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Different languages, the same story: Psychoanalysis and narrative structure of performing arts

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Abstract

Sometimes we have to look outside to see ourselves... We name these multiple beings we have inside and stress their colours in fantastic narratives. Myths, movies, dreams... in the metaphor's and metonymies' grassland. Joseph Campbell identified mythic features common to several cultures. The Western modern myths? We find them in stories and characters from performing arts, fascinating millions of people. These so largely hypnotizing narratives, that cross space and time, sign perhaps a touch in the deep inner "cave" of human being. In Theatre, Michael Chekhov speaks about the triplicity, polarity and transformation laws. In Psychology, Sigmund Freud tells us about the triangular oedipal situation (here stressed in its internality, as a basic psychological structure of human action, in which desire and obstacles oppose). Hegel enounces the dialectical process as the motor of all transformation. This presentation intends to explore some ideas that are shared by several fields of knowledge, although enounced in different ways. In common, we find the centrality of a conflict between two opposite forces, which starts in a zero point characterized by undifferentiation of a particular dimension. Somehow, disequilibrium is triggered to a point of no return: a story of antagonism begins, developing toward a resolution. Integration of the opposites and transformation then occur, in order to regain an acceptable equilibrium. We assist to a cycle that culminates on metaphorical death and resurrection of the individual, as in the myths described by Campbell. A cycle that will repeat itself in its structure, in the alternating points of tension and relaxation, conflict and integration, as new challenges emerges. Just as the never-the-same river, the end of the cycle is always different from the beginning, creating the rhythm of a spiral...

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