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CONCORD AND DISCORD IN THE BANQUETING HALL

According to Malinowski myth offers an everlasting model to the organization of the society. Since it conforms with the social and intellectual relationship within a community, it is understood that myth is considered to be true. From this point of view, myth legitimates the existing society with its inequality and disorders, where a lawful challenge is allowed only according to the right course.

Otherwise challengers must set up a revolutionary strategy which entails an upheaval and a substitution of the model. But that aim can be achieved only by reintegrating the original chaos because of the tight link between social and cosmic orders.

The risk of annihilating the present imperfect status coming from the meta-historical perfect Cosmogony, is counter-balanced by the trust in the universal and total change warranted by the Eschatology. In both perspectives the common belief is that the chronological processes degenerate the perfection of the myth and therefore they have to be abolished.

The approaches divert: what we know is that the experience of revisiting the myths of the origin is proper to the conservative oriented community; the eschatologists, on the other side, do not stress the end but the certainty of a new start. The tales recall the beginning, when the principles of the present culture were established, and they mark a kind of new course within the old era.

The rituality of the performance has a psycho-therapeutic value particularly if a dialogue intervenes between two or more members of interrelated families representatives of the different interests of the group. The whole community takes an advantage from the idea of a renewal bound to such a ri-

tual. The critical phases are overcome evoking the re-creation, whose meaning is ambiguous as we have just shown, by eliciting from the general corpus of inherited knowledge. The performing aspect of this ritual yields the literary creation where myths are transformed into logos but are moulded and defined by the social and cultural patterns of the establishment.

Among oral cultures verbal agonism is a distinctive feature of the common living and interpersonality. Competition and collision find in the speechacts the means for dominating upon the facts through pragmatic oriented thinking. Flyting, as well as excessive praising riddles or proverbs, are expressions of this basic agonism that may lead to fight, even physically, for power in groups aggregated by attraction and antagonism of the convivial connection.

Dynamism of status in a society where members are juridically unequal exalts the top status through a corresponding honour price shewn by an adequate hero's portion. This is the situation related by some of the epic tales of the Celtic peoples. The topic of the banquet as the show of public sharing and as the striving at the competent forum for a better rank, substitutes flyting of the senna for a range of boasting challenging duelling, quite like the happenings at the homeric banquet.

The sagas referring to the social dynamism are the procedures of the cosmic ontology of the society represented by the banquet of the gods.

In the Irish Fled Bricrenn "Bricriu's Feast", Bricriu of the Poison Tongue, trouble-maker and trickster, organized a great feast in honour of king Conchobar and for the occasion he built a palace imitating the banqueting hall of the sacred Tara. Since Bricriu knew that the heroes would not let him in, he put beside the hall his sun-chamber which allowed him to look into it through the glass windows placed on every side.

Bricriu observes from outside the happenings which occur inside, violating and desecrating the delimited space of the banqueting hall i.e. of the cosmic and social order. The breaking effects of Bricriu are to transform the socially organized order and disorder of the basic agonism into a chaotic struggle avoided only, as the saga relates, by the intervention of

divine arbitrators.

Bricriu and Loki play similar roles. With his sun-chamber Bricriu distorts the sacred space, watches into it and interferes with the happenings of the competent forum when proposing the same hero's portion to three warriors, admits hierarchic scales different from the established one.

Loki penetrates violently into the banquet transforming the convivial connection of the agonism, ascribing the due importance to the enumerated facts and bereaving the speech acts of the pragmatic oriented thinking. Agonism degenerates into struggle and the foreseeable success of Loki is averted by the intervention of Thor.

Loki like Bricriu is an outsider; as the Lokasenna states he comes from off the limits of the spatial systems of the society, infested with wolves where the culture places the enigmatic and unsolved problems of the established society (*æsir...elto hann braut til scógar, enn their fóro at drecca*).

But the question is that for Loki and for believers in the eschatological renewal, the wild space gives rise to an alternative vision of the world.

