WRITTEN IN THE STARS?

Shaping a new reality in our communities in the ‘autumn of modernity’ through restorative practices

INTRODUCTION

• Background: research since 1994 and phd of Criminology (2005), KU Leuven, Belgium
• Criminology:
  o Belgium: independent training: master of 4 years
  o psychological and sociological approach
• Specialisation: restorative justice and mediation
  o European Master in Mediation, IUKB, Sion, Suisse (1999-2010)
  o Master en Médiation, Université du Luxembourg (2002-...)
• Own theoretical systemic-existential approach (Phd, 2005):
  o ‘sys’– ‘tem’: ‘under the same theme’: cyclic approach, "seasons"
  o existential: the deeper dimension of life

THE PROCESS OF INTEGRATION AND DISINTEGRATION

SUMMER process of INTEGRATION . full force . expansion
AUTUMN turning point: . picking the fruits . destruction of old forms
SPRING process of DISINTEGRATION . composting . turning to the inside . reflection
WINTER

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS OF SOCIETY

Autumn-winter of modernity

* Western Europe: a history of 150-200 years, or from ‘spring’ until ‘autumn’
* from a consensus-, to a dissensus-, to an assensus-soviety
* Enlightenment: ‘reason’ as a cornerstone of the age of modernity
**SOCIETY IN DISINTEGRATION**

**Autumn-winter of modernity**

* PERSONALLY:
  . autumn-winter feeling
  . feeling of loss of control
  . feelings of fear and insecurity

* SOCIETY:
  . fragmentation of traditional structures
  . change, instability and unpredictibility
  . future as threat
  . destruction of consensus and hierarchy
  . horizontalisation of relations
  . growing distances, rise of conflicts

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**Autumn - winter of society**

**FALLING APART AND TRANSFORMATION OF MODERNITY**

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**A SOCIETY IN DISTINTEGRATION**

from a welfare state to a security state

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**OR: ... TOWARDS A SECURITY SOCIETY (1)**

**SECURITY:**

- The rise of the "risk society" (U. Beck), the prevention and security discourse in politics, media and public opinion;
- Security obsession focused on petty crime in (semi-)public space;
- ‘Existential Insecurity’ (Z. Bauman) - ‘Ontological Insecurity’ (A. Giddens);
- Nuisance and intolerance

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**... AND A MEDIATION SOCIETY (2)**

**MEDIATION:**

- loss of social bonds and hierarchy, horizontalisation of relations, growing distances, social disintegration
- from macro-conflicts towards an accumulation of micro-conflicts
- mediation: sign of a society in disintegration (‘autumn- winter’), repeated in history
- the rise of restorative practices and mediation as a new tool in all fields of society: family, environment, work floor, school, neighbourhood, international, victim-offender mediation, ...
- conflict management in all domains of society

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**A SOCIETY IN DISTINTEGRATION**

from a welfare state to a security state

* welfare state: (striving for) welfare as a dominant theme:
  . growth and expansion
  . integration as dynamics (‘spring-summer’)
  . climax: golden sixties
  . future as desire

* security state: (striving for) security as a dominant theme:
  . recession and decrease
  . disintegration as dynamics (‘autumn-winter’)
  . crises as a continuous thread (and not as an exception)
  . future as a threat
0. INTRODUCTION
1. AUTUMN OF MODERNITY
2. ETHICAL CHANGES IN SOCIETY
3. HETERONOMOUS - AUTONOMOUS LIFE SPHERE (I. Illich)
4. EXISTENTIAL ETHICS
5. CORNERSTONES FOR A RP SOCIETY

THREE PHASES IN 200 YEARS OF MODERNITY:
- consensus – dissensus – assensus

HETERONOMOUS VS. AUTONOMOUS LIFE SPHERE (I. Illich)

synergetic balance
TWO LIFE SPHERES IN SOCIETY

- Every society consists of two life spheres
- These life spheres are complementary
- These life spheres cannot replace each other
- These life spheres are found back on the macro, meso, micro level, in daily life
- In our society there is a disproportion between these life spheres
- This disproportion is found within the justice system, education, ...

HETERONOMOUS VS. AUTONOMOUS PART OF WESTERN SOCIETY (I. Illich)

AIM
- Formal, heteronomous part of society
  - Institutions, professions
  - Organised society
  - Exchange value based economy
  - World of 'rights'
  - Education: instrumental learning

MEAN
- Informal, autonomous or vernacular part of society
  - Informal networks
  - Not organised society
  - Personal, existential life skills and ambitions
  - Practical value based economy
  - 'Freedom' as a key issue
  - Education: existential learning

LOSS OF BALANCE AND SYNERGY
- Reversal of 'AIM' and 'MEANS'

HETERONOMOUS VS. AUTONOMOUS PART OF WESTERN SOCIETY (I. Illich)

A DOUBLE ANSWER TO CRIME AND CONFLICT
- Doing justice – restore freedom

EXTERNALIST ETHICS
- NORMATIVE PRINCIPLE: JUSTICE
- Material, emotional, existential

INTERNALIST ETHICS
- NORMATIVE PRINCIPLE: FREEDOM
- Material, emotional, existential

CYCLE OF MODERNITY: "OVERINSTITUTIONALIZATION" autonomous and heteronomous life sphere (I. Illich)

SIX PHASES

1. Consensus society (1800-)
2. Dissensus society (1970-)
3. Assensus society (2000-)
4. Autumn
5. Summer
6. Winter

A DOUBLE ANSWER TO CRIME AND CONFLICT
- Doing justice – restore freedom

EXTERNALIST ETHICS
- NORMATIVE PRINCIPLE: JUSTICE
- Restorative justice and practices, mediation, conferences, restorative justice and practices, mediation, conferences, circles, round tables, relational methods

INTERNALIST ETHICS
- NORMATIVE PRINCIPLE: FREEDOM
- Restorative practices, mediation, conferences, circles, round tables, relational methods
CYCLE OF MODERNITY: "OVERINSTITUTIONALIZATION" autonomous and heteronomous life sphere (I. Illich) II

- "spring": dominance of the autonomous life sphere
- turning point: 1900-1920, heteronomous life sphere becomes present
- "autumn": 1980-... : dominance of the heteronomous sphere: radical monopoly, over-institutionalization, ...
- now: rediscovery of the quality of the autonomous life sphere in mediation, restorative justice, restorative practices, horizontal methods of support, round tables, family conferencing, ...

AUTUMN/WINTER OF MODERNITY towards an ethics of mediation (1)

- from an ethical object (doing what is imposed) towards an ethical subject (defining himself 'good' and 'bad')
- disintegration of traditional ethical structures
- radical individualisation of ethical experiences and opinions
- existential orientation (ethical compass): internal, no longer external
- experiences are steering, and less and less external frameworks
- a multitude of stimuli confuse existential anchor:
  - kicks, flashes, boosts
  - easy access to drugs, alcohol, medication, sex, violence, games
  - extremes become normal
- Permitted? Yes or now? Why (not)?
  - classic blame does not work (anymore)
  - the ideal of a life without troubles, cf. idols, celebrities (normative belief)?
  - (risk of) loss of orientation -> existential damage

AUTUMN/WINTER OF MODERNITY towards an ethics of mediation (2)

- past... to a moral subject
  - objective, externalist ethics
  - individual only as part of the collective
  - strong implicit consensus
  - parents and teacher: one front
  - rules are of central importance
  - fear of punishment
  - against experiences
  - ethical consumerism
  - vertical pattern, imposed

- now...
  - subjective, internalist ethics
  - radical individualisation
  - everyone his own meaning: assensus
  - front is often gone
  - rules do not make impression any longer
  - punishment doesn't make impression
  - experience based
  - active construction through experiences
  - horizontal, dialogue and encounter

PAST

NOW

from a moral object... to a moral subject

CLASSICAL JUSTICE

PROCUSSION

MEDIATION & RJ / RP

AUTUMN/WINTER OF MODERNITY towards an ethics of mediation (3)

- consequences:
  - imposed rules are no longer connected with the experiences of younger generations
  - rules are accepted, but only superficially
  - young people become 'ethical yourselfers'

an existential ethics:

- common source of internal and external ethics
- source commune, beyond influence of culture, gender, etc.
- accessible on is sensitive of a cultural relativity
- accessible insofar as one is free on an existential level (flow of life)
- becomes visible in extreme situations

ONE EXISTENTIAL ETHICS, TWO EXPRESSIONS

- turbidity: right to destructiveness (Nagy)
- habits and traditions
- self regulating ethical power

EXTERNALIST ETHICS

INTERNALIST ETHICS
EXISTENTIAL ETHICS AS FOUNDATION

- internalist vs. externalist ethics:
  - changes in time and place (cultural assumptions)
  - relative:
    - turbidity because of 'right to destructiveness' (eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth) -> internalist
    - turbidity because of customs and traditions -> externalist
- assensus society: rediscovery of an internalist ethics
- existential ethics: root or foundation:
  - absolute character
  - "root", inner source beyond time and place
  - whole humanity

THE PROCESS OF INTEGRATION AND DISINTEGRATION

SUMMER
- process of INTEGRATION: full force, expansion
- turning point: picking the fruits, destruction of old forms

AUTUMN
- process of DISINTEGRATION: composting, turning to the inside, reflection

SPRING
- process of INTEGRATION: new Spring, renewal, fragile new life

WINTER
- process of DISINTEGRATION: recycling, composting, destruction

“autumn-winter” of modernity
THE CHANGE OF THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

- “composting” 200 years of the cycle of modernity
- transformation of modernity and the falling apart of vertical, patriarchal sociological structures and patterns
- traditional structures of society falling apart, cf. class society -> Durkheim, Talcott Parsons (functionalism), ...
- from a "three"-structure towards a "rhizomic" structure of society and social relationships -> Guattari & Deleuze, "Rhizome"
- Enlightenment: "reason" as a cornerstone and changes in society: what’s new: emotions, ecology, women, sustainability, diversity, ...
- "building the future"
SHAPING A NEW REALITY for restorative practices

sociological developments of horizontalisation in relations ("rhizome")
+ the crumbling-away of verticality in normativity: assensus
+ rediscovery of the autonomous life sphere: biotope for RP and mediation (↔ over-institutionalization)
+ from an externalist ethics towards an internalist ethics

= CORNER STONES FOR A FUTURE OF RJ & RP in autumn – winter of modernity

IIRP World Conference
Kortrijk, Belgium, 15-17 May 2019

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MORE INFORMATION?

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If you use these projections of my presentation ©, please refer to the Doctoral thesis below. The projections are an excerpt:


Thank you,