1st Cirpit Colloquium – Naples “Ecosophy: the Wisdom of Dwelling”

The theme of Ecosophy between Intercultural Philosophy and Thought of Complexity, leitmotif of the meeting, has always been a subject particularly dear to Panikkar and Morin, both supporters, even if from different sides, of the need in our times for a profound transformation aiming to the very survival of man and planet. In that regard Panikkar spoke of “metamorphosis” in its etymological meaning, using the metaphor of the chrysalis, which leaves the cocoon to a new form of life. A transformation in depth, that neither the Easts nor the Wests would be able to achieve individually, without dialogue, mutual relationship, and critique of modernity.

Panikkar spoke in particular of three current catastrophes: the ecological which is looming, the psychological which is visible and the economic which is real, as parts of a unique phenomenon: the "global village syndrome". A wide spread trend including a global market and government, a global democracy, a universal science, a monotheistic religion, a monocultural attitude and so on. In front of this he invited to a critical and self-critical approach, pointing out how "the civilized man" has progressively alienated himself from nature, from cosmos and from divine, forgetting the close connection between his body and the earth and losing consciousness of nature rhythms and sacredness.

As a matter of fact the earth is not only a place, a planet, but chiefly a symbol of the whole reality as well. Man must therefore recover his roots, that deep 'humus' characterizing his state of contingency, which paradoxically constitutes the point of tangency with the divine. In order to achieve a radical change of mentality. In particular, according to him, it's now necessary to get over the exclusivity of logos, regaining the other fundamental dimension of mythos. Panikkar proposes "a cosmotheandric cosmology " that can re-open man to his three types of knowledge: empirical, intellectual and mystic-holistic, three forms constitutively in mutual terms of relationship.

What emerges from this vision is a man essentially "polis," tribe, community. A deep-rooted, carnal, political, that's to say community, including all living forms (things, animals, human beings and gods), where everything is related to everything. The approach (not system) proposed here is not global but holistic and cannot be confused with the abstract absolute ideal regarding universal human values, but rather applied to the different concrete human experiences. Panikkar's ecosophic message calls for the reclaiming of the natural order of the universe as a whole, not only through an awareness of the so called "rights" of men and animals, but also through a different consciousness of the earth, to be considered not as a dead body, but as a living organism, as a real subject.

In this sense we're invited to keep open an inter-disciplinary dialogue between science, philosophy and theology, as disciplines belonging to the same cosmological context, comparing ourselves with other different views of reality in a self-critical sense, trying to emancipate ourselves from our exclusive conceptual thought and calculating use of rationality. As Panikkar says: "Science about Infinity is not knowledge of the Infinite."

Briefly, today we should try to gain a more complex and trans-disciplinary view (Morin). It's the old story of Icarus's flight and his fall, as depicted in Bruegel famous picture, a metaphor of human daring intuition. In this sense, as Edgar Morin asserts, it's up to Icarus to free ourselves from the prehistory of the human mind. Both Morin and Panikkar in a very similar way, even if through different philosophical approaches, invite contemporary man to open his mind, according to a paradoxical logic (or “a-dualistic”, as per Panikkar's terms ) in order to combine the analytical vision (rational, according to science) with the vision of the whole (intuitive, according to Traditional Philosophy).

This is what the transdisciplinary and intercultural dialogue suggests, in full compliance of their diversities, trying to connect them in a fruitful even if difficult, uni-pluriversal way, to protect knowledge, environment and cultural and ethnic relations, aiming to a sustainable future.

We hope that the theme launched in Naples, can continue to be discussed on the Forum opened on our website, inviting scholars, readers and friends to join in on the debate.