

Review of "Polisanalisi. Una clinica del sociale"

By Giulia Proietti, Francesca Granier, Federica Pantaleo

Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2019

"The social is not external but very much internal too and penetrates the innermost being of the individual personality".

As Foulkes already stated in 1964, it is impossible on a psychological level to separate between what is internal and what is external. Individuals, groups and organizations are deeply absorbed in transpersonal relationships that are articulated on several levels. There is no psyche without a relationship with the evolution of history and culture (and vice versa). It is tangled with political, historical, social, biological and educational changes. Overall, the volume "PolisAnalisi" offers a proposal that expands and continues the overcoming of intrapsychic individualism. The author, Filippo Pergola, tried to contribute to the study of the relationship between the internal world and mind-body-relationship, using the epistemology of complexity to overcome the idea that between these aspects there was a before and an after.

The "PolisAnalisi", intended as "the care of the common space of coexistence", constitutes a key to the exploration of the problems of social organization and in particular for that dimension of human life which is politics. Every political situation is an expression of a parallel psychic problem present in millions of individuals; in turn, each personality is also the result of history and worldviews in a social context to which they belong. Everything that happens in the city (polis) is a set of mental facts, today under the dominion of primitive affects, which lead to restricted points of view in the "friend-enemy" scheme, for the desperate search for a stable meaning. The "immunity democracy" of the post-modern era is based on immunization. Therefore, the

citizen is mainly driven to ask for protection and not participation, which would be the cornerstone of democracy. Protection involves a series of measures, of isolation or even self-isolation, which turn into fear of contact with others. Analyzing the psychological roots of "civil pathologies", we come to ask the question: "Who is my enemy?". Conflicts in the workplace and family, climate and economic crisis, destruction of mother earth, xenophobias, extremism, terrorism and devaluation of institutions have common psychological causes. Impotence, shame and social anguish generate resentment and paranoia: to simplify conflicts we project them into distant adversaries, turning the other into an enemy, because only in this way we can manage fear. The killing of the foreigner (inside and consequently outside of us) is psychopathology. The rapid and continuous changes we are witnessing in contemporary society are only apparent and behind them lies a depressive state.

In addition to a theoretical reading, PolisAnalisi offers a clinic framework for the social sector. The cure is listening to the stranger's stories, to meet our "Shadow" and discover that "the Ego is the Other". It is necessary to expand the resources of meaning, develop multidimensional visions and re-educate to the limits, so as to see the "Other" as enrichment and not as an obstacle. The volume promotes a clinical way to establish new rules of coexistence in a "win-win" perspective, to allow forgiveness that goes beyond revenge and to make the "polis" become a space in which to exchange relational goods: trust, cooperation and reciprocity.

“Allow me to consider polysanalysis, in the broad sense argued by Pergola, the most accurate re-foundation of a new social psychiatry. There is an absolute need for an epistemology of being a person within new communities”

- Corrado Pontalti