

*Women victims of trafficking and prostitution**

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Summary. *There are many theoretical studies and action research available on the subject of prostitution and human trafficking. In every culture, women are discriminated against compared to men ; often reflections about gender differences expressed by narratives recall victimization, and / or claim. The proposed study aims to listen to the stories of women who have been victims of trafficking or prostitution. These women did not choose this employment that is ethically and morally questionable, but they are women who have been victims of an abuse of their human dignity and their freedom. The attempt to trace the narrative patterns used by these women to rebuild their world and define the matrices-to anticipate events allows us to understand the patterns of typing and relationships that create new social contexts and individual paths. Our inquiry, therefore, starts from an analysis of the reports provided by women who rebel against their condition of slavery, and are on their way to escaping from violence. These women have been supported by organizations that provide psychological and practical support .The analysis of the text was designed using SPAD, because of its peculiarities not only in the dictionary context, but also in the construction of an analysis of the lexical correspondence.*

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One of the pillars on which the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is based is the right referred to the person, in other words the right to the equality, to life, to freedom and to security. Article 4 says: “No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms” (Cassese, 1994, p. 125). Slavery also is a form of violence that today is manifested mostly against women.

Violence is not a sheer cognitive process but it is bound to facts. Its evaluation is subjective and located in a determined historical and social-cultural context. “Violence is such only in the uniqueness of the subjective experience and thus cannot be an absolute nor ultimate objectivity. Outside of the subjective experience, violence is built as a social representation and as such it can get very different forms and meanings depending on the contexts” (Rebughini 2001, p. 13).

Violence as manifestation of power has a relational nature, it is and it’s manifested as a quality or form of strength. Weber (1960) indeed defines violence as a strength relationship in which one part imposes on another excluding every other form of relationship and communication. Trying to legitimate violence, the other is represented “inhuman”, like a “not person”, or like a simple target, object of an operation of high technology (Rebughini, 2001, p. 28). Defining what violence is, means thinking of a social scenery in terms of order, control, tensions and conflicts.

Criminal organizations are not limited to illegal transport of individuals, but they extend their activity orienting the destination of the interested subjects often exposing them to further forms of slavery and to poorer and more degraded life conditions than those that pushed them to face the risks of clandestine immigration in the first place. As you can read in the stories of our subjects the price to pay for the transport is often represented by bonds that force individuals, once arrived at destination, to the world of prostitution. Young women are forced to prostitute through physic and sexual violence operated on them by criminals inserted in the same organizations that prearrange the clandestine transport (Siracusa, 2000).

European legislation

The Inter-ministerial Commission for the support of victims of trade, violence, severe exploitation that is located near the Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, is coordinated by the Department for the Human Rights and the Equals Opportunities and in that participate the Home Office, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Social Policies. The goal of this commission is protecting and promoting the victims’ rights and also

has represented and still represents the most effective contribution to the opposition against the criminal organizations that handle the trafficking and exploitation. Italy is the country with the highest number of arrests and trials for crimes of trafficking and correlated (Di Nicola, 2006).

The phenomenon of the trade, be it for sexual or work exploitation (together with other forms of exploitation such as begging, mendicity and organs sale), has an ancient history that in the Protocollo di Palermo of year 2000 has had a sort of start-up to start paths of social protection at international level in favour of the victims. The Directive 2011/36/UE of the European Parliament and of the Council of the April 5, 2011 concerning the prevention and repression of the trade of human beings and the protection of the victims, may constitute a sort of synthesis, of harmonization and of indication for the lines to use at european level in the defence and care of the victims because the european normative in this field is yet inhomogeneous.

If in other european countries the persons subject to crime of trade are only supplied of assistance and not of a permission to stay exclusively finalized to their assistance and not to the cooperation in crime inquiry, in Italy the victim is granted full rights lifting him/her from the mandatory onus of denunciation and of relative necessary participation to the crime proceeding (Art.18 of Dlgs n. 286/98).

To guarantee those rights for the victims of trade, in some UE countries have been structured National Plans of Action over the trade of persons and the paths of social protection for the victims (reception in protected structures, professional advice, professional formation, social and work insertion, psychological and legal support, etc.). Those countries have offered guarantees (permissions to stay for humanitarians motivations for not communitarian trade victims), have defined webs of intervention (made of public organizations and of social private) capable of implementing such offerings in favour of the victims. Strong competences and expertises have finally been created on the problem of the trafficking, building specific professional figures and adapting, in those programs, professional figures of long navigation such as the psychologist, the professional educator, the social worker, also through the creation of specific formative paths.

These politics at UE level have granted for sure good outcomes, whether in the sphere of the repression of the criminal organizations dedicated to human beings exploitation, or in the sphere of prevention, or finally in the sphere of the social protection of the trade victims themselves.

Maybe the Directive 2011/36/UE of the European Parliament and of the Council of April 5, 2011 concerning the prevention and repression of the human beings trade and the protection of the victims, Directive that all the

European countries will have to ratify in 2013, will offer politics and incisive strategies to oppose the phenomenon of the human beings trade.

Recently Italy has started a legislative reform in matter of trafficking, with which has been modified the article 600 of the Codice Penale, that forbade the reduction and the keeping in slavery. The new law concerning the “Measures against persons’ trade”, that is law 288 of year 2003, has been made necessary to confront with new forms of slavery, those linked to the trafficking and the trade of human beings. Such law doesn’t speak of slavery only, an obsolete term, but also of servitude, a little wider concept that is translatable, as says the law’s text, with “continuative subjection associated to the exploitation of work or of prostitution”.

Our goal consists in delineate the borders of the phenomenon in local ambit, and precisely in Veneto. The starting hypothesis concerns the existence of differentiate sceneries according to motivations. The attention is oriented toward finding the dimensions inside which the actions and representations of the social world are organized. The inquiry so expresses itself as an explorative inquiry that is interested in the representation domain of the women that decide to change their path of life. Women that experiment a moment of breaking, currently still potential, between their past and their future, reorganizing their identity of human beings starting from a precise historical moment which is perceived as highly invalidating for the self and the self-efficacy in the world. These women are robbed of their own humanity and are perceived as objects that are capable only of creating pleasure. It is a question of being at the mercy of other’s will to the end of provoke a material, carnal and economical pleasure to men. This social dynamic that expresses with the constraint to prostitution and slavery, expresses one of the most aggressive forms of gender violence in the contemporary context.

Research

The research is the first explorative inquiry of the narrative repertoires of the women that have been victims of human trafficking. The sample observed includes the account of four women. The data was supplied by the Welcome Association of Padua and have been used in the full respect of privacy, protecting the sorrow of the women that made themselves available in sharing this piece of their life’s story.

The sample is expressed through the survey of only four narrative repertoires and thus it doesn’t want in any way to be considered a

representative element of a given phenomenon, nevertheless we remember that the small number of the sample is also determined by the peculiarity of the study object. It is difficult to find documents in which women go through that traumatic event again. The women that turn to the structures present on the territory are often foreigners or are elaborating again, with the help of professionals, that moment of sorrow. The linguistic barrier, sometimes also the competence in reporting in written form and the emotional pressure of the moment, make all the more complex the creation of a documentation that allows to observe after some time the inquired phenomenon.

Our approach is oriented towards trying to understand all the more proactive dynamics and the paths toward which these women will orient themselves in the rebuilding of their own identity. As Dilthey remembered yet in 1883, *understanding* is different from *explaining*; both are needed to build and organize knowledge, although these elements differentiate because they convey different forms of defining object categories. Expressing in the contemporary context the distinction suggested by the scholar, we could say that the circularity of experience outlines the frame inside which the subject and the social groups express their hermeneutics to interpret and organize their action in the world. "Written text or produced by the oral narration is the space within which takes place the "circle of interpretation", and in it is recomposed the dialectic between explaining and understanding: (...) understanding and explanation are not two opposite methods. Precisely, only the explanation is methodical. The understanding is the non methodical moment that precedes, accompanies and absorbs the explanation. On the contrary the explanation develops analytically the understanding" (P. Ricoeur, 1987, p. 90).

The lives of the human beings are necessarily interlaced with narrations: every day we tell stories and we represent our experience through a re-elaboration that structuralizes the stories. This ability is an inherent dimension in the human being, with the development of the language man has been able to structuralize and improve his narrating ability. It is through this narrating function that the subjects build their world, defining the borders between the licit and the illicit, the actual and the fantastic. The construction of self-biographic path structuralizes in a sort of *continuum* between past, present and future, in which the protagonist merges with the narrator (Bruner, 2002). The Other exercises a crucial role in the definition of self, a side-altar that by means of processes of community and distinction allows the subject to express his own uniqueness and fickleness. The dimension of Me and of You represents the essential relationship in the process of definition and renovation of personal and social identity. The act

of narrating “*converts the individual experience in a collective coin*” (Bruner, 2002, p.12), a transaction that allows the development of the single and the community. According to the scholar it is a necessary act that allows the subject to order the ideas, organize them and redefine the hierarchical schemes with which he organized them.

According to Daniel Taylor every individual structuralizes his own Me and his own Self by means of a process of synthesis of the stories he has heard, lived and also of those he hasn't lived. Bateson (1976) indicated in the process of difference individuation the presence of the individuality and defined with that process the production of the information. And it is yet in our historical context that, as Lyotard remembers, the narration with its argumentations determines and binds the knowledge, a knowledge that extends to all the fields of the intellect and of the human relationships, that expresses itself in the everyday till the transmission and elaboration of scientific assumptions.

Calvino, in ‘If on a winter's night a traveller’, summarized the zeitgeist saying: “*It seems to me that in the world there now exist only stories that remain suspended or get lost along the way*”, an image that allows to catch the dynamicity and strength in creating worlds and orient life's paths. The possibility of reading the women's narrations helps us understand the repertoires that convey the reality of this social group and recall narrative-emotional schemes that will orient the future paths of self-efficacy and of changing of the representation of the self.

The text analysis has been made thanks to the use of the statistic software SPAD that allows to find, in our specific case, the dictionary of the *corpus* and to make the main lexicometric analysis. In this study we will analyze the results emerged starting from the vocabulary from the analysis of the lexical correspondences of the first 50 terms for frequency and obtained after the process of text normalization.

Results

The *corpus* analyzed is made of 541 different graphic forms of which 351 appear in the text with frequency equal to 1, the text is therefore composed for the 64,88% by terms that are used only once; this peculiarity shows language variety and also a particular fragmentation and scattering in coding the specific experience of violence undergone.

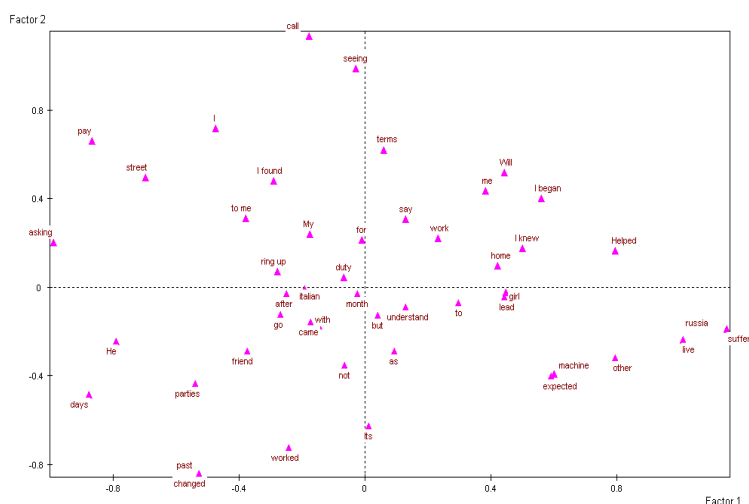
Observing the text in his sheer composition we verify that the first ‘full’ world present by frequency are: *home*, *work* and *Italy*, Tab. 1, lexemes that subtend areas in which the subject experiments much of his daily life, at

home and at work carry out the most weighty relationships and roles of the individual, with Italy is stressed the fracture in their own autobiography between before and after. A ‘before’ generated from poverty and wishes, i.e. “becoming a dancer”, a changing one’s own social-economical status and an ‘after’ expressed by a place that contains the essence of the expectations and sorrow for the undergone violence, it is not actually a physical place, but rather a life experience strongly invalidating.

Table.1: Text corpus: most frequently used lexemes

Word/Segment	Frequency	Word/Segment	Frequency
In	52	For	21
To me	43	The (male)	20
Which	37	With	19
Of	32	I am	19
And	31	Not	16
To	31	After	14
The (female)	23	He/Her/it has	13
An (male)	23	Home	13
An (female)	23	Work	12
I have	21	Italy	12

After executing the process of text pre-processing and a lexemes normalisation we proceeded doing the lexical correspondences analysis, in graph. 1 we display is the graphical translation of this inquiry.



Graph. 1: Lexical correspondence analysis

From the graph we observe that the narrative reports of the interviewed women are statistically expressed by two factors that transversally represent the elaborated text. The first factor, Factor 1, that we can call work meaning prostitution in its material dynamics, it is indeed expressed by words like *payment*, *car*, *after*, *changing*, while the second factor, Factor 2, expresses a dimension of transition, a changing, an aiming to modify the working condition as a prostitute, it indeed expresses by means of elements like living, help, asking, payment, day and street.

A self defining that starts from the traumatic experience, but that grants a space for change, for a reordering of one’s own identity matrixes that is expressed thanks to the reception of the help request, to an active inclination to changing, to taking decisions and being actors of their own destiny and not any more victims like in the experience of prostitution. The reception of the request of these women thus represents the essential bond to which entrust the practical relapse of a different destiny. Yes, these women are presented as victims of an abuse of power, but are also able to observe their own social context and find the webs of support present in the community, a social capital that is tangibly expressed in the reception of this request of help; below we report a brief exemplificative extract: “he

wanted always more and more, so I decided to run away to ask for help”, “it really exists he who truly loves, who helps you having a peaceful life”.

Conclusion

It would be important that at an European level, policies in favour of trafficking victims would also put into effect the construction of tools for identifying victims, for monitoring and for evaluating paths of social protection built “ad hoc”. Therefore it would be necessary to create specific programs based on this theme, able to offer economical availabilities to realize structuralized actions. The women declare they are guilty of ingenuity: “a newspaper announced work for women in Turkey”, “One day the ruler’s son, [...], proposed me to leave. He told me that he would take me to Italy and that I could work as a dancer there”. The women say of having believed in a dream which allowed them to exit poverty and help their original family, of having been victims of a deception and of not having undertaken their own professional career by means of an agreement accepted in freedom. The freedom, which should be a right for all, has been hardly won back by means of a great sacrifice. The fear of possible prosecution was always present: “after three months, this nightmare has ended”; they had to win back their own freedom by means of a strong social web and a keeping of the faith in the Other as an element of social glue. This way these women have recovered informations on the help structures and succeeded in contact them, by means of some expedients, to make real their project of evasion and regaining of a free life.

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