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ON NARRATIVE IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT

In recent decades, attention to the issue of 'narrative identity', and problems connected In recent decades, significant connections and intertwining between various disciplines, both at the significant control and at the level of an applicative research. It is true that, in addition to the fields of narratology and the science of culture, narrative identity is mainly thematised in the psychological field. It is here, in fact, that it is considered by many ways: from personality psychology to social psychology, and from dynamic psychology to clinical psychology. The interest of psychological research goes beyond this general level of 'mental functioning', because narration forms one's lived experience and the way in which one embraces, interprets and understands his/her existence and relationships with others and with their cultural values. Narration is the expression of a psychological reality and, at the same time, is generative of a psychological reality. Consequently, it mirrors a representation of oneself, human relationships and the sense of things so much in accordance with choices, ideals, dispositions and interests, as in accordance with deeper dynamisms, drive thrusts, traumas and topical experiences.

Starting from the relationship between identity and narration in literature, this paper aims to investigate the question of narrative identity as the fulcrum of a scientific theorisation that operates between psychology and philosophy showing how the interrelationship between these two sciences is productive and fundamental.

Keywords: narrative identity, narratology, psychology, hermeneutics

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, attention to the issue of 'narrative identity', and problems connected to it has to it, has seen an exponential development in different research fields, with the effect of significant significant connections and intertwining between various disciplines, both at the theoretical-reflective level and at the level of an applicative research. It is true that, in addition to the level of an applicative research. addition to the fields of narratology and the science of culture, narrative identity is mainly there is mainly thematised in the psychological field. It is here, in fact, that it is considered by many ways: from personality psychology to social psychology, and from dynamic psychology to social psychology and from dynamic psychology to clinical psychology. Currently, only few strands of psychological and clinical research. clinical research see the intertwining with the philosophical dimension. Authors, such as Balbi are Juan Balbi, are not limited to remember Jerome Bruner's lesson about the narrow connection ber contribution of remaining the description between self-knowledge and narration or emphasising the enormous narration of remaining the enormous narration narration of remaining the enormous narration of remaining the enormous narration of remaining the enormous narration of remainin contribution of narration in understanding identity processes; rather, they underline the great congruence. great congruence with speculative studies such as Paul Ricoeur's perspective on the harrativa (2004) he expresses a substantial proximity to Ricoeur's perspective on the relationship between identity and narration, explicitly connecting it to Bridge intercepting intercepting interpretations. relationship between identity and harden the vast and articulated research around an antecedent lesson. This discourse binds the vast and articulated research around an antecedent lesson mind and language, intercepting interpretations such as Hunder's relationship lesson. This discourse of the antecedent lesson and language, intercepting interpretations such as Humber's relationship between mind and language as a structural, ontogenetic, component to the antecedent lesson. relationship between mind and language, in a structural, ontogenetic, component in the Maturana's, who conceives language as a structural, ontogenetic, component in the state of the state

Para comprender la historia evolutiva que da origen a lo humano, es necesario primero Para comprender la historia evolutiva que al conservarse en el sistema de linajes homínido hace posible de linajes nominido hace posible en el sistema de linajes homínido hace posible en el sistema de linajes en el sistema de linajes homínido hace posible en el sistema de linajes en el sistema de linajes homínido hace posible en el sistema de linajes el sistema de linajes en el sistema de linajes el sistema de linajes en el sistema de linajes el sistema de linaje mirar el modo de vida que ai consol valla el origen del lenguaje, y luego mirar al nuevo modo de vida que surge con el lenguaje, y luego mirar al nuevo modo de vida que surge con el lenguaje, y el origen del lenguaje, y luego initia que al conservarse establece el linaje particular a que nosotros los seres humanos [2]

It is true that the interest of psychological research goes beyond this general level of 'mental functioning', because narration forms one's lived experience and the way in which one embraces, interprets and understands his/her existence and relationships with others and with the cultural values. Narration is the expression of a psychological reality and, at the same time, is generative of a psychological reality. Consequently, it minores representation of oneself, human relationships and the sense of things so much in accordance with choices, ideals, dispositions and interests, as in accordance with deeper dynamisms, drive thrusts, traumas and topical experiences. A wide range of therapeutic and clinical proposals related to the narration is grafted onto this discursive strand, relying on the reflective functions of written and oral narration, interpretation and fictional or non-fictional representation. If psychoanalysts, such as Freud, saw narrative representation and (re-)construction as a therapeutic, temporary, function and an important constituent in the comprehensive approach to and resume of a clinical case. other psychotherapists, in turn, have identified and defined with narrative activity a process that is productively valid as a therapeutic and curative procedure. Among the latter, we can refer to James Hillman's therapeutic model. For Hillman, in fact, therapy is a way of giving life to the imagination and exercising it. The whole therapeutic activity, in essence, is a sort of imaginative exercise that recovers the oral tradition of narrating stories, and therapy restores history to life. [3] Certain psychotherapists have been following a solid or imaginative exercise that recovers the oral maginative exercise that been following a comparable theoretical-technical line since the 1970s, thanks to 1960's hermeneutics turn in philosophy. This is the case of Roy Schafer, for example (A New Language for Day of Principals in Language for Psychoanalysis, 1981; Retelling a Life: Narration and Dialogue in Psychoanalysis 1993. Psychoanalysis, 1992). Beyond the scientific questionability, both in terms of theoretical elaboration. theoretical elaboration and therapeutic effectiveness, it is undeniable that Schafer has contributed to identify contributed to identify some interesting and productive aspects of the narrative functions in psychotherapy. In Discretizing and productive aspects of the narrative depending of the functions in psychotherapy. In Retelling a Life, for instance, there is a deepening of the concept of narrative plot in the life, for instance, there is a deepening of the concept of narrative plot in the life, for instance, there is a deepening of the concept of narrative plot in the life, for instance, there is a deepening of the concept of narrative plot in the life, for instance, there is a deepening of the concept of narrative plot in the life, for instance, there is a deepening of the concept of narrative plot in the life, for instance, there is a deepening of the concept of narrative plot in the life, for instance, there is a deepening of the concept of narrative plot in the life, for instance, there is a deepening of the concept of narrative plot in the life, for instance, there is a deepening of the life, the life, the life, the life is a deepening of the life, the life is a deepening of the life, the life is a deepening of the life. concept of narrative plot in correlation with self-representation, unconscious fantasy and the self-representation metaphor that tries to take into account both the analyst's and the patient's perspective. If, on the one side, those narrative perspectives seem more approachable to Jung's psychoanalysis, on the other side. psychoanalysis, on the other side, already in Freud we find some theoretical-reflective patients. elements reproachable to the question of narration in therapy. In psychoanalysis, a practice life history is intuitively and clinical patient's life history is intuitively and clinical practice. patient's life history is intuitively related to metapsychological research and clinical therapout. practice, In other words, it constitutes a starting point, the basis and the field of all therapeutic exercises. This is a line of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point, the basis and the field of the starting point is contact different the starting point. therapeutic exercises. This is a line of reasoning that tends to put in contact different

theoretic models in therapy, as hermeneutical psychoanalysis, cognitive psychotherapy theoretic models in the psychology, thanks to a wider range of theoretical-speculative and socio-constructive psychology, thanks to a wider range of theoretical-speculative and socio-constructive of the psychology and the psychology and the psychology of the psych and socio-constitutive per the hermeneutical (1960s) and the narrative (1980s) turns, in one way or another, all psychologists and psychotherenists. references offered between another, all psychologists and psychotherapists of turns. Actually, in one way or another, all psychologists and psychotherapists state that it is Actually, in one way of the genesis of a disorder in order to explain, it at least in part or necessary to know the history of the events, the links and least in part or necessary to understand the best of the events, the links and the meanings that it is necessary to know the history of the events, the links and the meanings that it is necessary to modify the mechanisms that regulate the patient's current attributed to them, in order to modify the mechanisms that regulate the patient's current attributed to them, and existential feeling. Even the use of the collected material represents a behaviour and component of a psychological therapy, even if it seems to belong more to the tacit main components to the therapist than to his verbalisable declarative knowledge. [4] After 1980's narrative turn in philosophy and psychology, narration has become a After 1980's harried point both scientifically and culturally. Today, the fact that narrative identity represents a broadly interest for the psychological sciences has become something widely accepted and recognised as obvious. However, only in a philosophical, ideological or cultural dimension can we find its deeper and effective justification. That is to say, its theoretical roots have an interdisciplinary as well as a cultural fulcrum. To be more precise, the notion of narrative identity does not simply identify a given conception, but it refers to a vast problematic concerning the constitution, reality and meaning of the human personal identity. Was ist der Mensch? was Kant's formula to summarise a multimillennial research about on the essence of human nature, which tumed in the mind-body, cause-reasons and free will dilemmas in the modern epoch (for both, philosophy and science). The conception of 'narrative identity', which assumes authentic speculative significance only thanks to the work of Paul Ricoeur, subsumes and resets some of these major modern questions. Indeed, Ricoeur's research reveals the profound connections that link the study of the narrative dimension of human identity with more traditional problems of theory of knowledge, theory of mind, practical philosophy and philosophical anthropology.

IS IT REAL OR FICTIVE?

Ricoeur's Oneself as Another (1990) is a radical investigation and questioning of the human subject through what the author calls 'a hermeneutical phenomenology of the self'. [5] The notion of narrative identity represents the fulcrum of this anthropology. This already emerges within the general conclusions of the previous trilogy of Time and Narrative (1983-1985), where Ricoeur thematises the tensional dialectics between history and fiction in personal identity in the following way:

Without the recourse to narration, the problem of personal identity would in fact be condemned to an antinomy with no solution. Either we must posit a subject identical with itself through the diversity of its different states, or, following Hume and Nietzsche, we must hold that this identical subject is nothing more than a substantialist illusion, whose elimination merely brings to light a pure manifold of cognitions, emotions, and volitions. This dilemma disappears if we substitute for identity understood in the sense of oneself as self-same [soi-même] (ipse). The difference between idem and ipse is nothing hore than the difference between a substantial or formal identity and a narrative identity. [6]

and harmonisation; and this function is precisely exerted by the narrative identity, which and harmonisation; and this function is produced by the sole historical-cultural dimension of individual or therefore cannot be traced back to the sole historical-cultural dimension of individual or therefore cannot be fact, 'narrative identity oscillates between two limits; a lower to be sold in the sold therefore cannot be traced back to the determinant of individual or social identity. In fact, 'narrative identity oscillates between two limits: a lower limit, social identity. In fact, 'narrative identity oscillates between two limits: a lower limit, social identity. In fact, 'narrative identity oscillates between two limits: a lower limit, social identity. social identity. In fact, "narrative identity and ipse; and an upper limit, where permanence in time expresses the confusion of idem and ipse; and an upper limit, where permanence in time expresses the dientity without the aid and support where permanence in time expresses in the aid and support of the where the ipse poses the question of its identity without the aid and support of the where the ipse poses the question of the narrative identity is the formal of the where the *ipse* poses the question of the narrative identity is the formula of the *idem*'. [10] This movement of 'oscillation' of the substantialist and non-substantialist and non-substantialist. idem'. [10] This movement of community of the substantialist and non-substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist and non-substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist and non-substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist and non-substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist and non-substantialist and non-substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist and non-substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist and non-substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist and non-substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist and non-substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist and non-substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist perpetual antinomy of the substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual antinomy of the substantialist perpetual solution to the perpetual solution dimension of personal definity (man experience of change over time (both for the body matter). The common, daily, human experience of the same and unique in the person was a body matter). The common, darry the body and the permanence of the same and unique in the person we are, reveal and the psyche) and the permanence of this perpetual antinomy. Specifically, of this perpetual antinomy. the concreteness and factuality of this perpetual antinomy. Specifically, it is the narratological category of the character that constitutes the path of intelligibility and knowledge of identity on the dialectic side of permanence and change over time. The individual 'finds himself/herself' via representation, as the one who in the story performs the action and becomes the object of the plot. This is realised according to a formulation that the story does not just structure the action and its context, but the identity of the character; an identity that is now understood, in fact, as a narrative identity. As Ricoeur explains, the person, understood as a character in a story, is not an entity distinct from his/her 'experiences'. On the contrary, it shares the regime of the dynamic identity of the story recounted. The narration builds the identity of the character, which can be called his/her narrative identity. And it is the identity of the story to make the identity of the character. To inscribe this dialectic of the discordant concordance of the character in the dialectic of sameness and selfhood is imposed since the discordant concordance of the character is compared with the request for permanence over time, which is connected to the notion of identity. In addition, there is the necessity to show how the dialectic of the character comes to be inscribed in the interval between these two poles of permanence over time, to act as a mediator between them. This mediating function, which the character's narrative identity exerts between the poles of sameness and selfhood, is essentially attested by the imaginative variations to which the narrative submits this identity. In truth, it is not that the story limits itself to tolerating such variations, but it in fact generates them. [11]

The previous passages summarise a key paragraph that represents Ricoeur's theoreticalconceptual articulation proper to the theory of narrative identity in a context of narratological study, and gives a close connection with the experiential and practical sphere, that is, with the life world of a concrete person who is fed both of an effective experience and his/her imagination. I can identify myself with the character of a story and transform the world of text into a reflective and imaginative laboratory of interpretation, reconfiguration and personal renewal. This is possible not only because, as in a mirror reconfiguration and personal renewal. This is possible not only because, as in a mirror game, I can (re-)constitute myself as a narrator of my own story, but also, because by motion because by making me a 'character' opens the way to a possible reconfiguration and redefinition of who I redefinition of who I am, of the sense of my experience, of the possibilities of (re-)action within the circumstance of my life. The semantic innovation and new congruence of manning description has to do with the elaboration determined in the context of the narrative (re-)elaboration has to do with the elaboration and re-elaboration of my own identity and life experience. The act of reading telling and act of reading, telling and narrating allows the individual to understand himself/herself differently and better to path in the control of th differently and better, to rethink and create new perspectives of meaning and change. To narrate is to create meaning and create new perspectives of meaning and change articulation narrate is to create meaning and understanding. Narration is the creation, articulation and development of the cole. and development of the self. Both, the knowledge of oneself and the maturation of neself as a person, mature in the 'mirror' of narrative experiences, in the reflexive and neself as a person, manufactive experiences, in the reflexive and electrical examination aroused by narration and self-narration. The important analysis Affectitical examination of proof in psychoanalysis in one of its important analysis and Ricoeur dedicates to the question of proof in psychoanalysis in one of its important analysis and realogical contributions gives greater argumentative strength and realogical contributions. pistemological contributions gives greater argumentative strength and reasonableness pistemological contributions also links imaginative functions and cultural line. pistemological control also links imaginative functions and cultural life on the one of this discourse that closely also links imaginative functions and cultural life on the one this discourse that the one of published in 1977, 'The Question of Proof in Freud's Psychoanalytic Writings' is a published in 1977, that goes beyond the epistemological problem in psychoanalysis. philosophical paper and simply approach the theme of clinical cases to the notion [13] In fact, Ricogur does not simply approach the theme of clinical cases to the notion [13] In Tact, Record (with its arrangement between history and fiction), but instead, also of narrative identity (with its arrangement between history and fiction), but instead, also letter as a function of mediation between fact. of narrative latter as a function of mediation between factuality and representation, places the falsity. The criterion of narrativity must resolve the grave aporia of the loss of anchorage to the reality that the 'psychoanalytic fact' suffers (because in the loss of animal the loss (because in Freud's psychoanalysis becomes 'relevant' not what the patient actually experienced, but what the subject makes of his own fantasies). In Ricoeur's interpretation, the criterion of narrativity contributes to smoothing out the difficulty arising from the fictional criterion, that is, from the recognition of the effectiveness and the truthful force of a 'reasoned mythology'. The narrativity reconcile in some way the Dichtung and the Wahrheit, but it is a reconciliation not by substitution: it is not a substitute of 'saying true' for 'making true' or 'making believe true'. Rather, the true saying and the true doing are reconciled in the construction or reconstruction of a coherent story starting from the scattered fragments of our concrete experience. Following the theoreticalspeculative and practical way opened by the narrative character of the psychoanalytic fact, not only emerges that what it is at stake in psychoanalysis is the fact of being able to bring a broad and singular explanation to the whole history of the case of an individual patient (Sherwood), and that to explain means to reorganise the facts into an intelligible whole that constitutes a unique and continuous history, but that this state of things and functioning has to do with the determination, formation and maturation of human identity in general, beyond clinical cases, beyond psychoanalytic experience and beyond epistemological and methodological dilemmas.

In short, Ricoeur takes us beyond Aristotle's lessons by stating that every well-told story is a story that teaches us something. Moreover, he argues that a story reveals universal aspects of the human condition and that, to this end, poetry is more philosophical than the history of historians, which is too dependent on the anecdotal aspects of concrete life. The life. The narrative dimension is the most comprehensive and truthful synthetic and dynamic comprehensive and truthful synthetic and dynamic form of personal identity. [14] It not only subsumes the sphere of psychic-physical lie and decires and emotions, and physical life through the intuition of the instinctual drives, desires and emotions, and through the through the intuition of the instinctual drives, desires and emotions, and through the tendencies and dispositions of the character, but rather, it also expresses the abilities and abilities and possibilities of the individuals in their redefinition of perspectives, meanings, values and projects of action. Ricoeur sustains the thesis that the process of composition are composition or configuration is not accomplished in the text, but in the reader instead, and this very and this very condition makes possible the reconfiguration of the world of the More precisely, the meaning of a story springs from the intersection of the world of the whole analysis I is reader. Thus, the reading act becomes the crucial moment of the whole analysis. In it resides the capacity of the story to transfigure the reader's personal experience. [15]

CONCLUSION

Of course, to this argument we can counterpoise the fact that while a story is being lold Of course, to this argument we can example of course, the course of course, the course of co or life is being lived, the act of reaching or life is being lived. suspension within an interregular that suspension from the affairs of the world or alienation from not a simple temporary suspension from the affairs of the world or alienation from not a simple temporary. On the contrary, it is the very substance of our psychia from the affairs of the world or alienation from not a simple temporary suspension and a simple temporary suspension from the contrary, it is the very substance of our psychic reality, concrete circumstances. On the contrary, it is the very substance of our psychic reality, and different from the empirical reality (of the external world), and different from the empirical reality (of the external world). concrete circumstances. On the contrary (of the external world), and different from the empirical reality (of the external world), and different from which is different from the empirical realities. It is precisely on this point the which is different from the empirical which is different from abstract, ideal or purely imaginative realities. It is precisely on this point that the abstract, ideal or purely imaginate to the narration intercepts and tightens in a single philosophical hermeneutics applied to the narration intercepts and tightens in a single philosophical hermeneutics approved to philosophical hermeneutics approved to philosophical hermeneutics approved to philosophical hermeneutics approved to philosophical and anthropological question of the problematic node the gnosiological, ontological and anthropological question of the dialectic between world and experience, between reality and representation, recognising in the narrative function a triple value of mediation, namely (1) between a man and the world, (2) between a man and a man and (3) between a man and himself.

The effect of identification and catharsis, of configuration and reconfiguration, which generates the character, it is exactly what touches, structures, shapes and defines our psychic reality. And, this psychic reality is an effective, concrete and true reference: a reference to the (past, present and future) facts of the world and to intersubjective relations, and to the historical experience and planning horizon of an individual and of people.

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