Festival "Video Instants" Filmmaker/ Intervener in the Workshop/Atelier in 2000-2001

"Can an image give the proof that something has really existed, that something really happened? Nothing is less certain. However, they are there, images, around us, above us, in us, and sometimes we are in them.

Yet they well say something about the reality of the world and of us.

If they don't bring the proof that we so often expect, then what else do they bring? Some almost elsewhere? Some almost unknown? Some almost true? Some almost deceit? Some almost everything else but one and the world?

On account of that maybe, we can forward that an image is by definition always fascinating, vertiginous, because it bores a hole between reality and representation, between seeing and

knowing. This gaping is the image. I'm not speaking here of advertising images (or propaganda) which try to fill in that hole at all costs, to prevent all giddiness.

At this point of our presumption, we can even go a little further and place ourselves next to the spectator, next to the view of the other. To look at an image, on account of this gaping, of this laceration, is the venture being inevitably deceived: this image doesn't bring me the proof I was expecting! It doesn't tell me the complete truth! Disappointment! Yes indeed. Disenchantment! The bane of our era.

But at the same time, precisely thanks to this gaping, the image brings something else we weren't expecting. It produces an effect of truth that transgresses its own limits, that overflows. And this truth effect, this effect of meaning, participates in a re-enchantment of life. Perhaps we can dare say that today, a new thought of cinema, of photography, of video, can no longer just content itself working on the duality Reality/Representation, but incessantly actualise the duo Disenchantment/Enchantment."

2.3.3. Imagining a method

Philippe Tabarly¹⁶³

So what truth and what goal are there to be achieved here?

True, the word is reassuring, constructive and it alludes to a particular echo in a society resonating mainly to “the profitable, the result, the index, the merchandising, the sales force, self image at all costs, wealth as a sign of respectability, etc...”

To work in a prison is to be constantly confronted by its method, but we are also in a “workshop space “ a “space of parenthesis” which is a place that is episodically given up by the “military regime” of imprisonment.

What is this space that can collectively accommodate thought, public emotion, affection, withdrawal, pleasure, forgetting, the imaginary, appeasement...? Everything that escapes prison at the very heart of the prison and that it doesn't take into account in the relationship it has with the person it locks up.

Gold is scattered in the spirit but the spirit is far from being made of gold.

We the interveners, what do we do with “this other”, the detained person, in this place that imprisonment didn't invent, in this improbable place, in this “fictitious” place!

What to do but draw from what he is and his actions, in “this broken down relationship”, to borrow from “this hollow human matter” possible, that is surmountable, trails of life, so that we can be able to create TOGETHER a process that “awakens the desire for desire”, so that we can undertake actions that lead to “creating ones' life up to here”, and discover TOGETHER what it is possible to do, to think in order to achieve and touch “some meaning”. “To think...” said Cioran, “...is to unburden your heart.”

You will agree that one doesn't enter like that into “the cinema workshop” of a prison. Each time it is a question of making a good entrance, and to make a good entrance you prepare, you premeditate. We mobilize ourselves to get ready for whatever may burst forth, for what could explode in ones face, for what we don't know, for what we can must feel and understand very quickly, almost instinctively, I'm talking about the deep prison culture and perhaps about “delinquency itself”, I'm also talking about the way one must try untiringly to make oneself adequately available. To go inside the workshop is to inevitably go inside a great suffering, a great universal pain. To go inside the workshop is to saddle oneself with the complexity of human nature increased by a choice of society. To go inside the workshop is also to go inside something of oneself that we don't want to see, that we can't yet see. To go inside the workshop is to accept being seen and judged and, as Oscar Wilde said, “to be seen is to be discovered”.

And so it all comes down to this, to not be seen.

In this case it's a question of having nothing to hide, to try to be just.

Is the beginning a “truth to discover”?

Would it be the beginning of a method that would still not bear its name?

I continue to ponder and I tell myself that to go inside the workshop space consists in watching out for the looks, to try to understand what happens during our absence, to track

¹⁶³ Philippe Tabarly, filmmaker, chief cameraman, director of photography, intervener in the Information Unit of the “Workshop”, “Les Baumettes” prison, Marseille (France).

down and follow on the heels of what's at stake once more, again and again, that which "separates" us here and now from the imprisoned trainees, citizens.

And all of this grand observation is refined upon each re-entry. It is not the practice of habit and it won't have to become so. "I must constantly fight against all habit" would be one of the first propositions of a future method.

I add that the sought after method must contend with that of the prison, so above all it must be convincing. It must go in search of "an intimate part of that which interests the other, this part being decisive". It must therefore "unleash" something of the other, with which we work, "unearth" hidden predispositions, and aptitudes too, that he wouldn't yet know or would have forgotten. In this sense, we can talk of a "life laboratory" that allows one to put oneself back on the "path to oneself" and even better, on the « path to the ones' new self".

Would this be the second proposition that would feed the method?

And so, one of the main aspects of "the sought after method", consists in welcoming those who wouldn't find a place in this method, so that the same process of exclusion isn't reproduced here. One of the answers is time. Here time is to be won or lost because it is both sentence and reconsideration. Here everyone finds themselves with the vital obligation of composing their "personal time" in step with the weight of their own existence confronted by the implacable rhythm of imprisonment.

Perhaps it's a major question that we « secretly » share with the detained people, this restriction of time with which we also compose ourselves and which obliges us, to put it at the heart of our process, so that we can extract the essential, so that we don't put ourselves in a "state of urgency" but so that we organise a "state of waiting" which gives perspective.

For us, intervening, time must remain a precious "friend".

Us facing "disappearance".

We, the interveners, have the desire for "the group", I'm talking about this homogeneous link upon which we rely in order to advance. But "the group" here, more than elsewhere, remains a geometric variable and we must constantly "relocate" ourselves in this paradoxical situation re-constructing "the group" that has just disappeared

Thus a question arises for the intervener: how not to disappear himself in a group which tends to disappear?

We have an important tool, that of sharing without greed, without cowardice, our choice, our passion (cinema or other) by putting our know-how within reach of he who thinks he "doesn't know what to do" or that he "can't yet do". Right away, a common territory opens up like a door, leaving an emerging space which will be taken possession of. The word is capable, big, because to seize a space, a tool, can only really be done through a process and with a sincere and declared acceptance. But at this stage, in its first phase "of approach", the trainee doesn't yet know the amount of "truth" he will have to draw from himself to effectively rejoin the global process, a process which rapidly confronts him with his own questioning.

In this way he discovers that is only with this currency we will speak so that "the work", "his work" can really start. This change in value, this inevitable relocation towards "a himself regarding his world, the world", this putting to the test "his authenticity, his unquestionable, his questionable", immediately puts the "rule of I" at stake in a rigorous body. This body becomes a protection and also an invitation to live, through the experience of cinematography, (or other), another experience of humanity

Therefore the "method of the workshop" will naturally oppose itself to the "method of the prison" because this proposition of a "letting go" (letting go of what one knows), this proposition of a "deconstruction" which is just a visible phase of a change, summons necessarily a period of extreme fragilisation and therefore of conflict to protect one self. This will be the price each must pay, to "involve oneself" in this process and to find a place there

and perhaps “ones” place. The process invites, authorises each one to be able to “realize” this “singular relocation”.

Our task as interveners, through the choice of our art, takes on, in this relocation, another dimension to explore. In this prolongation, we are really putting ourselves “in a state of experience”, it is the price we have to pay, and it is also the humble measure of our maturity. It is with this that the prisoners will be confronted. It is from this we put our “disappearance” “at stake”.

Danger... don't accept this movement?

The danger, the trap, from the beginning of the relationships with the trainees, consists of “falling” into a sort of “fascination-seduction” that they know how to keep up for reasons of survival. In fact if they themselves “enter into an indispensable deconstruction”, we, the interveners, should accept our own deconstruction of the exterior, of our environment, of our beliefs, to put ourselves at risk like they are, in this process we are offering them. In this way we are putting ourselves on a kind of equal footing, not in terms of knowledge, but in terms of humanity. Therefore this will be our first task; to admit to knowing how to create humanity here by deconstructing oneself, accepting ones “image be clipped” to put it back at stake and fully live this “movement”.

To make a cinema (or other) experience is to make an experience in humanity.

In the penitentiary universe, to make “outright” the proposition of cinema, perhaps to reassure ourselves that we really are filmmakers, would be at the time a heavy contradiction because this proposition wouldn't taken into account of where they, the prisoners, are, of their thoughts, and the cultures that shape them. To make this “brutal” proposition would transform it into a “moral provocation”, because it would seem to them an overly dangerous jump into the void. On the other hand, “to start” from a relationship whose deep quality consists of progressively “putting their “authenticity” to the test” starting from “the humanity which they have in themselves”, whatever their eventuality, this proposition “of another experience of oneself” relocated to “a cinema experience”, really becomes, (because it takes the real into account), “an Art starting from Life” and in a wider sense, “cinema starting from their life”. “The cinematographic act” transforms itself here through its process into “a cinema experience”, which feeds itself from what's close by and from what one is and what they are. In time, making this cinema experience together” proposes a common humanity” and it brings us closer, and in this closeness, it brews and proposes other values.

To watch humanity within a framework (cinema or other) is to extend a singular point of view and to carry out an act of transgression that is characteristic of art.

We don't come here to “frame” the individual but “define a framework” for him in which he will be able to move about freely. The adaptation of this fictional framework/body offers him the experience of an “other transgression”, of a transgression controlled by a “cinema experience”. We aren't looking for the desire for cinema, but rather that the individual is able to question and “resettle” his view of the world, a point of view that is intimately his, a point of view that opens “to free will” like we ourselves try to do in our “discipline”. This way, to accept to enter in the process “to extend” a singular point of view, leads the individual to create a beneficial distance, a distance that “produces” another “freer, clearer experience of viewing”.

If one could withhold one of the aims to be achieved, perhaps it would concern this point of view that “unhinges destiny”.

A simple question...

Why are we in this place of “negation”?

It is an essential and mute question. To give exactly too quick an answer would certainly sound “the recall” to “the outside”. We certainly reconsider “the outside” from “this inside” and this reconsideration seems able to take place only in the fineness of a just balance, that doesn’t weaken but specifies our desires and prepares “an opening”, that is another link with ourselves, a lesser known space of ourselves which demands “an escape”.

Could we say that we come to prison “to escape ourselves”, to better touch “the hidden face” of humanity and from this perception, make a profound experience in “the art of living ones’ art” with the other?

The new exists only in us.

2.3.4. Meetings, interviews, collaborations

Interview with Stephane Sibilla

Stéphane Sibilla¹⁶⁴, Caroline Caccavale¹⁶⁵, Philippe Tabarly¹⁶⁶, Laetitia Martinet¹⁶⁷

Caroline: How did you find out about this training course?

Stéphane: When I arrived at Baumettes, I was forbidden to work because of my sentence, it's a period that lasted one year, I knew about the Workshop through another prisoner who had been taken into the September session. The activities he told me about interested me, that and the fact that the only activity I had in the prison was exercise, walking, and my cell, that was all. So the fact of doing something else other than prison, walking, conflicts, playing cards, that was becoming routine, that was becoming really exhausting, so the fact of doing something with my imprisonment really interested me. What's more, audiovisual, it was an activity I knew nothing about, I didn't know that it could include so many professions: boom operator, soundman, cameraman, producer, director, all of that, I didn't know there were so many professions behind all that, so I handed in my application but the course was already full, then I was lucky because one of the guys was released on conditional, and so after I had met Laetitia who gave me an interview and I was taken on, I replaced that guy

Caroline: So at the beginning you had only heard talk about it but you didn't really know what it was about...

Stéphane: Yes, I set off on an adventure, it was the unknown for me, I didn't know what to expect. I had been told more or less, during the interview, about film analysis, image analysis, two units : a creation unit on this or that project and an information unit where you go film concerts or people intervene here at Baumettes, for example a psychiatrist or a person with knowledge about the law etc... so that interested me and I went.

Philippe: Did you decide to do the course because you'd heard about many times, and if that's the case from who? Or was the deciding factor your interview with Laetitia or a kind of being fed up with this daily routine?

Stéphane: My choice to start the course wasn't due to my interview with Laetitia or a desire to do audiovisual at any cost. I wanted to do this course because I hadn't worked for over a year, I had no financial assistance, and so for a year it was really tough, I had to juggle here and there to eat some pasta in the evening. All the jobs in prison are in the basement, and because of my sentence, I was forbidden to go into the basement, and so I couldn't work. I couldn't be an auxiliary, or kitchen porter, or anything else. The situation of the Audiovisual Workshops, the place where the studio was situated, allowed me to negotiate around that because I didn't have to leave the centre to get there, so I could go work there. It was above all a financial need for me; I got a small wage at the end of the month, which was my first motivation. As time passed other reasons added up, seeing that I did 4 courses back to back, which adds up to 2 years more or less. So the first course, that was a financial need, the second was a bit more than curiosity and the third and fourth, we started working with Laetitia on the possibility of doing an outside training, that's how I left once on permission, to go to

¹⁶⁴ Trainee of the Workshops in Dominique Comtats' project « *Mots pour Maux* » ("Words for worse") from March 2003 to July 2005

¹⁶⁵ Director / Producer / Coordinator and founder of the Workshops since 1997

¹⁶⁶ Filmmaker / Intervener in the Information Unit of the Workshops since September 2004

¹⁶⁷ Head of pedagogy / cultural mediator of the Workshops from 1998 to 2005

Avignon and meet people from the IMCA, which fell by the wayside due to status problems because you had to be financed either by the RMI (revenu minimum d'insertion/minimal income for social integration), or by unemployment benefit, and being a prisoner you don't have any status, you are not considered as RMI-ist, or as unemployed, you are considered as nothing at all, so you can't make a financial demand these organisations.

So I then went to see the ANPE with Axelle, we confronted ourselves once again with the problem of training funds. And so we asked if there wasn't an alternative solution, and that's how I was told about the insertion path for which I didn't funding seeing that they accept everyone, all you need is a few little problems to get accepted, so I entered their criteria perfectly (laughs). So I was given a second permission and we went there with Laetitia, I met them, they got interested in my application and we were able to make up a file that we proposed to the board of sentence application.

Caroline: Laetitia, in these two years of workshops, what different phases have you seen emerge?

Laetitia: A first phase of passive observation, with a phase of trainee expectation vis-à-vis the interveners and what they had to propose in terms of the project, the organisation of work, the rules of the game: pf "who is who", because it is still a mini-society that is formed within the interior of the Workshop.

Caroline: Stéphane, what can you tell us about this first phase of observation and expectation?

Stéphane: This phase takes place every time a new filmmaker is taken in residence. We have got a new person to discover, who must also discover us. It's true that prison can be overwhelming, so he's also going through a phase of observation. He must have a really clear idea and know what he wants because if he doesn't and he doesn't take things in hand, we can't do it for him, and so it goes off in all directions. Some of them really know what they want and get really involved, and there are others who are there just because they've seen the light. Still, we need a minimum of firmness, because even if we're big boys now, we're there because we've done some stupid stuff, so if we don't have a framework that takes us to a finished product then...well us, we're in prison. From the moment you find yourself in prison, three quarters say they've got nothing left to lose, they tell themselves "what's worse that can happen than being in prison?" So if you don't tell them "there, you you're there, you've got to do this and you must get there", they won't go by themselves. You have to show him, tell him what he must do and how to do it, think and do it for him.

Laetitia: From your arrival in the first course, how long did it take you to understand that one of the demands we make on the trainees is to personally implicate yourselves in the projects, that there is a kind of autonomy there.

Stéphane: I'd like to say one course but...let's say one and a half, rather than two...

Caroline: What is it that makes all that time there necessary?

Stéphane: There's got to be a first finished project so we can realise that all this channelling there's been and that all the discussions there's been have lead to that. But until we create something we can't take this method into account. After we realise all this we're happy because we've DONE something, regardless of if it's good or not. So we take on the next project in a different way.

Caroline: In which moment did you start to feel changes in yourself, in your desires, in your perception of things around you?

Stéphane: When I arrived I had already been sentenced. But I was under two sentences, so I started to change when I got my sentences joined in March 2004, from that moment the light at the end of the tunnel became a lot closer. It was palpable. I went from “I’m not creating anything because freedom is too far away” to “there it is”, so I had to start thinking about what I was going to do after, before getting out, so that I didn’t leave with my hands cupped and find myself parachuted back into society just like that, without a penny, without a flat. So we started to think about it with Laetitia, about how I envisaged my release, and finding something I really wanted to do, about what she saw in me and the possibilities I had.

Laetitia: For me, the reduction of your sentence had little to do with it, even if I’m honest about how much easier it is for guys to project yourselves under these circumstances. But that’s not what I saw, you could have been 10 years from your release, and it would have been the same.

Stéphane: Yeah but why do you want me to envisage my release if I’ve still got 10 years of prison left?

Caroline: If you had done these workshops without your release at the end, do you think there would have been a before and after workshops for you? Is there anything that changed in you, in relation with your perception of the world, beyond the release project? What is there of those two in years that would mark someone staying in prison after the workshops

Stéphane: One thing is for sure, before or after the workshops, I had already told myself that I’d finished with bad stuff, that’s not a life. I didn’t need to go through the workshops to tell myself that. If the Workshops have changed something in me, I’d say it’s perhaps my relationship with others, the fact of integrating myself in a group. I’ve always had the knack of getting into a group, but into unhealthy groups. For example there at the insertion site where I’m at now, I only needed a week to get to know everybody and perhaps thanks to the workshops that I’ve been able to achieve that. Or to talk here in front of a microphone like I’m doing, I wouldn’t have been able to do that before. At the beginning of the workshops, it was out of the question for me to be filmed, I didn’t want to. I couldn’t accept my own image, now I’ve got no problem with it. The workshops have changed in me my relationships with others, they’ve developed my capacities to express myself and accept myself as I am

I’ve got more confidence in myself, and that, that can make it easier for people to approach me, and for me to them. On leaving the workshops you find yourself coming across people you’d have never met, you realise you can interest other people with aspects other than the past.

Laetitia: I’ve also noted that there is a necessity to de-dramatise access to knowledge. There are things to transmit and we don’t necessarily need studies to have basic notions of how human beings work, psychology. From when you can start transmitting that that allows giving back confidence. There is also the dimension of revaluing experience, creating links between individual experiences of one and others and society. When you haven’t exactly been attracted to study and knowledge, you find it difficult to connect what you live through, your personal sufferings, to the history of society on a larger scale.

Caroline: There is knowledge that is multiple: technical, cultural etc... And then you have more sensitive knowledge, linked to personal experience. All that, it’s a way of understanding, learning, knowing the world through many different windows. You, you have one too, because you’ve never been outside the world, you have felt it, experienced it, you have an experience of the world. An intellectual, who philosophises, reads books, etc also has an experience of the world but in a different place. These are just facets. Stop me if I’m wrong, we ask for you at the place of your experience, we’re going to look for the place where you’re at, and bring to the workplace to construct something together, but that what we’re looking for

in you. We're not asking you to be at the same place as us. We're asking you to come round the table with what you are, because YOUR knowledge, which you are going to put on the table, that's what we need.

Stéphane: Absolutely. It's a complementation between interveners and trainees.

Philippe: At what moment do you feel you can dive into the course, once you have gone through the "who is who" circuit, the why I'm involved beyond the fact that I'll get some cash and get out of my daily prison routine. At what moment do you start to find pleasure in discovering what colour you are, there?

Stéphane: From the moment where you told us stuff about yourself. If you want us to give you form ourselves, then you have to talk to us about yourself. Whether you come from the best schools or the underworld, you have to tell us about yourself.

You've got to give us a little. We give to you; you have to give as well...

If you didn't talk about yourself, we'd ask ourselves who is this guy? What's he doing here? He talks to us, he tries to worm our secrets out, and we talk to him about our life and he gives nothing from his, who does he think he is? The judge sent him or what? (Laughs) What we need is an exchange. If there is exchange there's a relation of trust that settles in and the more we talk things through, the further we go. You're interested in our stories and we are interested by yours, by your knowledge. The goal of the training course is to end up making a film, a finished product. We've got things to say, and you know how to put these things in their places so that we can make that film. So it's about complementing each other.

You helped get our point of view across, on screen. Before being a cinematographic adventure, it's a human adventure.

Caroline: There is a deep connection.

Stéphane: For you but not for us.

Caro: Of course, for you the cinematographic adventure comes when you find yourself in the position of the spectator of your creation. There, as a spectator, you relive all the process of this adventure. Before arriving at the finished product, it remains a human adventure, for you. After, for us, it's mixed up. But, somewhere we must know it and apprehend it before you do. Some dwell too much on the human adventure and others on the cinematographic one. Those who succeed are those manage to intimately connect them both.

Stéphane: For us it becomes apparent from the moment we see it, before that it's just a tape.

Laetitia: At the end of that first phase, once the trainees have understood that, even if we installed a framework that consisted of many demands, it would be neither a school framework, nor psychological, nor social, there would always be a moment of anguish when the trainees had understood that the demand rested on the implication of oneself and thus on conflicts and crises.

Caroline: First phase: deconstruction of the framework; next, conflict zone. What's more it is often collective and happens at the same moment, as we have been able to evaluate. During the shorter courses, around 4 and a half months, they normally come in the middle. All the first part is deconstruction, the "who is who". Once everything is deconstructed there is a crisis and remission concerning "we don't understand anything we're doing, so what's the point" and at that moment there is a need, we don't understand anything we're doing and that has the advantage of being something.

Stéphane: Has it been like that every year? Regardless of who's been on the course? The only course I did in its entirety was during Dominique Comtats' period.

Systematic!! We've all lived through it, no exception. The work starts coming together after that period.

Caroline: We were talking about the way we deconstruct the position of each and every one and, in relation to that, in the encounter, we realise that you, you are a lot more adapted to the system of consummation. When one arrives at the workshop, one comes with questions that oblige you to re-examine yourself in relation to that.

Stéphane: I don't know if the workshops go into that... Us, before coming to prison, we didn't live for who we were but for what we had. We've all ended up here because of the latest Lacoste, Nike, Golf... When you come into prison after that and you're here for several years, you have to time to ask yourself why you're there, what is it you have with all this and what is it you have lost. Me, I realised that I had a lot of friends before going into prison, and leaving, I haven't got any. They were only my friends in relation to what I had and what I could get for them, because of who I was. I realised that, even without doing the workshops. I realised that before, it was important for me to have money to buy drinks here and there when I went out. Now I don't care, I've got nothing, nothing, and that's the way it is. Perhaps the workshops made me feel better about all that. They have strengthened the reasoning I had concerning material goods and the relationships I had with others with respect to material goods. My girlfriend asked me yesterday what it was I liked about our relationship, and I told her "Of all the women I've known, I think you are the only one who is here for me, and not for what I've got... because at this moment in time I haven't got a thing. I haven't got a house, a car, I earn 700 euros a month and there you are all the same." Whereas the others, no, it wasn't that, apart from maybe one or two, but I was a lot younger then and it had nothing to do with it. The last women I was with before going to prison were only there for what I had, what I represented, or what I could get for them. So the workshops have comforted me about the reasoning I've made about material goods. Well... I still drink Coke and I still wear Nike on my feet...

Laetitia: After this phase of tensions and conflicts and once the trainees have deconstructed and identified who we and they are and vice-versa, there is a phase where creation can be engaged and where we put all our eggs in one basket. There is then a kind of invention of game rules which are really linked to the personality of each participant. Because even if there is systematically a crisis period, it's not the same every time, different things are at stake, and it often stems from the project that was proposed at the beginning by the intervener. This phase is important because it only works if there has been an expression of desire from the trainees' side as well. If there isn't this desire to invest oneself after the phase of conflict, we stay in this conflict phase and so nothing happens. The question of demand is there permanently, and what's more, it evolves. There, and it's the responsibility of the intervener, but it's there where all that which has been able to be exchanged, above all in terms of speech and strength of rapport, can transform itself into sound and images.

Laetitia: How did you experience the return journey between the prison and the workshop.

Stéphane: It's not the same journey. When you leave in the morning, it's... I was going to say a little deliverance but... When you leave in the morning, it's like you're going to work, it's cool, you know you're not going to the exercise yard or to your cell, you're happy. The course starts at 9h and I left at the same time as the exercise group to hang around the corridors a

little bit, have a chat, and then go up gently... even if I was called to order many times for doing that... well midday, that's not too serious given that it's lunch break. The evening on the other hand... the evening you finish at 16h30, if you can't hang about the corridor for while you're in a closed cell by 16h45, that's tough... especially in the summer, because it's still daytime.

As far as going from one environment to another is concerned, perhaps the journey itself plays real role in the end. Me, I always really took my time coming and going, it was a kind decompression chamber, a time to readjust.

Laetitia: Many of you said "if you could see us in prison you wouldn't be able to recognize us". There is a kind of separation of universes.

Stéphane: You have seen a few of these moments, all the same, where these two universes meet in the moments of conflict. When there's a tangle with one or the other, in general they are prison moments resurfacing. Often the tangles that arise in the workshops are unresolved prison ones, so they continue there where you are. You've got to succeed in leaving out whatever's gone on before and what can happen after, to arrive brand new at the workshop to give your best.

Laetitia: After this experience in prison, did you have the impression that your participation in the workshops made you more fragile or on the contrary, it changed your point of view and thus made you stronger?

Stéphane: I was a little bit more observant. Even if prison wants you to observe, we've often talked about this, from when you enter the waiting room you immediately observe the people. But I took a bit more time. I often did this in my cell; I looked out the window and watched the people in the yard. Sometimes there were some who did nothing, I watched them talking, what they were doing. I was in observation. I even observed the cats...It's stupid, it doesn't mean anything, but...would I have done this before, I don't know. When I was at Toulon, I also had a window in my cell, but I never used it. But there at Baumettes, when I was in my cell, I stayed by the window to observe people. When I was in a waiting I talked to the people I knew, I didn't go talk to a stranger because the discussions always revolve around "What did you do? How much time you get?". So eventually it drives you crazy. I often went to the multimedia waiting room, and stayed by myself, watching people.

Caroline: According to you, what point of view does prison bring to the activities and in particular to ours?

Stéphane: They don't know very much. Well, they know "9m²" has been filmed, they know when there's a show. And that we're there. But on the whole, about the atmosphere, the work we do there and how it goes, they don't know very much.

Caroline: You think they imagine things?

Stéphane: Yeah that's normal, when you don't know, you imagine things...

Caroline: I think that even those who come don't imagine at all what's in store for them. The work dimension is very relative. At worst, they imagine themselves having to work a bit like at school but in a much cooler way.

Philippe: That's exactly the image society wants, and that's why it works. Imagine, if the image of Lieux Fictifs was "we're going to work on Bergman and *Breathless* (*A bout de souffle*)" nobody would come. Fortunately they have this other image. But image do we have on leaving the workshop? How have you spoken about this with the other prisoners?

Stéphane: Me, I haven't had the time!

Laetitia: I'm coming back a little bit to my question about the return journeys between workshop-prison and what they can provoke in a trainee. You told us, in fact, that it made you more observant, that you had given yourself a grasp of distance with relation to the prison; therefore you could have endured imprisonment for longer...

Stéphane: No because I had arrived at a point where... when I arrived at the course I had been in prison for over two and a half years, so I had already integrated it. So even if I was going to have a little "window" during the day, that that was going to be a bit more cool, a bit less stressful, less violent, that wasn't going to change the fact I was in prison. I was there anyway, Workshops or not.

Caroline: Have you felt a different perception of you on behalf of the institution or the penitentiary personnel before and after the course?

Stéphane: No, because me, even before that, I was mellow, I had more or less good relationships with them, part from the dickheads. So for me that didn't change anything. Perhaps for someone who started off on a bad foot, had a bad relationship with the institution, and then through the workshops, the guards no longer recognised him, perhaps they'd he's super, that he's changed, but for me nothing's been changed.

Caroline: Sometimes we've been on the back end of stuff like "who do they think they are? They've become pretentious and think they're intellectuals". There was a time we felt that very strongly.

Stéphane: Me, I haven't felt that. On the contrary, I remember one day where we'd done a big work with the lights, we had sweated. I go back, I ask the guard if I can go to the showers and she answers me:

- No, for the Audiovisual Workshop trainees there's no shower after the course.
- But the masons and electricians have the right to.
- Yes but THEY, they work.
- But I, this afternoon, I've worked.
- At the Audiovisual Workshop you don't sweat so much.
- But you, in your work, you don't sweat much, but when you go home at night you have a shower.
- Yes but I pay my water bill.

I was filled with hatred. It was over in the canteen, in the evening. I see her and I say to her:

- So, what is the French taxpayer offering us this evening?

I looked at my plate and I said:

- No, I don't pay taxes, I'm not hungry.

And she left. I've seen her since on the outside since my conditional release and she has been very kind to me. So there you are, now she's my friend.

Caroline: What has the institution given back to you in relation to your journey through the Workshops?

Stéphane: Already, the penitentiary, I don't know how up to date they are about sentence adjustment and all that. They know you do activities, but they don't know if you'll end up a plumber or electrician or what, I don't think carry out analyses in relation to your behaviour. The few guards who were up to date, like François who talked about it with some of his colleagues, he's given me back only good things and he has encouraged me on this route, to continue, to not get mixed up in any monkey business, to find a trade and reinsert myself; the social services equal only to themselves, it's always the same... me when I was seeing the social worker, it was me who tried give him little boosts "come on, you've got to do your

job”. I’m fortunate Laetitia was there at that moment because she took care of everything. I was obliged to call upon the workshop interveners to act as my relays. If I hadn’t had them, I’d still be there. Or I wouldn’t have been able to do this insertion path because the delay would have made it escape from my hands.

As far as the Judge of Sentence Adjustment is concerned, I had met her in prison, a judge who’s out of the ordinary, not many like her around. But finally I was handed over to the board; I was dealt with by a different judge, who is still my actual judge. Her questions, I was expecting them. It was “You’re from Toulon, why Marseilles?” so I answered that, first of all, I had found a job in Marseilles and that was good for me because it meant I wouldn’t hang around Toulon again and the people who I used to hang around with. That allows me to disconnect myself from the environment I had come from. So there she replied that the world of the spectacle and Marseilles, they were two factors that wouldn’t distance from the drug environment... That’s the vision they have of people who work in culture. Therefore I answered that that I was big enough and that I had spent enough time behind bars to get in touch with my life, to realise what I now wanted and what I didn’t want anymore, and that it was up to me to choose the people I would surround myself with. I presented myself at the board with a work contract; they had a beginning date and a finishing date. The whole process of the training course, the qualitative aspect of the work on cinematography that had led me to do a work on myself were only taken into account through courses balance sheets and attendance registers. All that she saw was that during my training I had “done things”. I told them that I hadn’t come to see them with a promise of being taken on as a mason or electrician because I knew very well that that being the case, I wouldn’t have respected my obligations. I had discovered the audiovisual trades in prison, I had done two years of training, I had found an organisation outside which was willing to give me work contract, therefore I wanted to follow that road. It was seen that the contract covered the end of my sentence, so for her it was all benefits. If I had only received 700 euros, because that’s what I get 700 euros, maybe it wouldn’t have been approved. In my arrangement it is marked that with this contract, I can benefit from the RMI (revenu minimum d’insertion/minimal income for social integration) at the same time. But if I hadn’t got the RMI, she would have asked herself how I was going to live. One of the questions that often come back is that before going to prison I couldn’t make ends meet with the dole and so I started selling drugs, now with 700 euros, am I going to succeed in not going back down that road. But they don’t consider the fact that I’ve just spent 5 years of my life in prison and that I’ve done a work on myself and that I’ve got my bearings. They don’t believe that whatsoever. There are guards who tell me “we’ve seen you once, we’ll see you again”, and I’m sure that the entire penitentiary and justice department think the same. You are labelled a delinquent; you’ll remain a delinquent all your life. That reassures the guard to think like that since he’s been labelled a guard, he stay a guard all his life. But us, we don’t have the right to change. A training certificate won’t change justices’ opinion of a prisoner, or even a diploma obtained in prison. Perhaps an accumulation of various pieces of justification of what you have done throughout your stay in prison will have a little more weight, letters of recommendation, work opinions, diplomas, training certificates, all that accumulated perhaps. Now if I’d turned with a work contract of 9 months duration as a mason, or something similar, and a certificate of accommodation that would have easily sufficed, because in their eyes, mason, that’s a job that suits me, a job whether I get pissed off there and I go there backwards, that, they don’t give a shit about, whether or not I respect my engagements, that they give a shit about either, they’ll slap me back in prison. So me, I played on that as well, that I wasn’t coming to see them about a contract of complacent work and that I wouldn’t lose my grip after a months by no longer turning up at work because I didn’t like it, I explained to them that this was a profession that really pleased me and that I wanted to further my knowledge in this field, but it’s not easy...

You have to show them your determination. There were loads of questions they asked you to unbalance you, to see how you were going to react. Like this story about Marseilles and the world of the spectacle being a place to get back on drugs, how was I going to react to that? If I hadn't said anything, it goes badly, and if I give tit for tat being sure of myself, it goes better. Even if I go a little bit further into it, of course without losing any respect for her, but I show her that I've got character, that I know what I want and that drugs, anyway, are everywhere. No need to belong to the world of the spectacle to smoke a joint, that's not reserved just for you guys (laughs).

Philippe: As justice isn't interested in truth but in strategy, can the fact of having gone through the Workshop modify eventually the establishment of a more feasible release program with a lawyer to confront judges and justice?

Stéphane: Already the course helped me a lot in being able to talk to the judge, in an open fearless way, maybe it's the habit you develop from being in front of a camera. At my trial I was defensive, I tried to avoid talking to defend myself and look where it got me. I told myself that if I ever got a hearing, I would tell the judge what I thought, how I thought it, my way, and so I'd make it or break it. Anyway, I was in prison, nothing worse could happen to me. In the end it seems that it wasn't so bad after all. Since the course I've got a lot more capacity to express myself, as I said, the fact of regularly being in front of the camera has helped me a lot. Well when I find myself, like at Martigues, in front of forty people, in a cinema, it's a bit more difficult, it's impressive all the same. But the fact of preparing my release project through audiovisual, after having done a course, and having an opinion written about the end of course reports where the evolution of my journey is explained, from the beginning and the end of the course, the fact that's it not ME who's saying it, or my lawyer, but someone from the outside and has intervened at Baumettes for years. I think that that, that has got some weight in the eyes of the judge. It's an outside opinion of a person who's been rubbing shoulders with me for several months...

Laetitia: When you can be present... Because when you can't be present in front of the judge it's completely different.

Stéphane: Those who are absent are always wrong, when you're not present you can't defend yourself. But if I'm present, the debate takes place between the prosecutor, the judge and me. You arrive at the office, sit down around a table, it's like a trial; there's your lawyer, the prosecutor, a few assessors, the judge, a trainee, and the court clerk who records it all. I'm present, the debate is there, the judge talks with me, the prosecutor and the lawyer listen, and then the prosecutor pleads his case, he gives his unfavourable opinion, he argues. Then the lawyer pleads my case and I'm asked again if I have anything to say. So if I want to respond to some of the prosecutors' arguments that the lawyer has missed, then I can and I can tell him what I think. After all that everyone retires, they deliberate and give me the verdict a few days later.

But I'm there, I can defend myself. As I had understood the fact that there was no need to be intimidated by these people, they're human being too, and they are talking about my freedom. They'll decide whether I'm released or not. So I can't be intimidated, I've got to tell them what I think. If they say something I don't like or disagree with, then I've got to tell them how I see things. If a lawyer helps me things can go well. If not, well, I was given a state lawyer, so I sat down in the office, she was already there, and we had a few minutes before the hearing, she asked me a few quick questions because she didn't even know me. Then she just went over the same themes I had already covered with the judge, she didn't really contribute

much. If I'd had a lawyer who'd known me for a while then that things would have been different. I could have asked him to emphasise such and such a point. But there the lawyer was just a spectator really; the dialogue was between me, the judge and the prosecutor. They've got to get the impression that you want you want and where you're going. If I'm not convinced, I'm never going to convince them. If I'm on the defensive, it won't work out. Above all I must believe what I say. If not it's impossible.

Caroline: When you take this film you've got a double status, you are former prisoner and co-author of « Mots pour maux » (Words for worse).

Laetitia: In your opinion how does the course affect the relationship between prisoners?

Stéphane: The relationship between prisoners... we're a little group of 8, obviously you have a close relationship with everyone, you have things in common with the others or not. What should happen, given the fact there's just a few of us, is we should make an effort to get on, the 4 cells are next to each other, we should help each other out, for example cook together, for everyone, or that kind of thing, but that's not what happens.

Laetitia: Not even from time to time?

Stéphane: Yes, but you've seen it, there are always conflicts. There were trainees who never worked with certain others. The conflicts that went on upstairs carried on downstairs. Even if you have to do something with someone who you have a conflict with, he won't do it. You've seen it happen.

Philippe: In all the courses that you've done have you ever come across one of the trainees playing the role of the regulator, someone who you could lean on?

Stéphane: No. At the beginning I thought that maybe the older ones could take on that role, but no.

Laetitia: I've often heard that the course continues a little bit upstairs in the evening...

Stéphane: A bit but not much really. There are other more serious problems in the evenings. You have to eat, smoke, and think about how you're going to get to sleep... all that. The only time I really gave myself fully in the cell, was when I was alone. I'd taken up something writings, I'd read all that Dominique had given us about time, I'd read some things about mythology for Francescos project...all that when I was alone. In fact we'd need 8 cells, not 4.

Caroline: That sure would change a lot of things...

Stéphane: From the moment there's two of us it's harder to concentrate or write.

Caroline: Do you think your point of view on television has changed since the courses?

Stéphane: You see all the mistakes, all the little edit combinations, change of shot. I watched more and more the technical side and all that didn't work, the errors. When I watch a film I ask myself what procedures they used to get their result. But generally I watch television a lot less. Before, I watched everything. Cheap series, game shows, stupid stuff. You can quiz me about all the TV series, I'm the best! I've seen them all. Now, I've had enough of them.

Interview with Younes - Gerard – Yves

Younès¹⁶⁸, Gérard¹⁶⁹, Yves¹⁷⁰, Anne de Marans¹⁷¹

Younès

Anne: Can you talk to us about your experience in « *La germination de l'utopie* » (“*The germination of Utopia*”)?

Younès: The first time they showed me *La germination de l'utopie* let me be frank: I didn't understand a thing. I wasn't in a situation to understand it either. I had decided to do the course with a clear aim in mind: to cross over to the other side of the camera, that is the technical side, to get a different look on the profession... The initiation to video really interested me, this form of expression moved me. Then when Mark started talking to us about it, I saw what he was saying, his way of constructing things without thinking; I was swept away without realising. Then in a given moment I found myself in a situation, psychologically, that was no good for me, which was a problem for me. You see in prison you try and get along the best you can, you kind of kid yourself about your reality. But it's there, it exists, you're in prison. But for me I'd given it secondary importance. But then, suddenly through the course it became the main theme and that really unbalanced me, because for years I had tried, forced myself to avoid my suffering, I had been hypocritical with myself, like a lot of prisoners here... I saw the situation I was in and I didn't like what I saw whatsoever. That made me suffer for a while, I had to step back, think, and as it was a problem for the group I also had to establish communication. I had to get things together, I had to rectify psychologically, for me, for the project. I had to impregnate myself with the project in a good way, not a bad one. Thanks to all that I was able to clear my perspective... From one persons' experience I set myself to a different form of freedom within imprisonment, and it's this form of freedom you have to see.

Imprisonment exists, it's a fact. You shouldn't have to cover it up, but look at it, find ways to express it, talk about it, think about it, and find a form of freedom and expression in imprisonment.

Anne: During the production of “*La Germination de l'Utopie*”, did you talk about this project with the other prisoners?

Younès: No, what we're doing at the moment, personally I don't talk about it... We do talk about it between us, the prisoners in the work group, we exchange opinions and enjoy the texts... but I don't think the other prisoners would know what we were talking about.

¹⁶⁸ Workshop trainee from March 2000 to July 2001 in the project directed by Marc Mercier “*The germination of Utopia*”/”*La Germination de l'Utopie*”

¹⁶⁹ Workshop trainee from March to July to 2001 in the project directed by Marc Mercier “*The germination of Utopia*”/”*La Germination de l'Utopie*”

¹⁷⁰ Workshop trainee from March to July to 2001 in the project directed by Marc Mercier “*The germination of Utopia*”/”*La Germination de l'Utopie*”

¹⁷¹ European project Head / Administrator of Lieux Fictifs from January 1999

Gérard

Anne: Can you talk to us about your experience in « *La germination de l'utopie* » (“*The germination of Utopia*”)?

Gérard: I had never experienced a group project. Nevertheless, I had had other prison experiences seeing that I'd been in prison beforehand. I'd done some activities, but prison before didn't really have the means, there weren't writing workshops or... not really, a collective project like this I'd never done before to be honest... We always see art as being something really complicated, but like Yves says, I think art's in reach of everyone. So has that changed what I experience in the creation process, perhaps with respect to the group yes, I didn't we could come up with so many things at the heart of the group. I mean that the collective breeds a lot more creativity than the individual state. In this sense I think it's very beneficial and that there, I discovered something. I discovered that through a project lead by many people, one can be clearly more creative than an individual quest, even though that's good to do too, but with lots of people you inspire each other more, you share emotions, you have a laugh, it's really a lot more positive, because something else is added that stimulates and provides moral support, and that's the fact of being many. We're on the same boat; we help each other out, and have a lot of fun as well. So there the creative process is a lot more important, that's for sure.

Anne: And Marc's position, in relation to that? Has Marc been able to modify the idea you had of what an artist is?

Gérard: Oh yes, certainly. I'd like to, above all, stress that without Marc there wouldn't have been a project. It's Marc who came at the beginning with all his ideas, he proposed something to us, he proposed a video installation, something that none of us had ever heard of before. So obviously it was a surprise at the beginning. But the reflection one draws out of that is that Marc, with his way of sharing his artistic project with us, is essential. It's Marc who has opened up the way for us, even if he needed a creative element from each of us to do so. There we were a group; we invested ourselves to the advantage of this creative process. There was a collective communion, and there in Marc's project, I felt it as such. It's also a work of communication, where the whole group communicated.

Anne: Does the installation show that well?

Gérard: I don't know if the installation shows all of that. That's up to the public to say, because it's the public who will feel it. As I said, when you look at a painting, watch a film, we try to see the message there. We certainly tried to communicate with Marc, I hope we succeeded. For me, I think I had some good moments; we had some very rich moments, moments of emotion. If we've been able to translate all of that through the video installation, which was the goal we set ourselves, then for me, the project's been a success.

Anne: You've said a lot about your reaction to the form of the project, the video installation. But what about the theme, how did you react to the proposal of “Germination” and “Utopia”? How did you adapt to it?

Gérard: Me, I'm a bit like all the others. We are prisoners and we're offered an audiovisual training. So we get interested because we think: I'm going to handle a camera, a computer etc... So we enrol onto the course, and suddenly a change of plan, we're being offered a video installation. Marc Mercier is used to this and so he comes or with a project, or with not much, or with two words: germination and utopia. You have to admit it's a bit of a surprise, especially for prisoners. So obviously we were a bit pissed off at the beginning and we took our time in coming back down to earth. Because we asked ourselves at times if this guy was really an extra-terrestrial taking into account that prison is not really a place where culture is easily accessible. So if they talk to you about books it's alright, they talk to you about Bruce Willis and all that, that's fine but if they talk to you about video installation, germination and

utopia, well you tell yourself... But on hindsight you understand things a lot better and you say to yourself: a video installation, that's something after all.

Anne: If that had been presented at the beginning as a video installation project on the theme of germination and utopia, would you have applied for it?

Gérard: I don't think so, no. Because the words are forbidding by themselves, in a prison environment, we would have said: why get pissed off there... So perhaps it's better it turned out like it did.

Anne: Now you have been through this experience, would you enrol yourself onto other courses which seem straight off to be a bit abracadabra?

Gérard: Yes, of course, precisely because I know that as abracadabra a project may seem, it can turn out to be very enriching.

Anne: Let's talk about the showing of the installation. Is it very important for you? Is it important that it be shown here in prison, as it is outside? These two kinds of showing are they on the same level for you or is one more important than the other?

Gérard: I think they're both important. Unfortunately I don't think the prison showing will be perceived as it should. First of all for reasons of space, it's not really suitable for a continual procession of prisoners, unless it's done in the spectacle hall, as planned. Plus I think that 80% of the people won't be interested. It's sad to say it but it's the truth. So there's the installation on the outside, for everyone, that will be better, because I think a lot more people will see it there. That doesn't mean it will be perceived better however, but seeing that it will be an installation made in prison and that the « prison label » works well at the moment, in the media, that could provoke a phenomenon of curiosity.

Anne: Does that bother you?

Gérard: No it doesn't bother me because everybody should come and see it and if that's the way they'll come then so be it. Everybody's got to come because after they'll think what they want but at least they will have seen it. They will have made an idea of what a video installation can be, like all of us, but what's more a video installation made by prisoners. That means we'll still have put a message across. And in that sense it will be positive, even people only have a vague idea at the beginning and come by curiosity. There are the unconditionals and so there must also be a mass of people who can come. So at that moment it's good that it's shown on the outside.

Anne: In relation to the administration, the prison itself, is it important to show it?

Gérard: Well if the management decides to come and see it then maybe, perhaps some of them will come, that could do some good. They could realise that we're capable of doing certain things; that we're not just these dimwits in prison. We try to get out of the mindnumbingness of prison. If we can get this message across as well, that would be good. But they mustn't take it to the contrary, like we're answering back. We are answering back but in another way, that's what they must see.

Anne: Seeing this project through in prison, was that a problem?

Gérard: I think prison lets you think better, because you're confronted with a situation that isn't normal, so you're obliged to make amends and get through all that. On the contrary it's easier to get in touch with your conscience in prison, whatever the problem is. So if the project relies on reflection, you can start by reflecting about prison.

Anne: Would you have been able to participate in this kind of experience outside? And if so, would you have gone so far?

Gérard: No I don't think so. Outside I was taken up by my activities, not always criminal, don't have to believe me, but I work a lot and I think that's most people's lot. We're taken over by the daily routine, we can't turn to activities which decompress us and let us invest in cultural projects... Unfortunately I think that's the sad reality of most of us. Not everybody earns a lot of money, so we try and survive before actually living. So approaching projects

like these is practically out of our capabilities. Before, we have to be sure to have our daily bread, and that's difficult. It's a shame, but I think that's what stops us from doing these kinds of projects.

Yves

Yves: The course has allowed me to demystify creation. It's true that for me creativity was just the gift of a few people, who could develop their sensitivity through images, or writing, and all that. It's true that here I've now discovered myself on the writing level, but I don't know if I'll continue outside or not.

Anne: In the definition that you could give of art, what's more important for you, the object or the process?

Yves: I think the globality. The globality because well, it's also good to show the finished product, after we can discuss the form or the basis but for me the process is a globality, you can't separate the two, if not you're making aesthetics for aesthetics and well, apart from a few people that can be interested in that, for me frankly, it's not too interesting... There are people who are specialists and can write beautiful things but, it's all a bit hollow, flat, there's no real feeling in it. I'm more interested in the basis, forms comes after for me. Now there are people who attach more importance to the form... but I find that a bit hollow.

Anne: "Germination" and "Utopia", what did that echo in you, how did you adapt these words? What answers did you find?

Yves: "*The germination of utopia*", I find the project interesting for it's title and the place it takes place in. It's true that prison really isn't a place of utopias... and the germination, that's the act of... the little flower that grows and at the same time the idea of life always beating its environment. We can be in a very difficult environment, like prison, but that can also be outside... even in concrete there are flowers growing. This idea, I thought it would be interesting to develop it here.

And then there's the way it's staged, true it took time to adapt because there were a lot of things to master, but I think I had to do it again, I'd start it the same way.

Anne: And in the confrontation with the imaginary... because when Marc arrived he came with a very precise imaginary in relation to the prison. How did this imaginary adjust itself to your own experience?

Yves: It adjusted to the inherent problems of prison. For example we couldn't film certain things, we were always obliged to make a demand to go do something, to go film in this place or that. It was always a problem of regulations... There we find ourselves in the midst of the topic. Utopia is to go further, beyond rules and regulations, normality. Then between our experiences and what Marc brought in from the outside, effectively, there was a confrontation... There are certain things you have to interiorise. As I think Marc did... each one of us made progress in that respect. In a given moment there'd be an argument because we couldn't see where things were going. What we had to assimilate wasn't always easy, and we didn't get the hang of it, and we end up arguing... In relation to Imprisonment I think Marc also got to understand certain things and was able to integrate them, moreover, in the project and I think that will stand out.

Anne: Would you have been able to participate in this kind of experience outside?

Yves: No I don't think so. I worked in an artistic environment outside because it was my daily bread. I was irregular though. But a project like this or even another one, I wouldn't have... It wasn't my world, my life was happening elsewhere and for me there wasn't any interpenetration. I like culture well enough; I'm like everyone else, a consumer. Now from that to becoming an actor... I could only have done that here... outside I wouldn't have got involved.

Anne: And in relation to the rest of the prison, have you talked about this project? How do they perceive the work?

Yves: There, it's a personal reflection, everyone can talk about it... already we're an ultra minority. The project involved 8 of us, selected by criteria. We're kind of the administrations showcase, let's be honest. We got a visit from the Minister of Justice, she left saying «Its

fantastic here». So we are part of the administrations showcase. The project itself, frankly, the rest of the centre, 80%, isn't really aware of it, and I think they wouldn't care anyway. So we have to be realistic. We've, foremost, done this for ourselves, and then, when we present the project if it moves people we'll be happy... but that's not our aim... personally I never thought that the project was going to change the life of the people in prison or even their relation to art, or anything else... already in prison we're not given the means to reflect and secondly we're offered the same model of consummation as the outside, which is precisely a model which doesn't ask you think anyway.

Anne: Let's talk about the showing of the installation. Is it very important for you? Is it important that it be shown here in prison, as it is outside? These two kinds of showing are they on the same level for you or is one more important than the other?

Yves: For me they're both on the same level in the sense where effectively, as I said before I'm practically certain that 80 % of the certain don't give a damn... Already it's not obvious whether they'll come or not, because it's a voluntary step they need to take. And we know through other projects that voluntarily people don't normally turn up. What's more the conception of the word culture for the rest of the centre it's like "yeah right, deep thoughts, intellectual and all that, I prefer to go kick a ball around".

Of the 20% who do turn up, I think that ,even there, those who will ask themselves a few questions and be interested will be even more of a minority...

Then on the outside, what I'm really afraid of is that it remains in a small circle, the cultural circle in the widest meaning of the term. I think the exposure of this kind of project to the general public is somewhat problematic.

Because above all people go on their own accord and if they don't have this voluntary urge, even just through curiosity, it stays in a small circle. I'd be happy that people were able to see this project because, all the same, it's an sum of work and inversion, that people have brought together with their ideas, reflections, analyses, and so for me it's interesting, but I keep realistic about the impact that it can have on the outside.

Anne: The audiovisual workshop was presented as a training workshop. If only its creative dimension had been presented, would you have done this process? What were your motivations?

Yves: I would have done the same process. Because here "the Workshop", as I often say, is an oasis in the middle of a desert. It's a place that allows you to breathe, that cuts off a bit of your ordinary prison time, etc... and it's a place where, precisely you can develop your thoughts. In this way it's an oasis in the desert. I would have gone through this process anyway because on the outside I was used to asking myself a lot of questions, etc... so it's a way of keeping a foot on the outside. Now, it's true, it's a place that deserves, like many others in prison, to be available to a lot more people. Because, when I say that there a lot of people here who don't think, I'm not being derogatory. I don't mean that people in prison are stupid, that's not true. On the contrary, I've met loads of very intelligent people in prison, but they just don't have the possibility to develop their own thoughts. And that's precisely what "the Workshop" is there for.

Collaborations and interveners

Video artists and filmmakers who have produced an artistic experience in the framework of resident intervention:

- Joseph Césarini (filmmaker)
- Alain Dufau (filmmaker)
- Marc Mercier (video artist)
- Jacques Reboud (filmmaker)
- Abdoulaye Diop Dany (storyteller and director) Senegal
- Caroline Caccavale (filmmaker)
- Tiziana Banchieri (filmmaker) Italy
- Jimmy Glasberg (director of photography - filmmaker)
- Clément Dorival (filmmaker)
- Dominique Comtat (filmmaker)
- Thierry Lanfranchi (filmmaker)
- Francesco Tancredi (filmmaker) Italy
- Jean-Michel Perez (filmmaker)

Filmmakers and technicians who collaborated in and produced the internal Information unit programme:

- Jean-Luc Chaperon (director)
- François Landriot (soundimage technician)
- Philippe Tabarly (director of photography - filmmaker)
- Axelle Schatz (assistant producer - editor)
- Anne Alix (filmmaker)

3.

The evaluation process In non-formal education in prison

3.1. The evaluation scene

Gianna Stefan¹⁷²

The underlying philosophy in the evaluation process and the evaluation meters that we suggest are being worked out from the “**good practices**” of stage and film projects described in previous chapters, and they derive from a course of research and confrontation which allowed us to identify common denominators on an international basis.

Since the theatre and film projects we are looking after have as a purpose that of encouraging change in processes of problematic situations for inmates, we acknowledge a social purpose to the evaluation, due to its function in identifying the factors that promote or hinder these processes.

For one thing, when we talk about evaluation we are referring to how to develop an understanding about why things went the way they went and with what effects, how to get indications of possible corrections, improvements, new planning, tools that allow us to identify the most suitable and effective course of action in order for us to reach our aims.

The approach to the evaluation that we suggest places at the centre the complexity which is a characteristic of artistic educational/formative projects, specifically in the context of prison, with the intention of contributing to the innovation projects of rehabilitation of temporary inmate people.

This approach is such that:

- its theoretical reference models are those of systemic theory and empowerment;
- it assumes both the ecological and environmental dimension in its relational values and in those of interconnection of the individual acting in the social, professional and organizational context;
- it looks at the personal skills, at the professional and role boundaries with a dynamic perspective;
- it acknowledges the temporal dimension as a necessary aspect in both the changing and evaluating process;
- it regards as an essential part for its success a cognitive dynamic aware of developing through partial and temporary knowledge (monitoring);
- it considers the person as an indivisible unit (mind-body) within the relational-systemic and bioenergetics models.

In this procedural, dynamic and systemic perspective, the evaluation **meters** gain effectiveness, not so much because they produce data that can be measured and quantified, but because they are **useful tools due to their informative and descriptive value, being able to give suggestions that make observation and self-observation easier**.

The evaluation methodology that we regard as the most apt in order to describing the changing processes of inmate people, who take part in theatrical activities, is strongly of the qualitative/systemic type.

Beginning by considering that the person-oriented services ground the professionalism of their operators on the “human relationship” (considered as the main instrument for the outcome of the social/educational/formative work) it can be deduced that techniques and methodologies cannot be set aside in the real relationship and communication between the people involved in the observed process (and integrated in a specific context).

¹⁷² Gianna Stefan, researcher and teacher I.R.S.A. (Insurance’s Research and Development Institute).

If a prevailingly technical/quantitative evaluation methodology is exposed to the risk of emphasizing the surveying tools by considering them as producers of a “neutral and objective” representation of reality, the qualitative/systemic one differs from them, since it acknowledges as constituent parts of the process under observation:

- the **subjective/professional dimensions** in the representation of reality;
- the **temporal dimension** (the time line) of the observed process;
- the **dimension of “the social mediation of observations** among the actors involved” (intersubjectivity and interprofessionalism).

In order to evaluate the change processes of people, and not just within the limits of prison, we need to assume a **multiperspective insight**, which is capable of acknowledging the cognitive added value that is produced thanks to communicative and cooperative relationships amongst all the actors involved in the evaluation process.

Accordingly, the use of this approach implies a **cultural challenge**, that concerns not just the institutional operators and their professionalism, but also the organizational context, urged to define spaces and times that make easier for the subjects involved in the evaluation to get chances of exchange and meeting one another, and working under different roles inside G.O.T. (Gruppo Osservazione e Trattamento – Italia; Observation and Treatment Group – Italy; or its equivalents in other European countries).

On the one end, it becomes professionally necessary for the **operators** in the detention environment:

- to develop and to analyze thoroughly observation methodological skills;
- to work out and utilize tools for understanding, within non-formal education, the change processes;
- to go into the awareness of professional subjective behaviour and the possible tendency to the one-sided formalization of the performances and behaviours of the inmates.

On the other end, it is equally important that:

- the institutional and non institutional operators are willing to mutually recognize in one another the different cognitive authorities that they carry, each of them in their respective working field;
- the detention **institution** states the operational methods of the integration of the different evaluational observations and checks the quality of the observations.

Operationally, it means that the indicators used by each operator should be interpreted in the same context as the other indicators, as variables affected by many factors (normative, environmental, cultural, psychological, economic, organizational, social, etc.), that should be measured by integrating the **evaluational points of view** of the different personalities involved, together with the **self evaluational** ones of the subjects interested in the change.

As a matter of fact, since most of the work on the personal skills is oriented towards extending self-knowledge and stimulating the promotion of one's personal reality, the evaluation of the change process should be based both on the observation of the learning processes from the operators, and on the activation and development of self-observation from the receivers of the projects and the interventions. It is like saying it's important to verify not just what a receiver of a formation knows, but also what he/she can do with what he/she knows and through what processes he/she managed doing it.

Experience teaches us (see the high re-offence rate) that the evaluation and measurement technical meters have generally a low qualitative meaning: mechanisms separate one from the other, which tends to be objective as regard to a single performance or behaviour, but that do not give an adequate description of the evolution process of personal motivations and skills.

In the long run and on the large numbers (operator/inmates ratio) there is the risk that this produces some kind of rigidity and professional self-referentiality of the operators involved. Technical and personal capabilities require different methods and evaluation meters. In fact, evaluating personal skills means relating not just to observable performances, but also to the contexts and to the processes implied by them, that is to the modalities through which the skills and the motivations for change can be strengthened and made transferable.

Empowerment and theatre process

The empowerment can be considered as a strategy of intervention which has the purpose of stimulating and supporting personal (or group) processes of change and environment, in order to improve the quality of life.

One of its fundamental characteristics is that of considering the persons (and the groups) in their own environmental context, assuming personal (or group) skills and resources, and the environmental/system of reference chances and bonds, as the fundamental tools for the activation and development of change processes.

The hypothesis of the project “Teatrodentro” is that **the theatre process in the prison environment should be an empowerment process**, able to extend and to reinforce “in an integrated process of learning and elaboration the possibilities of positive change in the subjects”¹⁷³.

Theatre, during detention, becomes a possible path for the reformulation of the individual and collective social identity, and not just pure entertainment and recreational action.

In the following table, we compare the basic assumptions of Empowerment¹⁷⁴ with “theatre training” (Teatrodentro project), in order to point out analogies and similarities between them.

¹⁷³ S. Gheno, “L’uso della forza. Il self empowerment nel lavoro psicosociale e comunitario”. Ed. Mc Graw-Hill, 2005

¹⁷⁴ Based on the essay “Il gusto del potere” di M.Bruscaglioni e S.Gheno, ed. Franco Angeli, 2002

EMPOWERMENT	THEATRE PROCESS
<p>Process key-words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Environment – social context/community</i> - <i>Imagination/searching for possibilities/chances</i> - <i>Experimentation/change acted</i> - Consider the person in the context of his own environment - Use psychological knowledge and skills for producing a personal and environmental change that aims to improve quality of life - Tendency to the continuous mental/imaginative construction of different chances of relationships between oneself and the environment - Tendency to the continuous choice among the different possibilities mentally constructed (and maybe partly experimented, too) in order to carry out effectively at least one of them - Evaluation of the advisability of a synergistic “contamination” among the different possibilities of the subject - It concerns the relationship of the person with a specific object (another person, a skill to develop, a desire) or at most with an area of one's life (work, relation with institutions, etc) <p>(Scheme elaboration based on the essay “Il gusto del potere” di M. Brusaglioni e S. Gheno)</p>	<p>Process key-words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Environment – dramatic context</i> - <i>Imagination/character construction</i> - <i>rehearsal/show</i> - <i>To imagine a new character: imaginative processes which is in immediate relation with the context: continuous relation between imagination and the reality of the dramatic context... which is a metaphor for life.</i> - <i>The evaluation process is part of the method: rehearsals in theatre are a continuous test and evaluation, as well as a monitoring of the acted relieved of the judgment, which becomes material for work. Such a repetition of the observation and of the criticism spurs the learning of self evaluation: it is said that an actor in about three, four years accomplishes a shift in the balancing of the evaluation from internal to external. He introjects the evaluation of the external eye by developing an internal director.</i> - <i>Theatre requires rules and discipline in order to be produced: relation between rules and pleasure (not rules and control). Observation becomes understanding the system: description.</i> - <i>The theatre process recreates the observed life in order to find the measure that would fit the reference context.</i> <p>(Scheme elaboration based on the workgroups of the “Teatrodentro” project)</p>

It can be understood that both processes aim at putting in motion **creative energies and synergies**, (of the subject in relation with self, others, environment), in order to “transform how to think of oneself within a real possibility of being and acting”¹⁷⁵, for “a new mental image will produce a new behaviour”¹⁷⁶.

¹⁷⁵ S. Gheno, “Use of strength”

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Bion

Within the specificity of the theatre work, it will be important therefore to observe the experience/learning process and wonder:

- *Does it put in motion subjective resources and energies of a physical, imaginative, emotional, rational, relational creative sort?*
- *Does it strengthen the internal/external resources evaluation/self evaluation for the realistic satisfaction of needs/desires/expectations?*
- *Does it help to work out a self image that could produce consistent results within a subjective and collective project?*

The anthropological concept that shapes the processes of the Teatrodentro model is a concept that suggests some **qualitative indicators of the methodological approach to observation**:

- Persons cannot be reduced to reassuring representations of a “case” that can be “objectively” subjected to investigation, treatment, control, or whose behaviour can be decoded as linear and predictable sequences;
- Stress on the issue of freedom, self evaluation and creativity, as constituent of a person’s being, even and most of all within the field of need.
- Acknowledge the importance of energetic symbolic dimension (“symbolic is embodied in the body/behaviour”)
- Own the value of relativity of disciplinary paradigms in use, refuse to “imprison” the subjects within rigid interpretative categories

Teatrodentro teachers, through a bioenergetic approach, strongly connected with the “theatre of cruelty” poetics of Antonin Artaud, regard subjects as a whole body-and-mind: the energetic structure of bodies and behaviours acted within the theatre process become indicators of personal strengths and weaknesses, as well as a chance to start a process of change in perception of self and environment.

It must be highlighted that subjects who take part in theatre education in prison have often shown psycho/emotional/behaviour attitudes of self evaluation that hinder or slow down the development of reasons why they took part in the institutional training offer. These aspects fix the energetic/emotional tone of the training, group, environment, and task.

It is important to read them not only as “negative signs of disadvantage”, but also as “material”, “energetic resources” that must be “put to work” in the training process, through theatre techniques and methods on one hand, and through moments of reflection aimed at developing a realistic awareness on the other hand.

Examples of indicators to which to pay attention:

<i>“Negative” psycho/emotional aspects</i>	<i>Observed behaviour</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of confidence in self and organization • Powerlessness • Dependence • Alienation • Lack of self esteem • Weak identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apathy/defensiveness • Submissiveness/renunciation • Aggressiveness/conflict • Competition • Lack of concentration/lack of attention to the task • Look for a scapegoat. Projection of responsibility of failure • Unstructured attitude (in relation to time...)

Observation of body and image that the person in prison “brings” into the training situation, are **indicators of representation and expectations**, both positive and negative, in relation with the “theatre environment”, and with it possibly being an “external” place (I’m going out of the ward and I want to give a good image) and/or “evaluating” (I will try to enter relationships positively in this place).

Physical aspect observation:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean clothes • Taking care of personal hygiene • Wearing shoes • Taking position close to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Untidy clothes • Not shaving, smelling bad • Wearing slippers • Tendency to keep distance
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As motivation to learn and subjective awareness reinforce each other, it is important to **pay attention** to those **behaviours** and those **emotional states** that take place **in the evolution of the relationship with the training work, with self perception and representation, with institution and with reference to vision/perspective on the future.**

Feeling of change in people (Rose Marie Noissant)

Here are some suggestions: You can, as a consequence of your experience, note some clues, reflections (as students) that allow us to see indicators of change.

1. A person registering for a non formal education class does not necessarily have the perception of a possible change.
First reason is often to get out of the cell, to a different space, possibly to have fun, get in touch with people who are not prison residents...
2. Structure of activities entails rules (with respect to time, clothes, personal hygiene ...).
For most people, these are the first changes to be noticed.
3. Attitude towards teachers and the group evolves in function of trust established among people.
4. How do people speak of their awareness of a change (negative or positive) in relation to their evolution?
5. How do people face the notion of change? Of evolution? With whom and how often?
6. How to find out what helps and what hinders change?

Clues (in no special order) of the change that is taking place, that can get more evidence in different areas:

→ physical → behavioural → intellectual → in relation with values →
with regard to relations → with regard to life projects → with regard to desire
and motivation → with regard to self evaluation →

The spiral of self evaluation and the timeline interview/meeting

Considering **time as a basic element of relationship and processes quality**, allows operators (teachers) to work more on crucial and difficult moments, to support people on pinpointing their interests and to give them better directions for reintegration. It is important to highlight if there are moments in which people make decision and choices, and which are those moments. It is possible to obtain a clearer idea of change working with people in time, asking questions, discussing things.

The tool/methods of the interview/meeting are at the base of the evaluation process: it can be a monitor, evaluation and self evaluation tool, that takes up the value of a double tool (for people in prison and for theatre operators), to be used to stress and work on possible relations between theatre activities and change processes. It can supply information, not only on the change process but also on efficiency of methods and work processes.

In order to go thoroughly in the evaluation/self evaluation interview/meeting, some variables have to be taken into consideration – with regard to time, even theatre project time: when did the project start? When did activities with the people in prison start? When has the person started to take part in the activities?

Meetings with the people who take part in the theatre or cinema activities can be group and/or individual.

Where resistance or harshness is sensed towards the individual meeting, a step by step procedure can be embraced. In group meetings, questions and themes can be pointed out, to which it can be suggested to pay attention to and to reflect upon. In this way, a first approach to these themes is spurred, and still room remains for the individual pace of opening to reflection and self evaluation.

If people agree, these sessions can be recorded; otherwise notes are taken on what is said. The best possible thing, however, is to use different methods according to different situations and people.

Here we introduce a draft of questions, a sample of questions form, that can be used in time for interviews with the inmate population involved with theatre activities.

FIRST YEAR

- **First meeting:**

Take note of reasons expressed by detainee persons with regard to their choice to take part in activities

- **After one month:**

Interview

1. *“Why did you join the theatre activities?”*

2. *“What has changed within yourself since you joined?”*

Answers (1-2) are often telling with regard to self esteem

3. *“Do you have goals with regard to theatre?”*

4. *“What would you like to do, or be able to do”*

Answers (3-4) are often telling with regard to value allotted to pursued goals.

5. *“Do you see changes in your life (detention) since you have joined the theatre (or cinema) activities?”*

In function to the answers it will be possible to decide the process direction in relation with one or more factors.

- **After six months:**

Repeat the same questions, adding in depth questions regarding direction taken.

Thus it is possible to focus on the individual position with respect to training process, and help the person to better define their project, thanks to an increase in awareness and reflection.

This way it is possible to gather information on the motivational process.

STARTING WITH THE SECOND YEAR

- In depth interview regarding every factor of the training process. Through these interview/meeting elements for reflection are deepened and highlighted: elaboration gets importance for the conscious taking on of the change process: new, clearer ideas should start to emerge regarding what they want to do or obtain.

- *Age:*
- *How long have you been following the training class (theatre, drawing, etc?)*
- *When you joined, why was it? What did you expect this training would give you?*
- *Now a year has passed since you started, do you still think the same regarding the training?*
- *Did theatre training give you something more than you expected?*
- *What do you think of the work you did on yourself?*
- *Do you see changes in yourself?*
- *What do you think of training and theatre (or cinema) activities?*
- *Had you ever done some theatre (cinema)?*
- *Do you think you will go on and take another training class?*
- *In the case that you do, what will be your motive?*
- *Now that some time has passed, what do you expect from the training you are taking?*
- *Do you see any change in your everyday life?*
- *Do you think theatre training helped you to change something outside the class and the theatre activities? If you do, what do you refer to?*
- *Do you have plans for your future? Regarding theatre (or cinema)?*
- *Is it important to you to go on with theatre (cinema)?*
- *What could make you leave the training and theatre activities (or cinema)?*
- *Have your ways of coping with difficulties changed since you started the training class?*
- *As a job, what do you do in the theatre (cinema)?*
- *Is there anything in common between what you do during theatre (cinema) activities and your everyday life?*
- *How did you get to know about the theatre (cinema) class?*
- *What do your friends, family, and environment think of your theatre (cinema) class?*
- *Do you think you changed since you started? How?*
- *Can you point out two tangible aspects of your life you think that have changed since you started the theatre (cinema) training?*
- *Do your friends, family and people close to you see changes in you? Can you describe these changes?*
- *Do they encourage you to go on with your training?*
- *When you have problems, do you talk to someone? If you do, to whom?*

AFTER A FEW YEARS

- Ask questions in the previous list to people in prison who have been in the theatre process for some years, deepening the reflection regarding the course and perceived change

- *Is theatre (cinema) a change process to you? Can you describe its actual steps?*
- *Can you feel you changed, evolved? In which aspects?*
- *What behaviours of yours would you say have changed?*
- *What do you think are the reasons for your change and your evolution?*

Feasibility indicators for planning/producing a theatre training process in prison

In order to produce a **theatre project**, based on the offered Teatrodentro pattern, it is necessary from the start to use indicators that help to evaluate feasibility, or rather **degree of feasibility**.

The pattern is not rigid: it calls for knowledge enterprise, acquisition of new inter-subjectivities, new and more complex abilities and relationship knowledge.

A new **planning process** has to take place, aimed at creating a new (training) environment in which to intertwine relationships and synergies of knowledge, skills, meanings, emotions. Knowing that expectations and tasks (because the “change product” is not “tangible” and usually undergoes a high discretion in interpretation) can be different depending on the fact that they are posed by the institution, subjects offering theatre training, or recipient subjects.

Of course, working in a situation in which all social actors aim at the same target, with continuity, is the best possible to be hoped for: but this is seldom the situation in which we work!

Consistent and adequate **cooperation and meeting processes** between different subjects need therefore to be established, starting from the specific conditions in the context in which we operate and with actual resources at hand, in order to add communication and development elements to the system, from a social/political and economical point of view.

The planning process has therefore to be integrated with **negotiation processes**: frail and intensely emotional moments that affect relation dynamics, as well as the eventual outcome. Planning together is not easy; it means dealing with the differences, resistance, different projections that participants have to approach the common task.

The planning process is often the source, for the people involved in it, of emotional ambivalence, in particular if the project is “innovative”: allpowerfullness and powerlessness chase each other while we focus on possible paths, unchaining moments of anxiety that often express themselves through harshness, conflict, psychological blockage and passive attitude.

But for this very reason the planning process can be considered as an opportunity for all involved subjects, (institution operators, professional teachers, theatre companies, recipients, etc.), an empowerment process in terms of **learning and personal, professional and organizational skills development**.

It is a good thing to look at the planning/producing process thoroughly, in every step, from a dynamic and systemic perspective, taking care of the meta-knowledge (learning to learn) within a continuous recursive circuit between experience and reflection.

This means putting oneself in a position of research, to activate intelligence, and get ready to give value and meaning to the work, even in the face of structural limitations, avoiding to simplify through ideology or group interests, but aiming at achieving an intervention that, starting from the actual situation, can evolve and become testimony of a possible change for detainee people, operators, prison systems... local communities.

We can try to replace the theory of “it’s all or nothing” with a search for strategies of strengthening and giving value to existing opportunities, on the basis of professionalism that is a fundamental resource in building a culture of change.

Therefore, **the “Teatrodentro” pattern of theatre training does not impose as the single pattern, but as an example, a methodology, which successful practice depends on its reworking in the field, in the specificity of the detention situation in which it is being applied.**

But what are the required conditions for a theatre project to be, in its complexity, an empowerment process for all involved subjects?

Which indicators have to be weighted to evacuate the best feasibility of a theatre project?

In order to evaluate feasibility consistent with the purpose of helping the change process, we offer a list of questions/indicators as guidance:

- ***Does the purpose of national law find consistent application in operative situations?***
National laws aimed to *re-education purposes* and *reintegration*: they have, as a leading value the perspective of social inclusion. Starting from these assumptions, legislative ties can be interpreted in their dimension of social mediation as alive and open to innovation, where these can yield strategies that help and support the transformation of disadvantages (personal and socioeconomic) of people in prison. It is important to analyze and evaluate what obstacles can hinder a consistent application of the law purposes in the actual change project operative aspect.
- ***What kind of prison is the project going to be carried out in? What rules and codes shape the prison environmental context?***
Penal institutions of ordinary or softer regime of detention are the most appropriate for carrying out the theatre project.
If the institution welcomes and favours programmes of training and education activities it is necessary to further the research collecting data and information regarding *detainee persons*:
 - How is information spread among inmates regarding the opportunities of education activities?
 - How does access to class works? Does the institution operate a selection on who can or cannot take part? Does the decision rest with the person in prison? Or does it rest with the theatre organization?
 - Are there formal or “informal” rules and codes for reward and/or punishment?
 - Are detainees allowed “free movement” hours within the prison?*And regarding prison staff*:
 - How is information spread among institution operators (detention officers, psychosocial staff, etc.) regarding training and education activities for inmates?
 - What are the roles and tasks of detention officers with regard to their activities: are they always present and maintain a constant control? Or is control only

applied when entering or leaving the activity room? Can officers be effectively involved into observing activities?

- What role and task are ascribed to psychosocial staff with relation to inmates involved in the theatre activities?
- Is prison staff interested and involved in activities? Do they observe what is going on?

- ***What is the length of detention of theatre training course participants?***

Detention length for subjects involved in theatre activities should be *average*, which is 4 to 5 years.

The training process, that is the empowerment and change process, is not aimed at acquiring skills, but it implies a deeper learning for the detainee person, requiring “integration of new knowledge and abilities within the sphere of previous knowledge and attitudes” (M.Castagna, *Progettare la formazione; planning education*), within the one’s own experience and psychological. It is a delicate learning process that cannot set aside the temporal dimension and the free choice to take part on the part of the person. Therefore it is important to be able to make agreements with the prison administration for the person not to be transferred to other institutions and can follow the whole training process.

- ***What political/symbolical quality is possible to assign to the theatre space?***

Theatre space should be acknowledged within the prison as a space gifted with specific, agreed autonomy within educational processes and values identification of behavioural material spurred by the process. A space for which it is deemed legitimate to structure as a work setting with specific behaviour rules: this is the only way it can be assigned a symbolic quality and actually become a small place of “citizenship” within the prison, with rights and duties that are determined by the training context. The symbolic and “citizenship” dimension give value to this space as a training environment: a place/environment of training in which to take possession of the finding and the error in order to turn them into resources and opportunities: Through the possibility of experimenting and developing a dynamic and decisional skill.

- ***What are the agreements between institution and proposing subjects?***

The sort and length of agreement (with associations, theatre companies, professionals etc) denotes the institutions intention to carry out and integrate, in time, the theatre activity with other training offers in prison.

The agreement and its length can also be indicators of acknowledgement of the proposing subjects’ professionalism, and of the value assigned to the theatre project.

- ***Does the institution share aims and training goals of the theatre training project? Does it acknowledge the educational/training value of the theatre project?***

Sharing aims and goals is the first “agreement” to be pursued, because it allows to evaluate the real political feasibility of the project, and to form a clearer representation of the way in which undertaking of the training can be framed within the prison system. It is only after achieving this sharing that negotiation and mediation on the fulfilment process can be developed, taking resources into account.

The acknowledgement of the project educational/training value on the other hand, gives indications on the possibility to undertake a relationship that can change from client/supplier into partnership, interested in achieving a common goal of actual change fulfilment.

- ***What are the peculiarities of the theatre training project?***

The cultural, pedagogical, training aims of the theatre project have to be analyzed in order to find out whether the offer aims to achieve empowerment processes, or if it only entails an entertainment activity. Of course, the latter can not be included in the innovative pattern offered by Teatrodentro, as it would not be aimed at achieving transformation dynamics. The theoretical/methodological approach, together with the techniques used in the theatre work should be consistent and not conflicting with cultural, pedagogical and training aims.

- ***What does qualify, at start, the relationship between teachers and detainees with reference to the theatre project?***

Participation of the detainee in training should be a free choice, and should not undergo selection, mainly if connected to institutional disciplinary evaluation dynamics (with necessary due exceptions). Selection on a disciplinary basis would, from the start, compromise the training process, which requires a “free” motivation/mobilization of energies to be used for a “not easy job” that is about responsibility, autonomy, skill, and awareness.

The “training agreement” between teacher and pupil has to introduce and make clear the definition and sharing of rules (making a difference between the dimension of rules aimed at achieving a goal and the ingenuous perception of rule as prohibition that is typical of the prison environment) that apply to use of theatre space and the acceptance of reciprocal obligations: an agreement between adults, aimed at achieving the feasibility of an intentionally undertaken activity.

Among the agreement clauses there should be the acceptance of the training evaluation process.

3.2. Beyond the single evaluation

Gianna Stefan

“Those who are unhappy have no need for anything in this world but people capable of giving them their attention.

The capacity to give one's attention to a sufferer is a very rare and difficult thing; it is almost a miracle; it is a miracle.

Almost everyone who thinks themselves capable to do that is not... For that reason, it is sufficient, but indispensable, to know how to direct toward oneself a certain gaze. This gaze is first of all an attentive gaze”.
(S.Weil)

“The desire to get rid of uncertainty can hence appear as a specific disease of our mind, and every path leading to the big Certitude could be but an hysterical pregnancy.” (Edgar Morin)

Purpose of the Teatrodentro project is to put a growing number of prison workers in touch with theatre skills, which are considered innovative abilities, both supplementary and meaningful in relation to carrying out their institutional duties with regard to inmates.

It is innovative for its contribution to the development and deepening of methodological knowledge of observation, because it supplies the necessary tools to read, within non-formal education, the processes of change.

Basic pedagogical concepts underlying the project and its achievement, promote a positive, stimulating relationship ethic between prison workers and inmates, stimulating change.

In a complex society, shattered by ever changing social, communication and relationship/personal phenomena, we are all called to reading our daily life before and in order to act, think and generally lead a better life.

In order to do so, it is a good thing to acknowledge myths and beliefs that act upon us, through an approach that recognizes and values the complexity implied in being a person, and which allows to thoroughly improve consciousness, through the multi-dimensional and multi-perspective observation of human experience (ours and of others).

Social imagery, cultural imprint and behaviour within our society all belong to, what can be called, the big myth (the big Cosmo-vision) that has ruled the last two centuries: the techno/scientific system.

Even if we are not always aware of it, the method, approach and logic of science based on measurement and fragmentation on one hand, and the daily use of technologies (that we can consider as an exteriorization and specialized overdevelopment of human functions: from electrical appliances to PCs, and even bordering robotics) on the other, bear a cultural and experiential influence on our senses and on our representation of reality.

The techno/scientific system is bringing forth an anthropological (and environmental) change which is bringing the very concept of the human being (and inhabiting the earth) back up for discussion: the illusion that everything could be the product of technique and procedure, hence predictable and under control, gives a feeling of safety and diverts the attention from the anguish caused by the acceptance of human vulnerability.

The techno/scientific *belief/myth is*, all considered, the universe within which all cultural processes, collective or individual, are shaped among the societies we live in. These are all legitimate processes as long as we interpret them as an expression of the becoming of the complex human experience. Yet they need to be critically revisited and reoriented, in the light of their being insufficient to warrant, not only the quality of life development, but even their own maintenance of the individual or social organism, and for the environment that permits their existence (take for instance the growing explosions of “insanity”; wars, environmental crisis, etc). When this happens (and it is the situation in which humanity is now or is in danger of being) it is necessary to *creatively rework the human experience*, in order to find a culture that contemplates a new and effective balance between man and the environment, and between human beings.

In order to do so, it becomes essential to develop the ability to find references and to find one’s way among the complex and various contexts, identifying links and interconnections: this makes it possible to favour the growth of a complex portrayal of issues, a portrayal that will not reduce the sense and meaning of human actions or the very concept of the human being.

Nowadays the mystery of the uniqueness of being a person (that education should provide for while taking care of human beings development) is being replaced, more and more, by the concept of man as a “product”: of the marketplace, of the consumer society, of life styles and behaviours as far as personality is concerned; and as a dismountable apparatus whose parts can be analyzed and artificially replaced, as far as the body goes.

A widespread conception of scientific culture has it that scientific language is an exact mirror of reality. It might be more appropriate to say that science does not describe reality in itself, but our experience of reality, in as much as it keeps out of the picture anything that is unique, uncountable and unverifiable. The fact **the observer affects the observation** is a quantum physics statement, which revolutionized 20th century physics: it is meaningful that the very “individuality” of an elementary particle is a “problem” in theoretical physics.

Likewise, questioning the human condition can be “a problem”, questioning the meaning of being a person, the originality, freedom and creativity that marks every human being. Each human is different from all the others, and cannot be reduced to any other, but is determined by its relationship with others. “Man is a person: a knot in a net of relationships of which reality is made of and linked to other knots through the constitutive freedom of inter-independence” (R. Panikkar)

But what do we see when we think “person”? When in our job we look at a person who is kept in custody, what perception/representation have we got of the person and of our relationship? We must be aware of the fact that what we see depends on how we observe, but also on how we speak about it.

Indeed, whatever we look at, depending on our gaze and on the language we use, the complexity of the representation we make of it will change, as well as its aesthetic perception. For instance, looking at a face, a sunset, a flower, we wouldn’t say we are seeing “brightness gradients” and “shifts in spectrum composition” on our retina; if we listen to music, the wounded crying in pain, a child’s laughter, we do not say we hear “a change in the energy

distribution over our basal membrane”. The description of those experiences with a scientific language would dramatically reduce their content (emotions, feelings, conflicts, variances) and existential meanings connected to it.

As a matter of fact, experiences and perceptions depend as much on our previous experience as on the sensory information that is directly reaching our brain in one definite moment. To ascribe a conscious meaning, relevant to previous experience and to our knowledge of our world, is equivalent to activating a conscious self-and other-perception dynamic, which will show apart what and how much of “ours already” (our projections) is implied in the new representation, and which is the “novum” that enables our experience of the “here and now”.

To observe means paying attention to the perception and the relation with what we are observing. *To observe* means “to regard with attention, consider with care”; and the term *attention* derives from the Latin word “*attentio*”, related to the verb “attend”, “wait at”, with the meaning of looking after, dedicating one’s mind towards someone or something. If *attention* is related to “wait”, this indicates that *attention* implies a time dimension which is of “waiting”, a suspension of judgement that welcomes what it observes. It means giving up the illusion of control and remaining with “what there is”: it is the time for listening what is outside us, and what we “hear and feel”.

For instance, what does the tone of voice of a person in custody move within us, a person who sits in front of us, and whom we are observing because it is our task to?

What does it raise of our inner and outside experience?

It is important that we ask ourselves these questions and we try and give a true and “honest” answer: what is at risk is the possibility of giving a value of “justice” to the accomplishment of a task as delicate and engaging as social work. What is at risk is our professional ability to take into account all the pros and cons of expressing what will be, in the end, a judgment on a person.

This evaluation is strictly related to aims and objectives that we fixed for ourselves: in our work in prison, aims and objectives define the “cognitive reference and orientation system” within which we set ourselves and what we look at. The description of what we look at is the way in which we give visibility to the meanings and representations we assign to “problems” and how to solve them: it is an expression of our personal and professional subjectivity, and it indicates the relativity of the point of view it bears.

A psychologist’s observation is different from an educator’s or a judge’s, an inmate’s, a prison worker’s or an artist’s: each one observing from their point of view collects “data”, but how this data will be presented and received in the community (social, professional, relational) will affect the value of the data themselves.

What quality and value can we then assign to our observation, when every observation is relative?

If we consider the observation/evaluation as a social process and a cultural indicator, it follows that *an actual practice of pluralistic reading* is essential to obtain the inter-subjectivity of meanings and shared representations that could legitimate observation and evaluation.

To recognize the *illusion of unilateral and absolute truth* (that is free from relations, boundaries, specific circumstances, in the end a totalitarian and authoritarian truth), means being aware of “dealing with *probability data*”, that leaves room for the dimension of doubt, uncertainty, and risk.

All this can scare and create defensiveness, clash with our need for certainty and safety; but it could also unveil the chance of an opportunity to experiment the renewed vitality of our personal, relational and professional skills; of the growth of our ability to take up new and more complex responsibilities.

All in all, even juridical regulation is based on probability: “beyond any reasonable doubt” is a legal standard...

4.

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5.

Annexes

5.1. Tribunale di sorveglianza di Milano, Ufficio di sorveglianza¹⁷⁷ Maria Laura Fadda¹⁷⁸

La presentazione del progetto intitolato “Cambiamento” rimanda al significato della rieducazione nell’ambito del sistema della esecuzione penale.

Quelle che esprimerò sull’argomento sono opinioni personale che mi sono formata nel corso di questi anni di lavoro come Magistrato di Sorveglianza e che non hanno alcuna pretesa di esaustività.

In primo luogo ritengo che spesso si confonda con la rieducazione o con la educazione quello che è invece è un mero addestramento che coinvolge aspetti limitati della personalità dell’individuo.

L’educazione è in un certo senso parcellizzata: vi è ad esempio l’educazione al lavoro, alla genitorialità, al comportarsi bene.

Questa impostazione, questa visione classifica le persone a secondo dei loro comportamenti, dei loro atti. Così ci sono i lavoratori, i genitori o ad esempio i *sex offenders*.

A me sembra che questa visione sia quantomeno riduttiva.

Una persona non può essere definita solo da quello che ha compiuto, da quello che ha fatto o non ha fatto (come un reato).

Ciò che è stato fatto può essere giudicato come atto, ma non definisce l’io, la personalità di chi questo atto ha compiuto.

Educare, allora, significa entrare in contatto, per mezzo di una relazione con l’io profondo di una persona.

Significa in primo luogo comprendere e poi cercare di intervenire su quelle che sono le domande più profonde che l’IO si pone.

L’IO o una personalità non può essere dunque definita dai gesti o dai comportamenti che compie se di questi gesti e di questi comportamenti non si definisce il senso.

Il senso di ciò che una persona compie dipende dalla risposta che si è dato alle domande fondamentali che riguardano il suo destino, domande di affetto, di giustizia, di bellezza ecc., cioè domande circa “il senso” di un’esistenza.

Educare significa allora aiutare un individuo a rispondere a queste domande. Ma questo può avvenire soltanto all’interno di una relazione tra un “io” e un “tu”. All’interno di una relazione ove l’educatore aiuti la persona a comprendere tutta la dignità del proprio io che non è definito solo dal reato che ha commesso.

La relazione appare dunque come il momento centrale dell’educazione.

Cosa avviene in carcere di tutto questo?

In carcere vengono proposte, per quanto riguarda la rieducazione delle iniziative cosiddette trattamentali che riguardano spesso l’acquisizione di competenze di tipo scolastico o lavorativo.

Queste iniziative sia pure meritorie e necessarie, se non arrivano a toccare l’essere profondo dell’individuo, muovendolo verso questa prospettiva più ampia che riguarda “il senso” di quello che si fa, rischiano di costituire un mero addestramento o un intervento di tipo assistenziale.

¹⁷⁷ Relazione tenuta durante il seminario di formazione del progetto TEATRODENTRO – 116674 – CP – 1 – 2004 1 – IT – Grundtvig – G11 a Barcellona dal 29 novembre al 3 dicembre 2006

¹⁷⁸ Maria Laura Fadda è entrata in Magistratura nel 1987 come Sostituto Procuratore della Repubblica e giudice del lavoro, dal 1999 cura la sorveglianza presso il Tribunale di Milano

Al più possono stimolare una reazione del detenuto, magari sollecitata da bisogni di tipo economico o da un ritorno di affidabilità al fine di ottenere dei benefici, ma non stimolano una vera presa di coscienza di sé.

Specchio di questa situazione è ritenere il carcere al più come ente erogatore di servizi e conseguentemente un luogo ove è impossibile (per le note carenze organizzative e strutturali, per come è concepito ecc.) svolgere un'attività di rieducazione.

Allora, coerentemente con questa idea, capita di leggere certe proposte trattamentali formulate dalle equipe di osservazione e trattamento del carcere, tutte incentrate sul fare, cioè su quello che il detenuto fa.

Per esempio il detenuto potrebbe accedere ai permessi perché ha mantenuto condotta regolare e inoltre ha seguito un corso di falegnameria o ortovivaismo o di fotografia o di computer.

Ma chi è quest'individuo?

Questa è la domanda che rimane nell'ombra.

Come si confronta con il suo IO di quando ha commesso il reato?

È la stessa persona?

Quale è il senso delle attività che ha svolto?

È cambiato soltanto perché ha acquisito delle nuove competenze? Appunto perché sa usare il computer o ha lavorato in falegnameria?

Quello che voglio spiegare è che oggi l'educazione spesso è ridotta a una sorta di manuale di istruzione per l'uso, di regole, di apprendistato.

Si parla ad esempio di educazione alla legalità. Ma educazione alla legalità non significa rispetto formale di regole, quanto piuttosto rispetto dell'altro.

Perché altrimenti quando si educa, a cosa si educa?

Allora bisogna fermarsi a riflettere su questo: in che modo questa prospettiva può essere se non modificata almeno integrata?

Lo studio che è stato fatto sui progetti di rieducazione non formale appare in questo senso interessante in quanto il teatro sembra in grado di coinvolgere il detenuto in una relazione sia con il suo IO profondo sia con il maestro.

Chi insegna teatro è maestro nel senso che è dotato di maestria ed è figura diversa dall'“esperto” di una determinata disciplina.

Infatti, non soltanto comunica le sue competenze, ma comunica anche se stesso, mette in gioco se stesso nella relazione che instaura.

Se il teatro viene condotto con competenza e non è mero esercizio di stile, l'immedesimazione nel personaggio assegnato costituisce una messa in gioco che riguarda sia l'attore detenuto che la guida, che il maestro.

Conosciamo il profondo significato che al teatro è stato assegnato dalla cultura greca in poi come strumento per affrontare il conflitto e il dolore e dunque per dare “senso” a queste esperienze.

Allora se il cambiamento di una persona passa attraverso un'acquisizione di senso, allora possiamo attribuire valore fondante alla relazione tra il maestro e l'allievo detenuto proprio come motore di un cambiamento.

Ho parlato prima di dolore; oggi si tende a rimuovere, a non citare il dolore che la commissione di un reato e poi l'espiazione di una pena porta con sé.

La detenzione, l'espiazione della pena è in primo luogo un'esperienza di dolore.

In che modo questo dolore, il dolore della pena può avere una valenza rieducativa?

Sempre e soltanto se vi è una relazione in cui i bisogni dell'io vengono a galla.

È quando questi bisogni emergono che la persona riesce a riappropriarsi del “senso” dell'esperienza che sta vivendo.

Condivido, dunque, quanto è affermato nel progetto e cioè che l'esperienza teatrale sia quella che riesce a contattare il livello di reale esperienza della persona. Appare dunque come

un'esperienza in cui la relazione copre la sensazione invalidante che i propri atti, il proprio sé non abbiano senso.

Ho avuto l'occasione di seguire questo progetto educativo, di seguire detenuti che hanno svolto questa esperienza teatrale. Posso dire che il percorso rieducativo è stato proprio definito dal percorso teatrale ed è stato un percorso esemplare.

Meritorio è stato ad esempio il rispetto della gradualità nella fruizione progressiva di spazi di libertà.

Sembrava ci fosse consapevolezza dell'utilità di questa gradualità, consapevolezza che il tempo passato in carcere non fosse solo dolore o tempo buttato, ma in un certo senso avesse un'utilità un "senso" al fine di costruire il tempo da passare poi fuori.

Ecco questo a mio parere è importante.

Aiutare il detenuto in una ricerca di senso durante questo periodo di sofferenza che è la detenzione.

E che lo aiuti a non buttare via, una volta uscito, l'esperienza fatta dentro.

5.2. Attività artistiche e reinserimento sociale

Marzia Fratini¹⁷⁹

Ormai da diversi anni la Direzione Generale dei Detenuti e del Trattamento del Dipartimento Amministrazione Penitenziaria è impegnata in un progetto di rilancio delle attività connesse al *trattamento* dei detenuti, principio fondamentale dell'ordinamento penitenziario italiano (Legge 26 luglio 1975 n. 354) e diritto costituzionalmente garantito (art. 27 Costituzione).

A questo proposito, preme sottolineare che la Direzione Generale ha elaborato delle riflessioni e delle direttive di carattere generale, lasciando comunque un ampio margine di autonomia alle articolazioni periferiche per la concreta realizzazione delle iniziative progettuali sul territorio.

Il lavoro svolto è stato quello di avviare una riflessione sul concetto di *trattamento penitenziario* al fine di distinguere le iniziative di *puro intrattenimento* - iniziative indubbiamente utili nella difficile gestione del quotidiano dell'organizzazione carceraria e del tempo "inoccupato" – da quelle più propriamente *trattamentali* caratterizzate da un valore pedagogico di riflessione critica, di maturazione personale, di crescita e cambiamento, di volontà ad assumere comportamenti socialmente accettabili.

In questo senso "*fare trattamento*" diviene un qualcosa di reale e produttivo solo se inserito in un'ottica progettuale che riporti al centro dell'attenzione la persona nella sua complessità, partendo da una ipotesi individualizzata il cui presupposto deve essere l'adesione consapevole e responsabile del condannato.

Per realizzare questo obiettivo è necessario superare la soglia del carcere come confine fisico e psicologico, il carcere deve divenire parte integrante del più ampio sistema sociale nei fatti e non solo nelle intenzioni, attraverso la costruzione di forme stabili di relazione e confronto con le istituzioni del territorio e la società civile, allo scopo di individuare e sperimentare formule alternative di intervento.

A questo riguardo, la DG ha operato da un lato per promuovere il ruolo e la centralità dell'Area educativa degli Istituti penitenziari quale *conditio sine qua non* affinché l'intervento trattamentale potesse essere utile e significativo da un punto di vista pedagogico, dall'altro, cercando di affermare la centralità degli aspetti formativi e di crescita culturale quali strumenti indispensabili al percorso di cambiamento del singolo soggetto.

Per quel che riguarda il primo aspetto, la Direzione Generale ha fornito delle indicazioni di carattere schematico sulla strutturazione, l'organizzazione ed il funzionamento delle aree educative degli Istituti penitenziari definendo i diversi livelli e le metodologie di intervento (circolare n° 3593/6043 del 9 ottobre 2003 e circolare 217584 del 14 giugno 2005), focalizzando l'attenzione sulla pianificazione degli interventi e sull'inserimento delle diverse *attività trattamentali* in un progetto organico dell'Istituto penitenziario, mediante la stesura di un *progetto pedagogico annuale* da elaborare a cura della singola Direzione penitenziaria entro il mese di dicembre di ogni anno.

Tali indicazioni metodologiche ed organizzative hanno avuto lo scopo di superare l'estemporaneità degli interventi ma anche la prassi di un'accoglienza indiscriminata delle singole attività in assenza di una verifica di compatibilità e coordinamento con le altre iniziative attuate in Istituto, prassi che finiva col rendere difficile la valutazione sui risultati della collaborazione dei soggetti terzi al trattamento e sulla ricaduta trattamentale delle iniziative sui singoli detenuti.

¹⁷⁹ Marzia Fratini lavora presso il Dipartimento amministrazione penitenziaria, Direzione generale detenuti e trattamento, Ufficio osservazione e trattamento intramurale

Nello specifico, attraverso le citate disposizioni, sono stati definiti con precisione i ruoli, le funzioni e le diverse forme di interrelazione dei soggetti chiamati a realizzare e/o a collaborare al trattamento e, in particolare, si è provveduto a ridefinire la composizione ed il ruolo del Gruppo di Osservazione e Trattamento (GOT) quale “... *gruppo allargato di cui fanno parte o possono essere chiamati a far parte, con il coordinamento dell’educatore, tutti coloro che interagiscono con il detenuto o che collaborano al trattamento dello stesso...*”.

Attraverso la ridefinizione della composizione e del ruolo del GOT si è voluto principalmente sottolineare l'importanza delle differenti chiavi di lettura che tutti gli operatori che interagiscono con la persona detenuta possono offrire per una reale e migliore comprensione del percorso esistenziale della persona stessa, ampliando le opportunità di conoscenza ed affinando le capacità di osservazione e valutazione da parte dei diversi operatori del trattamento.

In quest’ottica, l’attenzione si è estesa anche alle iniziative di natura artistico/espressiva ed al teatro in particolare, tenuto conto dell’ampia diffusione delle attività teatrali all’interno degli Istituti penitenziari (su 207 Istituti presenti sul territorio è stata riscontrata nell’anno 2005 la presenza di circa 113 laboratori teatrali) poiché si è convinti che questo tipo di esperienza rappresenti un valido e significativo strumento per promuovere la possibilità di conoscere e sperimentare molteplici modelli comportamentali fondati sulla dimensione fisico – emozionale, la sola in grado di valorizzare l’unicità dell’individuo, promuovendo una rimodulazione dei ruoli e una diversa consapevolezza di se stessi e dei diversi livelli della relazione sia in rapporto all’istituzione che alla collettività in generale.

In un luogo come il carcere i percorsi artistico/espressivi – se non realizzati con modalità estemporanee ed occasionali - possono assumere il significato di “esperienza sociale” contribuendo alla trasformazione dei punti di vista e suscitando domande per favorire una riflessione critica; in questo senso la pratica artistica diventa principalmente lavoro su se stessi che favorisce un percorso di riappropriazione di quelle percezioni ed emozioni che rischiavano di andare perdute a causa dell’esperienza di isolamento e separazione proprie della condizione detentiva.

In quest’ottica, il percorso artistico si configura come un mezzo trasversale, che può rappresentare un’occasione per superare modelli comportamentali negativi, per acquisire sicurezza e fiducia nelle proprie capacità, per conoscere la possibilità di sperimentare nuovi modelli di relazione ma anche differenti modi di vivere le proprie emozioni mediante una *riscoperta della propria soggettività* attraverso la parola ed il gesto e la sperimentazione di nuovi e differenziati modi di essere ed agire non riconducibili esclusivamente ad una sterile esperienza narcisistica.

Attraverso il recupero dell'emotività, l'espressione della creatività, l'addestramento tecnico e fisico, le attività artistiche consentono un lavoro su se stessi mediante il quale è possibile superare i blocchi e gli automatismi (mentali e fisici) che spesso condizionano l'azione di chi si trova a vivere una condizione di disagio, rompendo il circolo vizioso del contenimento e del mascheramento di sé tipici dell’istituzione totale.

Infatti, se il significato delle iniziative artistico/espressive non viene individuato nel "puro intrattenimento" è possibile - attraverso azioni "guidate" di riflessione ed autoanalisi - aiutare il soggetto a prendere coscienza della propria emotività e del riflesso che le sue azioni, le sue parole, la sua gestualità producono sugli altri e su se stesso, realizzando in questo modo un'esperienza complessa sia sul piano cognitivo/culturale dei soggetti coinvolti, ma anche ampliando le possibilità e le modalità di osservazione e valutazione da parte degli operatori.

Le esperienze espressive realizzate in carcere quando sono guidate da una corretta metodologia artistica, creano *naturalmente* un contesto pedagogico basato sull'autoformazione e sull'autoanalisi; le ormai numerose esperienze realizzate nel corso degli anni – pur nelle

diverse modalità operative e nei diversi stili ed obiettivi espressivi – hanno dimostrato come non vi sia contraddizione nell'utilizzo a fini pedagogici del mezzo artistico.

In particolare il teatro consente di far emergere la creatività dell'individuo come atto propositivo e autonomo e – in questo senso – il teatro può divenire un luogo dove sperimentare ed approfondire le diverse possibilità del "sentire" e del "comunicare" attraverso una forma di *pedagogia teatrale* che si rivolge non solo ai soggetti in esecuzione pena o portatori di un disagio personale e/o sociale, ma anche agli stessi operatori.

Questi contenuti possono – dunque – concretizzarsi nei termini di una esperienza *intenzionalmente formativa*, particolarmente adatta ad essere sperimentata tra soggetti adulti con alle spalle percorsi di fallimenti personali ed educativi, poiché consente la realizzazione di nuove esperienze e trasformazioni positive partendo dagli aspetti ludici e produttivi propri delle esperienze artistiche.

Ed è proprio partendo dagli aspetti di natura emozionale ed espressiva, che presuppongono un'adesione consapevole e partecipata del soggetto, che può essere costruito un percorso trattamentale che abbia una significativa ricaduta sul percorso esistenziale futuro, perché il valore trattamentale delle diverse iniziative risiede nella possibilità di offrire concreti strumenti di ricostruzione di un autonomo percorso di vita nella società libera da realizzare attraverso la costruzione di percorsi formativi che consentano l'acquisizione di competenze spendibili all'esterno per una ridefinizione della propria accettabilità sociale.

A questo proposito, le prospettive offerte dal sistema dell'Educazione degli Adulti consentono di dare un valore aggiunto alle esperienze artistiche quali momenti di *educazione non formale* cui riconoscere una dignità ed una validità nel percorso formativo del soggetto in esecuzione di pena, poiché è evidente che accanto al mestiere di attore, realizzabile per una percentuale trascurabile di utenti, sono i *mestieri dell'arte* quelli che maggiormente possono rivelarsi valide opportunità per un futuro reinserimento, attraverso la costituzione di percorsi formativi ad hoc con gli Enti e le agenzie formative accreditate ma anche – laddove sia possibile – di "Accademie" sul modello dei Poli Universitari già attivi in diverse realtà penitenziarie.

Nel sistema detentivo, infatti, ogni esperienza – per essere realmente significativa – dovrebbe rispondere a più esigenze che vanno dalla crescita culturale, al favorire forme di socializzazione ed interazione secondo modelli condivisi e positivi, all'acquisizione di competenze sociali, relazionali e professionali.

In quest'ottica, le ormai numerose esperienze di laboratori ed attività in ambito teatrale costituiscono un patrimonio di base da valorizzare e dal quale partire per costruire percorsi che abbiano una *dimensione culturale e formativa* orientata ad una spendibilità esterna in grado di coniugare le competenze artistiche con quelle tecniche; è chiaro che per la realizzazione di ipotesi progettuali di questo tipo è necessario costruire delle sinergie con l'apporto di tutti coloro che sono a vario titolo coinvolti nelle iniziative, poiché il fattore fondamentale rimane quello della continuità degli interventi e dell'attenzione e del riconoscimento da parte delle istituzioni, elemento quest'ultimo che può contribuire a rendere il carcere non solo un *istituto di pena* ma anche un *istituto di cultura*, cioè un luogo dove le contraddizioni e le energie in esso presenti vengono valorizzate e trasformate in senso costruttivo e propositivo e non solo in senso contenitivo.

Dunque, se vogliamo dare alle iniziative culturali/artistico/espressive un *valore aggiunto* di concreta risorsa per il percorso di risocializzazione e reinserimento, occorre pensare in un'ottica di rete che preveda la presenza di diversi attori istituzionali e no, ciascuno in grado di portare *un contributo specifico* che possa essere di supporto alla costruzione di un autonomo percorso esistenziale.

A tale scopo è indispensabile disporre di strumenti per definire con precisione gli obiettivi e le metodologie di intervento, al fine di trasformare il "fai da te" in azione costante ed efficace,

valutabile secondo parametri di qualità da elaborare sulla base delle buone prassi, delle criticità e dei risultati emersi nel corso delle esperienze di eccellenza.

Rispetto al contesto *interno* al carcere è auspicabile la costituzione di un team di progetto coordinato dal responsabile dell'area trattamentale cui partecipino tutti gli operatori esterni ed interni che contribuiscono alla realizzazione del percorso artistico, ciò al fine di accompagnare costantemente le varie fasi di svolgimento dell'attività attraverso un'azione di verifica degli obiettivi trattamentali e di valutazione della ricaduta sugli utenti.

Ovviamente l'esperienza artistica o teatrale così intesa deve essere parte integrante del progetto pedagogico dell'Istituto e - conseguentemente - deve essere recepita nel programma di trattamento individuale del singolo partecipante; in quest'ottica un valido strumento può essere quello dell'incentivare la stipula di accordi o protocolli tra le Direzioni penitenziarie e gli Enti /Associazioni che materialmente gestiscono le attività artistico/ espressive all'interno degli Istituti non con lo scopo di imbrigliare e burocratizzare le diverse iniziative ma per dare loro il carattere di continuità ed un riconoscimento formale all'interno del complesso degli interventi propriamente trattamentali e risocializzanti.

Tale modalità organizzativa può - infatti - contribuire a creare una diversa modalità di rapporto con la Magistratura di Sorveglianza, che potrà così valutare l'esperienza teatrale o artistica in una dimensione trattamentale.

Rispetto al più ampio contesto della società libera, indispensabile è la creazione di forme stabili di rapporto con gli Enti del territorio (Regione e /o gli Enti locali) al fine di pervenire sia alla emanazione di normative ad hoc o alla stipula di protocolli d'intesa per valorizzare e garantire la promozione e/o il consolidamento dell'attività teatrali ed artistiche all'interno degli istituti, ma anche attraverso la previsione di stanziamenti finanziari mirati, già presenti in alcune realtà nazionali (Toscana, FVG etc.); il problema delle risorse economiche infatti non va trascurato poiché costituisce un elemento indispensabile al sostegno di qualsiasi attività che abbia un obiettivo a lungo termine; interessanti sotto questo profilo appaiono quelle esperienze di promozione di partnership (ATS es.) con Enti pubblici/privati, Fondazioni, ed Istituzioni etc. per la presentazione/partecipazione a specifici bandi nazionali ed internazionali (es. progetti del Fondo Sociale Europeo) .

A questo riguardo, nella Regione Toscana è stato promosso a partire dal 1999 un progetto regionale denominato *Teatro in Carcere* che ha destinato un contributo economico alle associazioni teatrali ed alle compagnie impegnate nelle attività teatrali dentro gli Istituti di Pena della Toscana.

Nella sostanza il progetto ha avuto lo scopo di sostenere le attività di produzione teatrale e l'impiego del teatro come strumento di socializzazione della popolazione detenuta, consolidando la rete dei penitenziari e delle case circondariali coinvolti dal progetto e promuovendo la conoscenza delle esperienze del teatro in carcere, anche attraverso la diffusione di materiali di informazione e comunicazione rivolti al territorio.

Ed è proprio in questo senso, promuovendo un sistema di rete con la più ampia realtà sociale, che le attività artistiche in carcere possono divenire occasioni di cambiamento per i soggetti reclusi ma anche agenti di mutamento del mondo penitenziario a sostegno di una legislazione più avanzata, poiché è indubbio che questo tipo di esperienze - laddove hanno assunto un carattere di continuità e di validità sotto il profilo artistico - culturale - hanno contribuito a cambiare il *clima* interno all'istituzione penitenziaria, rimodulando i rapporti tra le sue diverse componenti (ci si riferisce anche al rapporto tra le diverse aree dell'Istituzione penitenziaria ed alla dicotomia trattamento/sicurezza) ed aprendo il carcere all'esterno, in un percorso di superamento dell'isolamento che ha contribuito a determinare anche un cambiamento della percezione da parte della società.

Infatti, un aspetto da non trascurare è quello del ruolo che le attività artistico/espressive - se strutturate secondo modalità che comprendano una reale dimensione trattamentale - possono

avere nella trasformazione della *sensibilità politico/giuridica e sociale* verso l'Istituzione penitenziaria, promuovendo sia un diverso utilizzo degli strumenti giuridici esistenti che contribuendo ad affermare la necessità di innovazioni in campo normativo.

A questo riguardo, dopo diversi anni – e non senza fatica – in quelle realtà caratterizzate ormai da una continuità e da una dimensione artistica consolidata e riconosciuta (Volterra, Milano Bollate, Saluzzo, Roma Rebibbia) la Magistratura di Sorveglianza ha concesso l'utilizzo dello strumento dell'art 21 O.P. (lavoro all'esterno) per consentire ai detenuti attori di uscire dal carcere ed andare in *tourneè*, riconoscendo all'attività teatrale il valore di attività lavorativa (in questi casi ai detenuti viene corrisposto un gettone economico per la prestazione artistica) e non obbligando i detenuti ad avvalersi dello strumento del permesso premio normalmente utilizzato per coltivare i rapporti personali e familiari.

Sempre sotto il profilo del mutamento di sensibilità politico/ giuridica verso le iniziative trattamentali, è stata recentemente presentata una proposta di modifica della Legge penitenziaria (proposta di legge 29/C Boato e altri) - attualmente in discussione - nella quale viene suggerita la modifica dello strumento del *permesso premio* la cui fruizione viene prevista anche in ambito dell'UE per esigenze di completamento delle attività trattamentali e per l'effettuazione di scambi culturali con possibilità di accompagnamento da parte di operatori non dipendenti dall'AP che abbiano seguito le attività trattamentali per le quali i permessi sono stati concessi; è evidente che tale previsione normativa – ovviamente nel caso in cui sia recepita dall'ordinamento giuridico italiano – consentirebbe un ampliamento delle possibilità di attuazione e scambio delle diverse esperienze trattamentali, e teatrali in particolare, anche in ambito internazionale.

Tutto ciò premesso, e tenendo presente che le prime esperienze di attività teatrali all'interno del mondo penitenziario risalgono al 1982 a Rebibbia, sembra ormai possibile poter parlare di una *politica culturale della Giustizia* che , per certi versi, ha avuto un primo momento di legittimazione lo scorso 3 aprile, data in cui è stato sottoscritto il *Protocollo inerente le Attività Trattamentali in materia di Spettacolo* tra Ministero della Giustizia e Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, con il quale è stato creato uno strumento di coordinamento interistituzionale, la *Consulta per le Attività Trattamentali in materia di Spettacolo*, allo scopo di sistematizzare le numerose iniziative che vengono realizzate e per individuare delle linee guida congiunte , riconoscendo nel carcere un possibile luogo di produzione artistica e di formazione nel campo dei mestieri dello spettacolo e nel teatro penitenziario un elemento qualificato della drammaturgia contemporanea, un'espressione di quello che viene definito "Teatro d'impegno civile", caratterizzato da una propria cifra stilistica capace di mobilitare le energie fisiche e spirituali inesprese e di offrire al mondo esterno uno spaccato esistenziale autentico e libero da pregiudizi e stereotipi.

Da questo primo momento di riconoscimento "ufficiale" di una politica culturale in ambito penitenziario sono scaturiti una serie di progetti ed eventi che possono essere considerati i primi passi di un percorso di valorizzazione delle iniziative artistiche di qualità che prendono forma all'interno del sistema penitenziario

Il primo evento è stato lo spettacolo dei detenuti-attori della Compagnia della Fortezza di Volterra diretti da Armando Punzo che hanno presentato "I Pescecani quel che resta di Bertold Brecht" al Teatro Valle di Roma la sera del 3 aprile scorso, a conclusione della giornata che ha visto la firma del citato protocollo di intesa tra MG e MBAC nell'ambito *dell'VIII Settimana di Promozione della Cultura*.

Le iniziative sono poi proseguite con l'incontro – spettacolo, tenutosi il 15 maggio scorso presso la casa circondariale di Rebibbia Nuovo Complesso di Roma, con la partecipazione di artisti di spicco del panorama italiano, Umberto Orsini, Giovanna Marini ed Elio De Capitani i quali – insieme ai detenuti-attori della Compagnia Liberi Artisti Associati di Rebibbia, diretti dal regista Fabio Cavalli - hanno proposto alcuni brani tratti dallo spettacolo *La ballata del*

carcere di Reading di Oscar Wilde e da *La Tempesta* di William Shakespeare, nella versione in napoletano antico di Eduardo De Filippo.

L'evento era aperto al pubblico ed ha rappresentato un significativo momento di *drammaturgia penitenziaria* poiché, da un lato, attori professionisti hanno rievocato il sistema penitenziario dell'Inghilterra vittoriana, dall'altro, i detenuti dell'alta sicurezza di Rebibbia hanno messo in scena un testo che rappresenta una potente metafora sulla colpa, sulla pena e sulla libertà.

Un terzo progetto è stato quello relativo al *Premio Annalisa Scafi* per il sostegno alla scrittura, memoria e drammaturgia penitenziaria, strutturato in un concorso di scrittura creativa e di drammaturgia rivolto a tutti gli Istituti penitenziari del territorio che è culminato nella messa in scena – il 31 luglio scorso all'interno della rassegna *I solisti del teatro*, storica manifestazione dell'Estate Romana che si tiene ogni estate ai Giardini della Filarmonica di Roma - del testo vincitore suddiviso in due atti “*Sette mandate*” e “*Via Tarquinia 20 biografia di un sogno*”, testo selezionato da un'autorevole giuria di scrittori ed artisti professionisti.

Il progetto è nato dalla collaborazione della Compagnia Teatro 91 (importante Compagnia della scena del teatro nazionale italiano) con la Direzione Generale dei detenuti e del trattamento del Dipartimento dell'Amministrazione Penitenziaria ed ha avuto il patrocinio del Ministero della Giustizia e come partners il Segretariato Sociale della Rai, il Teatro Eliseo ed il Comune di Roma-Assessorato alle Politiche Culturali.

L'iniziativa è stata – inoltre- corredata dalla mostra *La Parola flessibile*, un'installazione multimediale con cui sono stati valorizzati gli scritti più significativi raccolti nell'ambito del concorso e dal monologo *Il Libro della vita* di Mimoun El Barouni, detenuto attore della Compagnia della Fortezza di Volterra.

Considerati i buoni risultati raggiunti, il concorso ha ottenuto un co- finanziamento da parte del MBAC e del MG. e verrà riproposto anche per il prossimo anno.

A coronamento di questa serie di iniziative, vi saranno altri momenti che vedranno la collaborazione del Teatro Eliseo di Roma: l' inserimento nella programmazione del mese di dicembre della nuova creazione della Compagnia della Fortezza di Volterra ed una seconda settimana - a gennaio p.v.- con la messa in scena del testo vincitore del citato concorso di drammaturgia penitenziaria.

Le iniziative citate sono importanti e significative sotto diversi aspetti, il primo aspetto riguarda l'inserimento di alcune esperienze di teatro penitenziario all'interno del sistema teatrale italiano, il secondo aspetto è quello legato al contributo fattivo, da parte di un'impresa privata, ai percorsi trattamentali in materia di teatro e cinema, poiché è evidente che solo con la collaborazione dell' industria nazionale dello spettacolo ed il supporto delle amministrazioni centrali/locali e del privato sociale, possono crearsi serie e reali prospettive per la promozione della dimensione trattamentale dei percorsi artistici e teatrali realizzati negli istituti penitenziari.

A questo riguardo, si segnala brevemente un'altra iniziativa che ormai da diversi anni la Direzione Generale detenuti e trattamento sta portando avanti insieme all'Associazione *Medfilm Festival*, attraverso la partecipazione ad un festival cinematografico nato allo scopo di incentivare la conoscenza, la comprensione ed il rafforzamento delle relazioni sociali ed umane tra i paesi euromediterranei.

Gli Istituti penitenziari coinvolti hanno partecipato sia come giuria dei film in concorso sia con materiali audiovisivi di loro produzione i quali – pur non partecipando al concorso – sono stati proiettati presso importanti sedi del festival nella città di Roma in una speciale rassegna denominata “*Racconti dal carcere*”.

L'esperienza ha dimostrato la caratteristica di *linguaggio universale* del cinema, in grado di rappresentare e far comprendere con immediatezza le differenze culturali tra paesi e popoli

diversi svolgendo una funzione di mediazione delle differenze; su questo piano lo strumento cinematografico si è rivelato il più idoneo ad essere rivolto ad un pubblico adulto di provenienza eterogenea, non solo dal punto di vista geografico ma anche sotto il profilo culturale e dell'esperienza di vita.

Nell'edizione appena conclusa il cui tema è stato “*Identità e Lavoro*”, la partecipazione dell'Amministrazione penitenziaria si è ampliata con l'allestimento di un punto vendita ove è stato possibile acquistare miele, piante aromatiche, vino, olio, prodotti dolciari biologici, caffè e zafferano prodotti dalle lavorazioni agricole di diversi Istituti penitenziari.

E' stato in questo modo realizzato un *circolo virtuoso* che – partendo dalle attività espressive comunicative del cinema - è arrivato a toccare gli aspetti produttivi, consentendo la valorizzazione di quegli elementi positivi del mondo penitenziario, mediante i quali è stato possibile presentare al pubblico esterno ed alla società civile un'immagine del carcere molto lontana da quella normalmente gravata da stereotipi e pregiudizi che si ritrova nelle pagine di cronaca nera. A conclusione di questo excursus sulle diverse iniziative in atto, si segnala un progetto ambizioso cui sta lavorando la casa di reclusione di Volterra denominato “*Il Carcere di Volterra da Istituto di Pena a Istituto di Cultura*” che vede il partenariato della regione Toscana, della Provincia di Pisa e del Comune di Volterra e che dovrebbe condurre alla realizzazione – all'interno dell'istituto di Volterra - di un centro di produzione teatrale basato su percorsi formativi di qualificazione di figure professionali nell'ambito dei mestieri dello spettacolo anche mediante l'attivazione di un Corso di Laurea del DAMS dell'Università di Bologna sul teatro nei luoghi di disagio.

Per questo progetto è stato chiesto il finanziamento alla Cassa Ammende del Dipartimento dell'Amministrazione Penitenziaria, organo che ha la funzione di finanziare progetti dell'Amministrazione penitenziaria che utilizzano le disponibilità finanziarie dei fondi comunitari e programmi finalizzati a favorire il reinserimento sociale dei detenuti e degli internati, ed attualmente è ancora nell'elenco dei progetti da sottoporre al vagli del consiglio di amministrazione dell'ente.

Da quanto evidenziato, si ritiene possa emergere il reale convincimento della DG detenuti e trattamento a considerare le attività artistico/ espressive quali elementi qualificanti del trattamento penitenziario e strumenti privilegiati per promuovere quell'apertura del carcere al mondo esterno ed alla forze positive della società civile senza la quale tutti gli interventi di natura trattamentale rischiano di rimanere sterili azioni di contenimento e di occupazione di un tempo “inoccupato” e dilatato quale è quello che caratterizza la condizione detentiva.

Molto è stato fatto e molto rimane da fare, poiché i tempi sono maturi per superare il momento dell'entusiasmo e dell'improvvisazione per arrivare ad attuare “azioni di sistema” che richiedono un impegno coerente, costante e condiviso sotto il profilo metodologico ed organizzativo al fine di superare prassi cristallizzate attraverso l' ampliamento degli spazi di riflessione a tutti coloro che potranno fornire un valido contributo in tal senso.

5.3. Verso un diverso approccio al trattamento delle persone in esecuzione penale. Il ruolo del provveditorato regionale. Riflessioni su un'esperienza.

Patrizia Ciardiello¹⁸⁰

SOMMARIO: *Premessa - Introduzione* – 1. La cornice normativa – 2. L'esperienza in corso – 2.1. Il contesto organizzativo. *Un'analisi dei nodi critici* – 2.2. Le direttrici dell'intervento – 3. I passi ulteriori - *Conclusioni*

Premessa

Allo scopo di anticipare (una parte de)i limiti del mio lavoro, è importante precisare che prescindere dall'entrare nel merito della *caotica mescolanza di luoghi comuni della vecchia e nuova cultura che caratterizza quanto ruota attorno alla pena detentiva...e che è anche il riflesso delle ambiguità e ambivalenze che attraversano l'opinione pubblica* (MOSCONI 2001a: 23-29); che darò per note gran parte delle questioni, ormai ampiamente dibattute, che caratterizzano il sistema dei delitti e delle pene nel nostro paese: la perdurante centralità della pena detentiva; la separazione fra politiche penitenziarie e orientamenti in materia di politiche criminali; la tendenza all'espansione del controllo penale interno ed esterno al carcere nella scia di quanto caratterizza l'evoluzione del sistema penale negli Stati Uniti e in Europa (WACQUANT 2000); la reale praticabilità delle trasformazioni richieste dal nuovo regolamento di esecuzione connessa alla crisi del *welfare state*; la connessa, alta probabilità che continui a rimanere ingestibile, a causa della mutata composizione della popolazione detenuta, ma anche del sovraffollamento che da tempo connota stabilmente le carceri del paese, “*la disparità tra risorse disponibili, in termini di operatori ed attività trattamentali, e numero di “utenti”*” (MOSCONI 2001b:16), oggi accresciuta in considerazione del recente passaggio a mansioni di coordinamento di una rilevante quota degli operatori dell'area sociale e pedagogica e della mancata previsione di un connesso *turn-over*; il nodo della effettiva ricaduta di pur qualificate iniziative di formazione del personale poiché “*la formazione funziona solo se vi sono, sullo sfondo, scelte politiche convergenti e risorse umane ed economiche destinate alla soluzione dei problemi. Là dove questo non esiste come minimo comune denominatore di partenza, le eventuali “buone intenzioni” individuali sono destinate alla deriva, alla frustrazione e – come ultima sponda - al disimpegno*” (PEPA 1992a:31).

Sono, peraltro, consapevole del rischio di concorrere a un mero rinnovamento del lessico istituzionale (MOSCONI 2001c:28) come chiunque, all'interno o all'esterno dell'istituzione penitenziaria, punti a dare corpo a qualcuna delle citate “buone intenzioni”, sia pure da una posizione, come la mia, che definirei come caratterizzata da un *disincanto attivo*. Il disincanto di chi appartiene tuttora alla schiera di quelli che Foucault definì “piccoli funzionari dell'ortopedia morale” e che, da tempo, nella consapevolezza di quanto possa essere attraente “*perdersi in utopistiche prospettive di rapido superamento dell'afflizione penale e penitenziaria*” (MOSCONI 2001c:30), pur conservando come stella fissa la graduale riduzione del ricorso al diritto penale ed al carcere, si confronta, fra mille defatiganti dubbi, con i paradossi che caratterizzano il sistema dell'esecuzione penale in carcere e con la necessità di testimoniare nella quotidianità il desiderio di rintracciare, ovunque essi siano, compagni di strada che vogliano, come me e con me, “*operare nel senso favorevole ad una diversa rappresentazione sociale della problematicità oggi criminalizzata*” (PAVARINI 1992:47).

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Introduzione

Di recente, Giovanni Tamburino ha scritto che il sistema carcerario italiano è caratterizzato da una serie di paradossi ed è all'enunciazione di due di tali paradossi che desidero affidare l'incipit del presente lavoro: quello della *pianificazione impossibile*, connessa, secondo l'autore, alla breve e spesso *"imprevedibile durata della permanenza in carcere che comporta l'estrema difficoltà di pianificare la scuola, i corsi di qualificazione professionale, il lavoro e qualunque altro progetto"*; quello del *buon funzionamento* che significa *"che... il carcere che funziona bene rende socialmente irresistibile la richiesta di farvi ricorso. Il cattivo funzionamento può essere l'estrema difesa contro l'esplosione da sovraccarico. Soltanto il sovraffollamento, che comporta com'è ovvio il deteriorarsi del funzionamento, funge da calmiera rispetto all'invocazione "più carcere!" che viene dalla società"* (TAMBURINO 2000a:172-173).

Come Tamburino *"Non riesco più a credere che dipenda dal caso o dalla cattiva volontà se in luoghi e tempi diversi, sotto regimi politici agli antipodi, il carcere ripete gli stessi errori"* e, ciononostante, credo, come l'autore, che il disincanto non possa tramutarsi in un invito alla rassegnazione, ma in *"un invito a prendere bene le misure"* (TAMBURINO 2000b: 170).

Accolgo tale invito e, nel segno del *"prendere bene le misure"*, svilupperò, anche attingendo ad un'esperienza in corso, una riflessione concernente una possibile declinazione in termini operativi delle *"indicazioni offerte dai nuovi paradigmi affermatasi in ambito criminologico e psicologico-giuridico"* (PATRIZI 1997a: 89) nella ridefinizione dei parametri di trattamento delle persone in esecuzione penale. Assumo, in tal senso, che i Provveditorati Regionali dell'Amministrazione Penitenziaria - strutture amministrative di rango intermedio non adeguatamente valorizzate dal finora timido decentramento delle attribuzioni - possono assumere, in prospettiva, un ruolo significativo nel supportare, all'interno del distretto di competenza, la progressiva apertura, attraverso adeguati programmi di formazione del personale e la metodologia della consulenza di processo, ad una diversa concezione del trattamento. Un trattamento che sia *"finalizzato non tanto all'obiettivo di modificare gli atteggiamenti personali, secondo un modello che, per la sua ambizione ed astrattezza e per non essere accompagnato da più concrete indicazioni quanto ai percorsi da seguire, può generare inerzia... quanto a quello di incidere sulla trama delle relazioni personali e sociali degli interessati e, così, favorirne il reinserimento sociale"* (GIANFROTTA 1999b: 31-32). Un trattamento che, tenendo conto del nucleo positivo comune a tutti i filoni in cui storicamente si è articolata la critica all'ideologia *"classica"*, deposta ogni *ingenua fiducia* nelle capacità della scienza di formulare diagnosi circa le cause della devianza e prognosi circa il rischio di recidiva (cfr. DAGA 1990a: 1321), sia finalizzato alla promozione di comportamenti non lesivi dell'ordine sociale, *con stretto riferimento ai precetti della legge penale*. Un trattamento che si avvalga, pertanto, di *"metodologie che dovranno prescindere da ogni approccio coattivo diretto o indiretto (realtà peraltro tanto più difficile da realizzare quanto più, attraverso l'introduzione di fatto di un sistema premiale, in molte situazioni si è in presenza di una trasposizione della antica finalità correzionale nella più realistica finalità disciplinare interna al sistema) e dovrebbero invece ridefinirsi nell'ottica del "servizio" (DAGA 1990b: 1310).*

È noto, in proposito, come il più recente dialogo fra mondo scientifico e operatività interna al sistema dell'esecuzione penale vada dipanandosi intorno alla dialettica fra l'ottica premiale, imperniata sull'attenzione specialistica al reo, ed un'ottica che privilegia le dimensioni interattive e di contesto.

Se il riferimento al binomio premio-punizione appare tuttora prevalente fra i criteri ispiratori del *sentencing* della Magistratura di Sorveglianza (anche se autorevoli autori sostengono che da tempo l'apertura ai percorsi di alternatività, nei fatti, si fonda, piuttosto che sulla valutazione della progressione nel trattamento o sulla gravità degli illeciti che hanno

determinato la situazione stessa, sulla valutazione delle risorse/opportunità - economiche, sociali, culturali - degli attori coinvolti nella situazione problematica: MOSCONI (2001d: 18), è pur vero che hanno fatto la loro comparsa, anche all'interno della novellazione di settore, alcuni dispositivi che possono, a mio parere, confortare nella ricerca di approcci operativi in grado di farsi carico dell'aumento di complessità che investe, a diversi livelli, il sistema della giustizia.

Va prospettandosi, infatti, l'emergere di una nuova operatività coerente con un'accezione di *"trattamento come intervento costruito con l'individuo in interazione, sulla base delle esigenze individuate nel corso dell'incontro operativo e non di ipotetiche cause del comportamento delinquenziale"* (PATRIZI 1997b: 91). Si tratta di un'operatività che abbisogna – ed è in qualche modo l'esito - di uno spostamento del *focus* dell'agire di ruolo *"dalla specializzazione tecnica verso competenze relazionali articolate, capaci di integrare la specificità delle proprie funzioni nelle varietà dei ruoli interagenti"*, nella direzione di una competenza sovralfunzionale in grado di sostenere l'operatore nell'interrogarsi *"sulle funzionalità del proprio agire non solo, né principalmente, rispetto all'evoluzione del singolo caso, ma in un'ottica più complessa che comprenda l'organizzazione, i ruoli in essa inseriti, gli altri sistemi di interazione"* (PATRIZI 1997c: 92).

Concordo con quanti, nell'ambito di una riflessione sulle nuove prospettive della psicologia in rapporto al trattamento penitenziario, hanno indicato un'alternativa concettuale nell'assunzione del vincolo normativo come fonte di informazione e come strumento per un intervento che valorizzi le risorse individuali e di contesto, sollecitando l'attuazione di programmi operativi ad esse più pertinenti (PATRIZI 1997d: 91).

In tal senso, l'intera riflessione che segue intende prendere spunto dagli elementi germinativi, a mio parere di una certa pregnanza, contenuti, *in nuce*, nel quinto comma dell'art. 115 del Nuovo Regolamento di Esecuzione: *"L'idoneità dei programmi di trattamento a perseguire le finalità della rieducazione è verificata attraverso appropriati metodi di ricerca qualitativa"*.

Non entrerà, in questa sede, nel merito della scelta del legislatore di collocare tale asserzione, nell'ambito del Titolo II della legge, avente per oggetto le *"Disposizioni relative all'organizzazione penitenziaria"*, all'interno di un articolo intitolato *"Distribuzione dei detenuti e degli internati negli istituti"*. Né sottolineerò che, in ogni caso, il lessico utilizzato rinvia, pur sempre, alla rieducazione e alla connessa costellazione semantica¹⁸¹.

Quel che mi preme qui rilevare attiene ad un profilo più squisitamente filosofico-giuridico, rispetto al quale la norma in questione mi pare introduca in forma esplicita e, credo, del tutto inedita nell'ambito del discorso sul *come* punire l'affermazione che è necessario accertare la congruità fra il *fine* (perseguire la finalità rieducativa) ed i *mezzi* utilizzati (i programmi individualizzati di trattamento, inclusivi delle scelte concernenti l'assegnazione dei condannati ad un determinato circuito differenziato).

Introdurre nella norma un richiamo alla necessità (di più, all'obbligo) di riconoscere la relazione di consanguineità fra i mezzi e i fini (*"Fra i mezzi e i fini c'è la stessa inviolabile relazione che esiste fra il seme e l'albero"* - Gandhi) in abbinamento all'accentuazione, contenuta nel secondo comma del primo articolo del Regolamento stesso e precedentemente richiamata, della proiezione che gli interventi devono assumere verso la trama delle relazioni personali e sociali delle persone condannate risulta, a mio parere, gravido di implicazioni di significativo spessore.

Penso al riverbero di tali implicazioni, oltre che sulla qualità dell'azione amministrativa in senso ampio, sulla direzione strategica degli interventi finalizzati al cambiamento delle

¹⁸¹ Del resto, è del tutto comprensibile che *"Un sistema così tenacemente attraversato dalla retorica correzionale-riabilitativa... sia portato a declinare ogni cosa, anche "il nuovo", attraverso l'unico vocabolario che conosce, ovvero attraverso quello che conosce meglio"* (PAVARINI 2001:129).

condizioni personali e sociali che ostacolano *“la costruttiva partecipazione sociale”* delle persone condannate. Penso all’opportunità di avvalersi delle suggestioni offerte da tali riferimenti normativi, *“mantenendosi entro i confini di cambiamento definiti dal vincolo giuridico”* (PATRIZI 1997e: 90) per concepire come attraversati dal medesimo *filo rosso* sia l’impegno di contrastare attivamente gli effetti negativi indotti dalla privazione della libertà sia quello di promuovere la modificazione dei contesti delle organizzazioni che tale impegno devono supportare: l’assunzione del sistema dell’esecuzione penale come sistema complesso, in cui le persone e le organizzazioni sono parti in relazione e appartengono a più ampi sistemi interagenti, in cui le comunicazioni e le interazioni *“si estendono oltre il problema rappresentato dal singolo caso”* (PATRIZI 1997f: 90).

È in questo orizzonte di senso che credo possa iscriversi la trama di progettualità oggetto della presente trattazione.

Entrando nel merito delle premesse concettuali e metodologiche che ne costituiscono il fondamento, credo necessario dichiarare la mia adesione al paradigma costruzionista, caratterizzato dalla concezione della realtà come strettamente connessa ai nomi, ai concetti e ai costrutti analitici che gli uomini impiegano per descriverla, ma anche dal ritenere che i significati *“hanno origine e rilevanza nella cultura in cui sono stati creati”* (BRUNER 2001: 17). In tal senso, sono molto attenta da tempo – nell’alveo di una riflessione sulla centralità delle risorse umane nel processo di miglioramento della qualità del servizio reso - alle Teorie dell’Azione organizzativa che colgono l’organizzazione nella sua dimensione processuale. Secondo tali Teorie, struttura organizzativa e agire organizzativo non sono due entità separate da mettere in una sequenza causale gerarchica, ma due aspetti inscindibili dell’organizzazione; l’organizzazione non è uno strumento docile nelle mani di agenti capaci di massimizzarne l’utilità e non è un sistema dotato di razionalità oggettiva; l’azione presuppone delle decisioni che vanno decifrate nel contesto delle *“premesse decisionali”* entro il quale l’azione prende forma (ALBANO 2000).

Nell’approccio alla questione del cambiamento degli individui, dei gruppi e delle organizzazioni tale paradigma comporta il concepire il cambiamento stesso come agganciato ad una molteplicità di principi regolativi, che sono al contempo condizione, ma anche conseguenza dell’agire degli individui.

Accogliendo una suggestione di Prigogine e Stengers utilizzata, di recente, da un autore che se ne è avvalso per una riflessione sulla progettazione nelle organizzazioni, ritengo che *“i sistemi complessi, quali sono anche le organizzazioni, evolvono secondo schemi che potremmo definire “ad albero”. I punti di biforcazione corrispondono a modalità equivalenti di sviluppo. In questi sistemi non è possibile prevedere la direzione di crescita né è possibile una reversibilità del cambiamento. Come in un albero non possiamo sapere quale specifica direzione prenderà una gemma – ciò dipende da tutta una serie di variabili ambientali - così nei sistemi complessi nuove piccole iniziative (i piccoli rami) o segni di novità (le gemme) non sappiamo se e quanto potranno svilupparsi e in che direzione. ...Se vogliamo sviluppare la parte destra di un albero nel nostro giardino dovremo intervenire sui nuovi rami e sulle gemme per “assistere” il suo cambiamento, ma non potremo farlo se non presenta biforcazioni. Far cambiare direzione a un treno mentre viaggia sui binari è assai difficile, richiede grandi energie e può avere effetti disastrosi, come nel deragliamento. Salvo che in occasione di uno scambio (biforcazione): potremo allora, con l’immissione di piccole dosi di energia, intervenire per farlo procedere in una direzione altra”* (ORSENIGO 1999a: 49).

Considerata la possibilità che grandi sforzi suscitino grandi resistenze e, di conseguenza, non siano in grado di fornire i risultati attesi, da tempo mi ispiro a tale metafora per tentare di porre in essere, di concerto con altre componenti dell’ufficio, un sostegno al cambiamento che passi attraverso il presidio delle criticità rappresentate dalle *“biforcazioni”*.

Tale sostegno tenta di esprimersi attraverso una strategia calibrata sulle incertezze e le turbolenze che attraversano incessantemente i contesti operativi interessati, modulata sulle informazioni altrettanto incessantemente raccolte e verificate, modificando l'azione in funzione delle informazioni raccolte e dei casi incontrati strada facendo. Una strategia attenta alla complessità etica del sistema giustizia e alla difficoltà, per i professionisti e le istituzioni che interagiscono nei diversi ruoli, di rintracciare linearità e coerenza fra norme penali, processuali, penitenziarie e aspettative socio culturali e al loro confrontarsi con il fatto che la propria legittimazione ad operare nella giustizia ha caratteristiche contraddittorie e conflittuali, soprattutto sul piano etico (DE LEO 1990) . Una strategia che fa perno su una formazione che, sulle orme di Bateson, si configura, *“come processo nel quale colui che apprende si possa imbattere nei più svariati facilitatori di connessioni... e possa trarre giovamento da tutto ciò che incontra stabilendo nessi ”* (DEMETRIO 1994: 237), costituendosi, per tale via, come fondamento dell'azione volta al cambiamento organizzativo (VERDE 1989: 26)

In tal senso, sono del parere che i Provveditorati Regionali possano assumere un ruolo più significativo che in passato nel sostenere l'avvio di un processo di apprendimento organizzativo diffuso, un processo finalizzato all'innesto in tutte le realtà operative dei rispettivi territori di competenza di nuclei germinativi di innovazione in grado di favorire la riflessione, all'interno di contesti dominati da un'emergenza da tempo non più congiunturale, sull'esistenza di una irriducibile molteplicità di angolazioni, di punti di vista, di posizionamenti che i diversi attori in interazione intrattengono e sulla generazione di un incessante processo di mutuo adattamento di individui e contesti (CALLARI GALLI – HARRISON: 1992)

Ne consegue che la progettualità connessa si caratterizza per alcuni assunti: le organizzazioni si configurano come contesti di apprendimento continuo; formare, di conseguenza, significa favorire il riorientamento dei comportamenti delle persone e delle organizzazioni attraverso la fusione tra apprendimento e lavoro, un lavorare apprendendo in cui gli interventi formativi *off-the-job* sono soltanto punti di sostegno, rafforzamento o accelerazione di un processo ininterrotto; in tal senso, è opportuno puntare sul rinforzo della capacità di lavorare per progetti, dell'autoformazione individuale e di gruppo attraverso interventi che si collochino a cavallo tra la formazione e lo sviluppo organizzativo (TOMASSINI 1995); il cambiamento delle persone e delle organizzazioni é solo in parte prevedibile e governabile e la razionalità dell'agire sociale in un ambiente complesso é assolutamente limitata (Luhmann); la connessa opportunità di evitare *“ogni tentativo diretto di influenzare l'azione altrui puntando, piuttosto, all'allestimento di situazioni o contesti nei quali qualche cambiamento possa avvenire”* (BATESON 1997: 386).

1. La cornice normativa

Credo che uno dei principali ostacoli sulla via dell'innovazione sia rappresentato, per l'amministrazione penitenziaria, dalla difficoltà a concepire l'organizzazione come rete di processi, come esito della mutua assunzione di impegni tra attori che intendono raggiungere un obiettivo attraverso forme di cooperazione, come rete di relazioni tra persone (e istituzioni) che producono flussi di transazioni costruttori di significati affatto influenti sulla realizzazione dei fini posti a fondamento dell'istituzione stessa.

Il rilancio dei valori fondativi dell'azione dell'amministrazione penitenziaria - concorrere al reinserimento sociale delle persone che hanno trasgredito il patto sociale o, almeno, non ostacolarlo - non può non passare, a mio parere, attraverso il diffondersi e il consolidarsi di competenze orientate allo sviluppo di una progettualità diffusa connotata dalla cifra dell'integrazione interprofessionale e interistituzionale, richiamata esplicitamente in più punti del Nuovo Regolamento di Esecuzione.

Anche la circolare avente per oggetto “Accordi di programma con le Regioni e i Comuni per lo sviluppo di azioni comuni, progetti, opere e servizi” (12 febbraio 2001), ricordando quanto previsto in materia dalla legge di bilancio per il triennio 2000-2003, sottolineava che: *“... l’evoluzione dei rapporti con le Regioni... per il coordinamento di iniziative e progetti condivisi... richiedono lo sviluppo di un quadro di più intensa cooperazione istituzionale con l’amministrazione statale dal quale, in prospettiva, non sarà più possibile prescindere”*.

Ancora, la Relazione di programma acclusa al provvedimento di ripartizione dei fondi assegnati dal Ministro della Giustizia al Dipartimento e ai Provveditori regionali per il 2001 precisava: *“L’esigenza di attivare tutte le risorse e le opportunità del settore in un quadro di azioni sinergiche (concordate già dalla fase dell’ideazione e fino a quella della esecuzione e della verifica dei risultati) suggerisce di privilegiare gli interventi per obiettivi predeterminati e per progetti operativi sulla base di intese e di accordi di programma che coinvolgano tutti i soggetti istituzionali e a cui partecipino gli operatori privati o dell’associazionismo con proprie proposte o in adesione all’offerta di partenariato. Per la realizzazione di un sistema penitenziario gestibile e corrispondente a quello normativo, continuerà l’impegno per il rilancio delle iniziative in tema di attività di osservazione e trattamento, attraverso il potenziamento quali-quantitativo dei servizi destinati al sostegno dei detenuti”*.

2. L’esperienza in corso

Credo che l’attività citata nell’introduzione possa aspirare a collocarsi nell’alveo dell’appena delineato *frame* normativo e culturale poiché ascrivibile al perseguimento contestuale di più obiettivi profondamente interconnessi, a partire dall’allargamento della base del consenso circa l’obiettivo di dare concretezza a quel mutamento culturale che deve rendere possibile una nuova attenzione ai risultati del servizio reso.

È in tale direzione, infatti, che procede l’impegno che da qualche tempo mi vede attiva, con altri, nella tessitura di una trama di progettualità interne ed esterne all’Amministrazione Penitenziaria finalizzata alla graduale sollecitazione di una diversa attenzione alla qualità dell’offerta di istruzione e formazione professionale alle persone detenute.

Ho cominciato col cogliere l’opportunità di affiancare l’Istituto Regionale per la Ricerca Educativa della Lombardia nella costruzione di un progetto nazionale scaturito dall’intenzione del Ministero dell’Istruzione di far uscire dal cono d’ombra la formazione degli adulti in esecuzione penale e di promuovere una riflessione in grado di favorirne il rilancio. Il progetto – conclusosi all’inizio del 2002 - si prefiggeva di realizzare l’analisi dei fattori di successo all’origine delle “buone pratiche” diffuse sul territorio nazionale e, per converso, di comprendere, fatte salve le specificità locali, gli elementi culturali e organizzativi in grado di dar conto delle criticità diffusamente riscontrabili.

Come anticipato, mi avvarrò, operata un’analisi dei nodi culturali e organizzativi che caratterizzano il campo, dell’esperienza concretamente agita per sviluppare alcune riflessioni sulla progettazione, sull’integrazione tra progetti e sul ruolo che i Provveditorati Regionali possono assumere nel supporto alla diffusione e al consolidamento di competenze utili per costruire strumenti ontologicamente coerenti con i richiamati nuovi paradigmi criminologici. Alludo, nella fattispecie, ad una progettazione che si caratterizzi per il riferimento all’**integrazione sia come metodologia che come finalità**. Un’integrazione da concepirsi non come tendenziale assimilazione dei diversi attori e dei diversi sistemi o, peggio, come avallo ad una surrettizia riaffermazione da parte del sistema penal-penitenziario del proprio monopolio assoluto su tutto quanto concerne “dare sofferenza legale” (PAVARINI 1992: 40) quanto, piuttosto, come esito naturale della constatazione delle interdipendenze, come produzione di sintesi più pertinenti in grado di promuovere la trasformazione degli assetti autoreferenziali precedenti (PEPA 1992: 29).

In tal senso, il riferimento d'obbligo è ad una progettazione che parte dal presupposto che il cambiamento non è controllabile, è individuabile più come un processo che come un risultato, è il prodotto di interazioni non sempre prevedibili e avviene dentro ambiguità non eliminabili. Una progettazione che non è pianificazione, attenta alla ricerca delle generalizzazioni e delle uniformità. Una progettazione che va oltre il *problem solving*, focalizzato sulla ricerca delle migliori soluzioni possibili ai problemi che via via si pongono. Una progettazione che non è qualcosa di staccato dalla gestione organizzativa, ma ad essa è strettamente collegata, in quanto interna ad una prospettiva che mette in discussione la linearità del modello "progettazione-cambiamento" tipica del mito aziendale. Una progettazione, che si avvale dell'idea, derivata dall'osservazione di ciò che accade nelle organizzazioni (MINTZBERG 1991), "*di una diversa sequenza, circolare o intrecciata, in cui le azioni possono anticipare e determinare progetti, in cui i cambiamenti, a volte anche accidentali e spesso dalle origini assai complesse, possono a posteriori essere giustificati e inquadrati, per essere rappresentati come chiari e lineari. Ciò perché i cambiamenti si sviluppano attraverso forme di autorganizzazione, secondo traiettorie non lineari, caratterizzate da oscillazioni, incidenti, ambiguità, oltre che da progetti ben studiati*" (ORSENIGO 1999b: 21). Una progettazione, infine, che non contempla la suddivisione tra pensiero e azione perché "*l'azione stessa permette di conoscere*" (OLIVETTI MANOUKIAN 1999: 8). Una progettazione in grado di favorire il riconoscimento e l'attivazione dell'intrinseco collegamento fra il livello individuale, il livello organizzativo e il livello sociale (OLIVETTI MANOUKIAN 1999b: 117).

È opportuno, peraltro, precisare che penso ad un supporto alla progettazione inquadrabile nella prospettiva della **consulenza di processo** intesa come una pratica nella quale "*chi interviene (consulente o manager) mette in atto una pratica di ricerca e azione volta all'implicazione dell'insieme delle persone coinvolte che fanno tutte parte del campo di intervento*" (KANEKLIN 1992: XI).

2.1. Il contesto organizzativo. Un'analisi di alcuni nodi critici

Il contesto organizzativo dell'amministrazione penitenziaria è caratterizzato dall'incessante quanto obbligato riferimento per gli attori al metacontesto costituito dalle norme del diritto sostanziale, processuale e penale e ad una *mission* polisemica in cui coesistono costrutti antinomici (sicurezza/trattamento, aiuto/controllo, promozione di *empowerment*/incapacitazione) che agli attori compete far dialogare e temperare.

La complessità di tale mandato grava in diversa forma e con diverse sfumature su tutti gli operatori, istituzionali e non, chiamati a farsene carico: i direttori degli istituti di pena e dei Centri di Servizio Sociale, il personale responsabile della sicurezza, il personale socio pedagogico, i consulenti, gli insegnanti dei corsi di istruzione e formazione professionale, gli operatori dei servizi sociali e sanitari territoriali, i cittadini che volontariamente impiegano parte del proprio tempo per mantenere il collegamento fra tempi e luoghi della pena e tempi e luoghi della libertà, il privato sociale, i rappresentanti di enti locali cointeressati alla gestione dell'esecuzione penale.

Si tratta di una congerie di soggetti e di linguaggi, di mandati istituzionali, professionali e sociali portatori di specificità di rilevante spessore e variamente articolate, specificità cariche delle storie delle persone che le incarnano, dei servizi, delle associazioni e delle istituzioni di provenienza, dei territori in cui vivono e operano. L'incontro fra queste persone (e organizzazioni, storie, mandati, linguaggi...), potenzialmente assai fertile, viene più spesso percepito come una fatica al limite della sostenibilità, una fatica connessa prevalentemente, mi pare, alla simmetria dei ruoli e delle aspettative e alla diffusa presenza di rappresentazioni del cambiamento che diventano il principale ostacolo al cambiamento stesso.

Entrando nel merito e operando qualche semplificazione, è frequente che si confrontino *teorie in uso* (WEICK 1997) che portano gli appartenenti all'Amministrazione Penitenziaria ad

esercitare forme di intervento sbilanciate sul versante del controllo penale e gli appartenenti ad altri servizi e/o istituzioni a mettere fra parentesi l'obbligato (quanto ingombrante) riferimento al metacontesto giuridico. E ciò nonostante le *teorie dichiarate* implicino il comune fare riferimento alla cd. prevenzione speciale come a un complesso di interventi unitariamente volto al reinserimento sociale delle persone condannate attraverso il contemperamento delle esigenze di difesa sociale e la promozione di offerte mirate a rendere possibile quel reinserimento. In questo senso, ancora semplificando, accade di frequente che gli appartenenti all'amministrazione penitenziaria tendano a leggere alcuni interventi degli altri soggetti come velleitari e che, per converso, gli operatori *altri* non sfuggano alla tentazione di vedere ovunque resistenze connesse al malcelato desiderio di conservare il fattuale monopolio della gestione dell'esecuzione penale. L'una e l'altra parte tendono a chiedersi simmetriche rinunce e avvicinamenti ai territori di rispettiva competenza attraverso processi di fronteggiamento che si risolvono spesso in una fattuale *impasse* se non in aperte conflittualità.

Rispetto al cambiamento, prevalgono rappresentazioni semplificate che identificano quest'ultimo con un risultato piuttosto che con un processo, come l'esito di un atto sostanzialmente volitivo che può essere soddisfacente solo se realizza per intero i suoi obiettivi, come frutto di connessioni lineari fra persone/eventi che imprime l'*input* e il cambiamento desiderato. In ogni caso, è soprattutto agli altri che si chiede di cambiare e, nell'attesa di cambiamenti drammatici, si rinuncia a perseguire i cambiamenti possibili.

In questa situazione, è comprensibile come la pur prescritta apertura alla progettazione integrata sia destinata ad incontrare una diffusa resistenza. Peraltro, non è possibile sottacere che la polisemia della *mission* affidata agli organi istituzionalmente deputati ad amministrare l'esecuzione penale comporta una perdurante difficoltà a far assurgere la predisposizione dell'offerta di opportunità di reinserimento sociale al rango di *core business* dell'azione organizzativa e istituzionale. Ne consegue, sul fronte dell'amministrazione penitenziaria, l'inclinazione a mantenere comportamenti autoreferenziali e, in qualche misura, a marginalizzare le attività connesse a quell'offerta e gli operatori, interni o esterni all'amministrazione, chiamati a cogestire l'offerta stessa. Sicché non è infrequente che negli istituti di pena si moltiplichino le aree di progettazione e che ciascuna delle aree provi un interesse assai modesto per i progetti altrui investendo prevalentemente sui propri. In questo caso, *“l'integrazione avviene per affiancamento, senza un disegno d'insieme, essendo per contro comune il progetto di fare ognuno ciò che vuole nel suo spazio organizzativo”* (ORSENIGO 1999c: 141).

Nonostante tali difficoltà, in alcune realtà, grazie ad alcune congiunture favorevoli, va emergendo la consapevolezza che lavorare nell'area dell'esecuzione penale deve comportare la conquista di un diverso senso di appartenenza, l'acquisizione di competenze interfunzionali e interistituzionali che consentano alle persone e ai progetti di liberare le proprie potenzialità generatrici lavorando in quello spazio *ecologico* in cui tutti gli attori si implicano nella ricerca di un lessico proprio di quello spazio, diverso da quelli dei contesti professionali e istituzionali di provenienza.

È proprio nella promozione e nella diffusione di questa nuova, diversa sensibilità che credo che i Provveditorati regionali possano assumere un ruolo di rilevante significato poiché sono persuasa che *“il riuscire a integrare progetti, a collegare persone, a costruire significati condivisi, a dare un senso alle diversità che convivono nell'organizzazione, oltre che produttivo per il servizio o l'azienda, è colto dai singoli come segno di capacità generativa. Per contro, la frammentazione è sentita come il prodotto non solo dell'incapacità, dei limiti nel riuscire a coniugare i diversi desideri e progetti, ma anche come il risultato della distruttività attiva nell'organizzazione e in noi stessi. L'essere parte di un'organizzazione in grado di integrare progetti differenti protegge sia la sua capacità produttiva sia le persone che ne fanno parte”* (ORSENIGO 1999d:134).

2.2. Le direttrici dell'intervento

È all'interno di questo orizzonte di senso che da tempo lavoro per favorire una progettazione capace di tener conto compiutamente del fatto che nelle organizzazioni e, a maggior ragione, nel dialogo fra diverse organizzazioni ciascuno dei soggetti in campo attribuisce significati agli eventi e alle azioni a seconda dei processi mentali attivati e che, pertanto, è necessario pensare alla progettazione come a *“un processo che volta per volta costruisce, con i diversi attori del progetto, il significato e il senso delle azioni da intraprendere”*, in un'ottica di ricerca e di esplorazione in cui il *manager* assume il ruolo di “consulente di processo”.

Si tratta di un ruolo fondato su un modello secondo il quale *“il cliente possiede il problema all'inizio e per tutta la durata del processo di consulenza”* (SCHEIN 1992: 28) e il manager/consulente di processo può essere determinante nel portare le persone e i gruppi ad affinare le proprie capacità di identificare e risolvere i problemi, suggerire idee e alternative alle quali le persone e i gruppi non hanno pensato al contempo incoraggiandoli ad assumersi la responsabilità finale della decisione operativa e delle azioni da intraprendere. Nella consulenza di processo **diagnosi e intervento sono inscindibili**. Il solo fatto di porre domande o sollevare questioni costituisce di per sé un intervento poiché rende evidente la percezione di un problema meritevole di attenzione.

Nel progetto concernente il miglioramento della qualità dell'offerta di istruzione alle persone detenute (implicante il miglioramento dei processi organizzativi che quell'offerta devono supportare) sono da qualche tempo impegnata nello sforzo di partecipare con gli altri attori (i referenti dell'IRRE, quelli dell'Ufficio Scolastico Regionale, quelli del Coordinamento regionale delle iniziative in materia di Educazione degli Adulti, alcuni docenti già impegnati negli istituti di pena, quelli del competente Assessorato regionale) alla costruzione di un processo caratterizzato *“da un investimento accentuato sulla condivisione non solo del progetto, ma del processo stesso di costruzione concepito come parte integrante della progettazione”* (ORSENIGO 1999e: 147).

Tale processo di costruzione ha preso avvio dalla ricerca di condivisione circa la natura dei requisiti di un'offerta formativa in grado di sostenere effettivamente le persone detenute nel loro percorso di reinserimento sociale.

Nel tempo, in tal senso, siamo giunti a convenire che le persone iscritte ai corsi di istruzione/formazione: devono poter portare a termine i corsi e, nel caso di trasferimenti, devono poter proseguire i medesimi in un altro istituto di pena; devono poter coniugare la frequenza delle attività formative con l'espletamento di un'attività lavorativa; devono poter accedere all'aula senza ritardi; devono potersi avvalere del maggior numero possibile di sussidi, a partire, ad esempio, dalla consultazione dei libri disponibili presso la biblioteca dell'istituto; devono poter fruire di un'offerta qualitativamente adeguata al loro *status* di adulti e, dunque, adatta a favorire il recupero dei crediti formativi e a consentire loro di formarsi tenendo conto anche della necessità di reinserimento nel mondo del lavoro; devono poter avvalersi di una programmazione didattica coerente con gli obiettivi sopra citati.

Ci siamo, peraltro, avvalsi, in tale indagine, di quanto sancito in materia dal nuovo Regolamento di Esecuzione il cui varo ha conferito, attraverso gli artt. 41/46, una più decisa enfasi ai processi che devono supportare l'attuazione di quegli elementi positivi del *trattamento* identificati con l'istruzione e la formazione professionale.

Abbiamo proceduto nella costruzione di significati condivisi e nell'integrazione fra le diverse progettualità consapevolmente e inconsapevolmente all'opera allestendo una serie di occasioni di confronto con e fra i diversi attori¹⁸².

¹⁸² L'organizzazione di un seminario regionale volto a costruire una prima ricognizione dello stato dell'arte rivolto ai soli docenti impegnati nelle carceri lombarde (aprile 2000); l'organizzazione di un intervento tutto

Ne é emersa la conferma che: le persone detenute iscritte ai corsi di istruzione/formazione vengono di frequente trasferite – contrariamente a quanto sancito dall'art. 41 del Regolamento di Esecuzione (co.4) - prima del termine dei corsi medesimi; i trasferimenti avvengono, con altrettanta frequenza, senza che si attivino le procedure previste dal medesimo articolo per valutarne l'opportunità; salvo che in alcune realtà d'eccellenza, il Piano dell'Offerta Formativa non viene predisposto; non sono ancora state istituite le Commissioni didattiche previste, ancora ai sensi dell'art.41 (co. 6) del Regolamento, per supportare la programmazione e l'implementazione delle relative attività.

3. I passi ulteriori

Superata la fase di impegno prevalentemente esterno, conseguito il risultato di essere identificata dai soggetti a vario titolo attivi sulla scena quale *partner* a pieno titolo coinvolta nel perseguimento di obiettivi di miglioramento ormai percepiti come comuni, la tappa successiva del percorso ha comportato l'affrontare, sul fronte interno all'Amministrazione Penitenziaria, il problema della "creazione dei clienti interni". Tale problema è direttamente connesso al fatto che, allo stato, le citate criticità - a mio parere, in qualche misura, connesse all'ontologica resistenza del carcere al cambiamento - sono state rappresentate dai soggetti istituzionali deputati (fra i quali ci sono presidi e docenti da poco entrati in contatto col settore penitenziario, per intuibili ragioni molto sensibili alle difficoltà connesse a climi organizzativi non particolarmente accoglienti) e non dagli *staff* degli istituti di pena (all'interno dei quali prevalgono operatori con una anzianità di servizio medio-lunga che, verosimilmente, talora incoraggia a concepire tali climi come parte integrante delle *routines* operative). In tal senso, affrontare, il problema della "creazione dei clienti interni", come definito da Schein, si palesa come particolarmente importante per indurre la visibilizzazione dei problemi in campo, per mitigare le resistenze che possono avere origine dalla necessità delle persone di proteggere la propria identità sociale, per esprimere attenzione circa la capacità delle persone e dei gruppi cui appartengono di lavorare costruttivamente alla risoluzione del problema e circa il sostegno che in tal senso il Provveditorato Regionale é disposto a fornire.

Sempre nell'alveo dell'utilizzazione della metodologia della consulenza di processo, di recente è stata trasmessa agli operatori in servizio nelle realtà operative locali la richiesta di sostenere il Provveditorato regionale - nell'ambito delle attività che devono concorrere alla graduale applicazione delle novità introdotte dal D.P.R. 230/2000 - nella ricerca intorno alle condizioni che possono portare, entro la fine del 2002, all'istituzione presso ciascun istituto di pena delle Commissioni didattiche, organismi concepiti dal citato Regolamento come strumenti al servizio della programmazione congiunta delle attività didattiche e, dunque, del miglioramento della qualità dell'offerta di formazione alle persone detenute e della stabilità della relativa fruizione ponendo l'obiettivo di una sensibile riduzione della percentuale dei trasferimenti di persone iscritte a corsi scolastici o professionali.

È stata evidenziata l'opportunità di realizzare tale esplorazione preliminare insieme a rappresentanze di dirigenti scolastici e del corpo docente, nel corso di una o più riunioni ad hoc, perseguendo, per tale via, l'obiettivo di sollecitare forme di lavoro congiunto che, in

lombardo ad un seminario nazionale rivolto ai referenti di tutti gli IRRE del paese in cui ho sostenuto i protagonisti di alcune "buone pratiche" (docenti e operatori penitenziari) nello sforzo di definire e raccontare congiuntamente le proprie esperienze (*settembre 2000*); la co-costruzione di un modulo formativo per insegnanti interessati ad approfondire la conoscenza del settore dell'esecuzione penale cui hanno partecipato operatori istituzionali e non (*novembre 2000*); l'allestimento di un nuovo seminario nazionale rivolto ai referenti di tutti gli IRRE del paese concepito come ricognizione delle iniziative germinate a partire dall'*input* offerto nell'anno precedente (*aprile 2001*); l'organizzazione del primo incontro fra il Provveditore Regionale e il neo-Direttore dell'Ufficio Scolastico Regionale (*maggio 2001*) e la conseguente programmazione di iniziative in grado di costituire presupposto per la realizzazione, secondo tempi da convenirsi, della prima Conferenza Regionale dei Servizi relativa alle attività di istruzione e formazione negli istituti di pena lombardi per adulti.

quanto finalizzate all'integrazione, appaiono idonee a favorire l'integrazione. *“L'integrazione nella progettazione risulta tanto più profonda e articolata quanto più sono condivisi i valori di fondo; quando cioè in un servizio i membri... sono impegnati nella costruzione di sistemi di riferimento circa ciò che “é giusto fare” sul lavoro”* (ORSENIGO 1999f: 149).

La condivisione del senso dell'impegnarsi può, peraltro, costituire una prospettiva comune entro cui diventano più accettabili la differenziazione, la negoziazione, il compromesso, il conflitto e alimenta un circolo virtuoso in cui lo sperimentare la capacità organizzativa alimenta a sua volta la fiducia nella possibilità di costruire sistemi condivisi di senso. In tal modo, *“gli attori organizzativi possono vedersi in un ruolo di soggetti non solo protetti e orientati da valori dati, ma anche come coautori del senso dell'esistenza del proprio servizio”*(ORSENIGO 1999g: 149).

Completata la fase esplorativa, è prevista la restituzione agli operatori delle informazioni ricevute dal Provveditorato allo scopo di favorire il loro coinvolgimento nel processo di diagnosi dei problemi in campo. Tale processo di feedback *“dovrebbe stimolarli a mantenere il possesso del problema”* e consentirà di verificare insieme a loro l'accuratezza dei dati forniti/ricevuti; di chiedere ai gruppi di suddividere i problemi identificati indicando quelli sui quali possono intervenire direttamente e quali invece ritengono debbano essere affrontati diversamente, favorendo l'identificazione del livello migliore per affrontare ogni problema dato (SCHEIN 1992b: 166).

L'obiettivo perseguito, in questo caso, è quello di favorire **l'identificazione congiunta sia dei nodi critici che degli obiettivi di miglioramento** in vista della promozione, attraverso la costituzione delle Commissioni didattiche, a. di un ampliamento delle opportunità di accesso delle persone detenute all'istruzione/formazione; b. di una apprezzabile riduzione del tasso dei trasferimenti di iscritti ai relativi corsi; c. di un ampliamento delle capacità di progettazione integrata e degli ambiti di integrazione operativa; d. dell'apertura di stabili canali di comunicazione e della costituzione di poli di coordinamento fra docenti dei sistemi deputati all'erogazione di interventi in materia e *staff* degli istituti di pena chiamati ad allestire le condizioni più favorevoli all'implementazione di tali interventi.

In questa direzione, il Provveditorato Regionale, nel farsi carico dei problemi di propria competenza (quali i trasferimenti in ambito distrettuale), potrà procedere, d'intesa con gli altri soggetti istituzionali, alla programmazione della prima Conferenza regionale dei Servizi implicati nell'offerta alle persone detenute di opportunità di istruzione e formazione professionale. Quest'ultima potrà, auspicabilmente, favorire la concertazione fra i vari attori di iniziative da realizzare a supporto delle Commissioni didattiche e, più in generale, dell'integrazione progettuale ed operativa quali, ad esempio, l'implementazione di canali comunicativi e poli di coordinamento orizzontali e verticali e momenti di formazione congiunta, molto utili, in genere, per consentire l'elaborazione informale di questioni che le regole culturali d'interazione spesso non consentono di ammettere e/o affrontare. La Conferenza sarà, peraltro, concepita come tappa di avvicinamento alla realizzazione di *accordi di programma* fra i diversi attori coinvolti finalizzati alla definizione dei rispettivi impegni, delle linee caratterizzanti la comune progettualità, delle modalità di interazione e di valutazione della operatività posta in essere.

Invertendo una procedura da tempo invalsa e dimostratamente poco feconda, gli accordi in questione dovrebbero diventare non la pre-condizione dell'integrazione, ma l'esito di una sperimentazione sul campo di modelli di co-funzionamento, mera formalizzazione di uno sforzo di sistematizzazione da tempo in corso e, dunque, suggello di una progettualità già condivisa sia nel merito che nel metodo.

Altro importante tassello della progettualità *in progress* è **l'intenso programma di formazione congiunta** varato allo scopo di supportare anche per tale via la graduale costruzione di significati il più possibile affini:

il progetto “Il sistema in-formazione” – cofinanziato dalla Regione Lombardia e dal Fondo Sociale Europeo – si prefigge, attraverso nove azioni formative che investiranno l'intero distretto, di sostenere e **orientare i processi di servizio** posti in essere dai terminali locali dei sistemi cointeressati nell'offerta in argomento (coincidenti, in parte, con i componenti delle Commissioni didattiche e con i referenti locali delle medesime);

il progetto “Per il sistema in-formazione” – ammesso a finanziamento dall'Istituto Superiore di Studi Penitenziari – integrerà e affiancherà il progetto sopra citato attraverso una formazione/consulenza che coinvolgerà il *management* di supporto ai responsabili regionali dei sistemi coinvolti nell'offerta di istruzione e formazione professionale alle persone in esecuzione di pena. Attraverso tale progetto si intende perseguire la finalità di sostenere e **orientare i processi di direzione e controllo** posti in essere dalle componenti dei sistemi, formali e non, che, ad un livello strategico regionale, concorrono, ai sensi della normativa vigente in materia, alla definizione, alla gestione e allo sviluppo degli interventi nel campo in esame.

Entrambi i progetti hanno a proprio fondamento l'attenzione alla necessità, su cui sempre più convergono gli esperti della formazione, di perseguire, al di là della considerazione delle differenze dei ruoli professionali e istituzionali, una *“competenza sovralfunzionale capace di includere l'altro nel proprio ragionamento specialistico... e di interrelare le funzioni di pertinenza del ruolo con le competenze di altre figure professionali e con le politiche con cui l'organizzazione di appartenenza affronta il dialogo con l'esterno”* (PATRIZI 1995: 16-17). Il che significa porre al centro dell'azione formativa, oltre ai contenuti, le dimensioni processuali e la produzione di acquisizioni applicabili anche ad altri contenuti e contesti (PATRIZI 1995: 17-18). Tali opzioni consentono, peraltro, di assumere un *focus* contestuale, teso, cioè, ad includere nello stesso orizzonte visuale sia gli attori dell'offerta formativa ai condannati che i condannati interlocutori dell'offerta stessa (CIARDIELLO 2001: 23). Il che, a mio parere, è suscettibile, secondo un modello di circolarità ricorsiva, di implicazioni rispetto ad una molteplicità di profili.

In primo luogo, rispetto ad una sollecitazione dei protagonisti alla riconcettualizzazione delle prassi operative, dei modelli che ispirano l'assunzione del ruolo e forniscono i criteri di interpretazione della legge nella (auspicata) direzione di un riorientamento dei medesimi verso nuovi approcci alla funzione trattamentale e formativa; approcci che progressivamente si distolgano dal *paradigma del deficit*, *“espressione sintetica che intende lumeggiare l'aspetto sociologico della **mancanza** come causa cui attribuire la condizione della “devianza”: mancanza di opportunità, di educazione, di risorse, di cultura; forse anche mancanza di intelligenza, di carattere, di volontà”* (MARCHIORO 2000: 6) e, dunque, maggiormente attenti alle dimensioni interattive e di contesto.

In secondo luogo, a favorire la sperimentazione di capacità di metacognizione che possano essere trasferite, oltre che nell'attuazione di pratiche di progettazione congiunta e integrata, nella relazione educativo-formativa con le persone condannate. In fondo, come scrive Morin, la prima finalità dell'insegnamento, già definita a suo tempo da Montaigne, consiste nel prefiggersi l'obiettivo di promuovere la formazione di *“una testa ben fatta”*: più che l'accumulo del sapere è molto più importante disporre di un'attitudine generale a porre e a trattare i problemi, ma anche di principi organizzatori che permettano di collegare i saperi e di dare loro senso.

Ancora, sollecitare l'attenzione alle dimensioni processuali, contestuali e interattive dell'azione dovrebbe favorire l'aumento della sensibilità a cogliere la dimensione processuale della qualità dei servizi alla persona, caratterizzati in modo peculiare dalla dimensione relazionale e dialogica del processo di produzione (FAZZI 2001: 21).

Conclusioni

Mi piace l'idea secondo la quale chi intenda “ *la progettazione come ricerca-azione deve accompagnare il processo di costruzione degli obiettivi attraverso la costituzione di “luoghi di conversazione” tra i diversi attori del progetto, al fine di facilitare la costruzione di significati delle azioni-visioni sufficientemente condivisi e comuni da mobilitare le risorse emotive e cognitive di ciascun attore*” (D'ANGELLA-ORSENIGO 1999: 65). “*Il ruolo di catalizzatore può servire come canale di comunicazione fra due parti dell'organizzazione che per una ragione o per l'altra non possono parlarsi direttamente. Nell'ottica della consulenza di processo, l'obiettivo in situazioni simili é di svolgere quel ruolo solo finché ciò é necessario per aiutare l'organizzazione a sviluppare i propri canali di comunicazione e di feedback per il futuro*” (SCHEIN1992c: 179).

É proprio in questi termini che penso al mio lavoro e al ruolo del Provveditorato regionale e mi piace quella “capacità negativa” che Lanzara ritiene debba essere appannaggio di colui che progetta secondo l'approccio dell'indagine esplorativa: la capacità, in altri termini, (...) “*di essere vulnerabile al dubbio... senza volere a tutti costi e rapidamente pervenire a fatti e a motivi certi... essere capaci di accontentarsi di mezze conoscenze e di mantenere le cose in una sorta di animazione sospesa*” (LANZARA 1993: 13).

Mi pare che tale capacità sia l'indispensabile premessa di una *imprenditività* che torni ad aver voglia di esprimersi, nonostante la molteplicità, la contraddittorietà, il disordine, a sostegno degli orientamenti di valore che devono costituire l'orizzonte di senso in cui inscrivere le incertezze, i rischi, la fatica del lavoro al servizio della collettività. Una fatica che - rispetto al sistema dell'esecuzione penale - concepisco strettamente connessa alla finalità di affrontare il problema del *se*, del *come* e del *quanto* punire secondo un approccio che punti a restituire il diritto ad una dimensione ecologica. Un approccio capace di farsi carico compiutamente della corresponsabilità sociale nella genesi della devianza (EUSEBI 1994) e della correlata necessità che la comunità assuma come impegno non delegabile il reinserimento sociale dei trasgressori della norma penale.

“*Bisogna ricominciare a fare un lavoro a ritroso non per riaffermare, come si diceva in maniera assolutoria anni fa, che il crimine è prodotto dalla società, ma per restituire una dimensione ecologica al problema della trasgressione, della devianza. La qual cosa consiste esattamente in questo: che il crimine si produce dentro la società e che sempre dentro la società bisogna trovare i rimedi*” (RESTA 1996: 7).

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5.4. Educazione continua in carcere e supporto dei processi di cambiamento. Dall'uomo detenuto ai processi attivati dall'interazione¹⁸³.

Patrizia Ciardiello

Nell'avvicinarmi al compito di fornire un contributo ai lavori odierni, mi sono aperta anzitutto alle suggestioni provenienti dalla parola “cambiamento” che dà titolo all'evento odierno, parte di un progetto di ricerca-intervento sull'educazione non formale per detenuti inseriti in programmi di reinserimento socio-professionale attraverso pratiche teatrali.

Comincio, quindi, dal precisare che della parola “cambiamento” mi interessa sottolineare in primo luogo la duplice accezione di atto e/o effetto del cambiare e del cambiarsi.

E ancora voglio precisare che avverto distante quella concezione del cambiamento come risultato di un insieme di atti volitivi di qualcuno (nella fattispecie, l'istituzione o chi, al fianco dell'istituzione, ne integra l'intervento) che sa se, chi e come qualcun altro deve cambiare, nel nostro caso la persona che ha infranto la norma penale e sta espiando la condanna inflittale.

Desidero, piuttosto, darvi conto delle opzioni sottostanti alle attività che, nella regione in cui lavoro, cerchiamo di promuovere, attraverso la formazione del personale, tenendo conto delle direttive nazionali e regionali, per supportare un cambiamento attento ai principi posti a fondamento dell'apprendimento in età adulta, definito dagli organizzatori della Conferenza di Amburgo del 1997, “una chiave per il XXI secolo...”

L'educazione degli adulti diviene per questo più di un diritto; è la chiave di volta del ventunesimo secolo, poiché appare sia come una conseguenza di una partecipazione attiva dei cittadini, sia come una condizione per una piena partecipazione alla vita sociale. È un concetto forte a sostegno di uno sviluppo coerente dal punto di vista ecologico, e democratico, promotore di giustizia ed equità e di una spinta scientifica, sociale ed economica, indirizzati alla costruzione di un mondo, in cui il conflitto violento sia sostituito dal dialogo e da una cultura della pace, basata sul senso di giustizia”.

Il cambiamento che cerchiamo di promuovere è inteso in senso processuale, può essere soddisfacente anche se non realizza per intero i suoi obiettivi, e, soprattutto, non è concepito come l'esito di connessioni lineari fra persone/eventi che imprimono l'*input* e il mutamento desiderato.

Il cambiamento così concepito è un processo che coinvolge tutti gli attori del sistema, a partire da quanti, in carcere, sono investiti di compiti direttamente o indirettamente educativi. In questo senso penso come attraversati dal medesimo *filo rosso* sia l'impegno di contrastare attivamente gli effetti negativi indotti dalla privazione della libertà sia quello di promuovere la modificazione dei contesti delle organizzazioni che tale impegno devono supportare.

Si tratta di assumere che nel complesso sistema dell'esecuzione penale i detenuti, gli operatori istituzionali, quelli delle agenzie che a vario titolo costituiscono emanazione della società civile sono parti in relazione e appartengono a più ampi sistemi in incessante interazione.

Concordo da tempo con quanti hanno messo in luce che esiste una stretta connessione fra la teorie implicite degli operatori circa la cd. *questione criminale* (per semplificare, le opinioni circa le “cause” del crimine e le modalità di risposta più efficaci per “prevenire” la commissione di nuovi reati) e la qualità degli interventi a supporto dei processi di reinserimento sociale.

¹⁸³ Relazione tenuta durante il seminario di formazione del progetto TEATRODENTRO – 116674 – CP – 1 – 2004 1 – IT – Grundtvig – G11 a Barcellona dal 29 novembre al 3 dicembre 2006

In altri termini, sono persuasa che le agenzie e i servizi che partecipano alla risposta sociale ai comportamenti individuati come devianti esercitano una profonda influenza sulla riorganizzazione dell'identità della persona che li ha messi in atto.

Dunque, diventa particolarmente importante promuovere, sia attraverso la formazione del personale sia attraverso i processi educativi formali e informali che investono la persona detenuta, lo spostamento del focus dell'attenzione *dall'uomo detenuto ai processi attivati dai contesti della detenzione*. Questo può consentire di fare emergere progressivamente una nuova operatività coerente con un'accezione di *"trattamento come intervento costruito con l'individuo in interazione, sulla base delle esigenze individuate nel corso dell'incontro operativo e non di ipotetiche cause del comportamento delinquenziale"*.

Desidero qui sostenere che, se come ha scritto Marc De Maeyer, *"la prigione è un teatro nel quale tutti i ruoli si assomigliano e si ripetono"*, e se si vuole interrompere il perpetuarsi della recitazione di stanchi copioni da parte di ancor più stanchi attori, la responsabilità di introdurre una battuta inattesa e di riaccendere l'attenzione spetta anzitutto agli operatori, istituzionali e non, investiti di un ruolo – un qualsiasi ruolo - nel trattamento delle persone condannate.

In consonanza con l'evoluzione paradigmatica delle scienze, occorre distogliersi da determinismi vecchi e nuovi, a partire da quello che concepisce l'autore di reato come portatore di *deficit* di varia natura identificati come "cause" della devianza e che induce la stessa persona condannata a rappresentarsi con le stesse parole e gli stessi, abusati *script*. Qualcosa che diventa l'ostacolo principale al cambiamento tanto invocato.

Nei sistemi viventi, invece, come Ilya Prigogine e Isabelle Stengers, studiosi all'incrocio fra diverse aree disciplinari, hanno evidenziato, per promuovere il cambiamento occorre assistere i "punti di biforcazione", quelli che in un albero possono essere l'equivalente di una gemma, embrioni di un cambiamento non reversibile, ma nemmeno prevedibile.

Assistere il cambiamento e avvalersi delle "biforcazioni" per supportare le persone condannate nella ricerca di un modo di rappresentare se stessi e il proprio futuro che non sia già scritto: questa credo debba diventare la cifra del lavoro di tutti gli attori (torna la metafora teatrale) dell'esecuzione penale, senza distinzioni, pur nelle peculiarità dei diversi ruoli. E può diventarlo se anche gli operatori vengono sollecitati, anche attraverso la formazione, ad uscire dalla fissità dei ruoli e dalla monotonia dei repertori e a rappresentare e rappresentarsi la propria professione secondo punti di vista inediti.

E' così che i processi educativi, formali e non formali, posti in essere all'interno del carcere, possono concorrere a promuovere il reinserimento sociale e la conquista di una nuova cittadinanza da parte di chi ha violato la norma penale.

Credo, pertanto, che tutti gli interventi debbano, in tal senso:

- a) supportare i fattori di resilienza e di fronteggiamento attivo delle criticità connesse all'esperienza detentiva e post detentiva, promuovendo il riconoscimento e l'autoriconoscimento delle persone come pienamente competenti per l'azione;
- b) promuovere processi di progettazione partecipata in grado di sollecitare l'innovazione delle politiche concernenti l'esecuzione penale.

Quanto promosso da "Teatrodentro" – progetto in diversi modi incoraggiato e sostenuto dall'amministrazione penitenziaria lombarda e nazionale - credo possa collocarsi agevolmente nella cornice di senso appena delineata, in quanto imperniato sia sulla valorizzazione dei processi di *empowerment* sia sul sostegno di progettazioni congiunte di percorsi individualizzati di reinserimento socio-professionale.

In una prospettiva europea, sulla strada che deve portare verso comuni politiche anche in materia di risposte al *se*, al *quanto* e al *come* punire, anche occasioni e progetti come questi possono avvicinare ad una diversa rappresentazione sociale della questione del reinserimento sociale dei condannati.

Diversa per il diverso approccio alla questione “sicurezza”, che possa tornare ad essere anzitutto sicurezza dei diritti.

Diversa per il ridotto ricorso alla pena e al carcere, sulla cui efficacia occorre non cessare di riflettere.

Diversa perché libera da quelle persuasioni di senso comune assai diffuse oltreoceano e in pericolosa espansione anche nel vecchio continente secondo cui “trattare” un autore di reato significa curarne una qualche presunta patologia ovvero enfatizzare la dimensione afflittiva della pena, magari coniugando terapia, punizione e riparazione coatta del danno inferto alle vittime.

Diversa perché pienamente erede di una tradizione di pensiero avversa alle semplificazioni e ai riduzionismi, nemici di qualsivoglia idea di cambiamento.

Grazie per la vostra attenzione.

Conclusions

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While I'm getting ready to write the conclusions of this publication, after taking care of it with passion and with the effort of someone who can't find the boundary of her views, reading the summary I'm surprised by a thought: the introduction is one, strictly singular, while conclusions are always plural.

Probably today no researcher would take the risk to conclude an enquiry with the statement of a single and final truth regarding any phenomenal datum.

But in our case, this plurality is not the result of a suspension, but rather the expression of a choice that lead us all the way through this research work, taking us to undertake the huge challenge of choosing complexity as a standard method. This is the reason why we resisted the temptation to reduce the complexity within which the non formal education processes move within detention contexts, in order to observe it, make it into a generative opportunity and try to carry out with all the subjects involved in this project the progressive and participate construction of a plural thought which seems to us a fundamental resource in order to be able to think and carry out good praxis.

Taking advantage of the expert skills of the project participants, of the stimulant reflections and observations collected among speakers who took part to the training seminars and of the ceaseless questions of the participants, we tried to explore a wide territory whose map is not completely defined, but is extraordinarily rich all the same.

All themes discussed here brought us to a dynamic and complex vision of non formal education in prison: the person, the relationship, contexts, institutions, training practices, operators, skills, the evaluation, integrations, processes, products...Everything showed here its multiple value, both as a restraint and as a potential.

This research has definitely confirmed many of the hypotheses it started from, which are structured around a core theme: cinema and theatre processes as non formal education practices, prove to generate many resources for personal change and evolution; they give rise to a training situation gifted with special qualities that both experience and theoretic reconnaissance show as being particularly significant in the specific condition of imprisonment.

Our reflection lingered on the enquiry of two areas of experience: theatre in prison and specifically the Milan and Barcelona situations, and cinema in prison, with reference to the Marseilles situation. These experiences are particularly meaningful, and involve different subjects, both as groups and as individuals (people, groups, institutions, local communities), that have been going on for years now, testing the used practices, starting research processes and operators' training. We can state they are standards to which many of the new experiences look to for reference.

In trying to translate the resources that ripened in these experiences, into educational skills for the operators working in prison with different roles, with specific attention to the observation processes, we realized all their richness and complexity. It is difficult to define, that is outline the boundaries of a clear contour to all the spurs and pedagogical energies generated in this process. A term is there to help us: *performance*. While *form* implies a definition, that is the structure of an organisation that holds in place, *performance* is a tension, a movement towards a form, but not its conclusion. Performance practices, which were the object of our research as training experiences in detention contexts, both through theatre work resources and cinema production, are marked by this dynamicity, this movement towards a form without concluding it. And this dynamicity marks our research as well, that, even looking through important acquisitions and method suggestions, it remains pervaded by tension and change. This is the

attitude that enables it to get close to the complexity of the enquired object – non formal educational processes in detention contexts – and to conserve the specific quality of so many resources of theatre practice and cinema research they bring with them.