

THE VICTORY AS A MECHANISM OF HEGEMONY: the inception of nation states in the pleasure to win.

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Abstract

Politics and Sport victories appear to have durable linkages as to why in many cultures, Elite had been devoted to put all their efforts in organizing public games and sporting spectacles. Historically political regimes have been devoted to be somehow closely bound to the organization of great events and sport victories. From Tiberius Nero and Vespasian - during the dynasties Claudia and Flavia respectively- until the local military Governments in Latin America or the recent Olympic Games in China, an evident obsession for managing magnificent spectacles that impact on the folk was present in whole of these dictatorships. ¿What are the social mechanism which helps creating hegemony?, ¿what is the role of education in such a process?, ¿Is there certain liaison among public events or games and ethnocentrism?, ¿how we may understand the pleasure to win in our modern times?. The following essay is intended to demonstrate as to how education, charisma, ethno-genesis, hegemony and mythical archetype converge and formalize a relationship between political order and logic of leisure. In other words, organization of these spectacles has the function to exacerbate and amuse in order or the social identity to be reinforced, reconsidering the leisure as a mechanism capable to create hegemony

Introduction

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The following essay is intended to demonstrate as to how education, charisma, ethno-genesis, hegemony and mythical archetype converge and formalize a relationship between political order and logic of leisure. In other words, organization of these spectacles has the function to exacerbate and amuse in order or the social identity to be reinforced, reconsidering the leisure as a mechanism capable to create hegemony (Munné, 1999).

Education

The term education comes from latin educere which had an ambiguous meaning. For one hand it is referenced to intellectual emancipation while for the other it had been related to feed cattle. For that reason, education had brought to the attention of many scholars in the globe in recent years. In this point, two streams dispute the hegemony and debate what are the function and limits of education in our modern times. At a first instance, a couple of scholars argued that modernization and globalized world has emptied the education contents encouraging the conflict, frustration and alienation sentiments (Kovadloff, 1992) (Reich y Schmitt, 1998) (Pérez López, 2007) (Potenzoni et al, 2007). But from other turn of mind, education is considered as a form of political perpetuation. Indeed, there is no possible to speak about emptiness of contents but a change in the economic production system in the wake of a new millennium (Stubbs, 1984:118) (Bordieu, 2003:145-155) (Bordieu y Passeron, 2003: 104-114) (Bernstein, 1989:191).

Whatever the case may be, education in an early age allows giving sense to the roles that a society offers. Under such a circumstance, children emulate in games to be a person that they are not but learn pre-existent patterns to rule behavior once grown up. For example, it is not surprising that in Ancient Rome children played to be Julius Ceasar or Augusto while in United States children like to be president or any type of outstanding hero. Basically, education provides to society with coherent and comprehensive guide-lines as to understand events and behave under certain circumstances. From this point of view, the devotion for Nation State as well as the passion for the success are born from no other place than primary education and associated with the logic of modern mass consumption. Just there, people are introduced in the world of nationalism and capitalist production like a merchandise. Broadly speaking, to be superior to others is the supreme end of people regardless their epoch, age and class. Games like other expression not only reinforce such a feeling but also offset the material deprivation suffered. An all-comprehensive treatment recur to history in finding how civilizations had organized magnificent festivals and spectacles to forget tragedies or crisis of other nature. As J. M Dupuy reminded, panic remains occulted at the heart of this events (Dupuy, 1999). Nevertheless, education in such, does not suffice to explain in depth the problem. ¿Are Sport events like education a manner to manipulate minds?. It looks to be a surface manifestation of a much deep-seated issue, likely related to charisma.

The charisma and the nation

From Max Weber point of view, Charismatic domination is based exclusively in attributes or "extraordinary" abilities perceived by and over an individual or specific group (Weber, 1992:170). In *Economy and Society*, Weber focuses on an analytic model explaining the sociological foundations of authority. For him, domination should be understood by "*the probability of finding obedience inside a certain group for specific requests*" (ibid: 170).

Specifically, groups as well as greater organizations are characterized to follow certain customs and values aimed at reproducing the social practices in the line of the time giving as a result the legitimacy that regime needs to be perpetuated. Nevertheless, in some occasions such legitimacy appears to be jeopardized because of charisma. In fact, Weber argues that "*we should understand for charisma the ability transformed in a extraordinary (conditioned magically in origin) of a personality for whose virtue is considered in possession of supernatural or superhuman forces*" (ibid: 193).

That way, a daily routine today gives origin to charisma in burocratic or traditional logic tomorrow; and when and if this happens, a new order emerges. Once dead the original charismatic leader (whatever the case may be), supporters felt disorganized and incurred unwittingly to legal-rational logic by instituting a new order that had nothing to do with the previous one (founded in the charismatic leadership). At that instance, the election of a new leader resulted from a new rationalization process that replaces and re-found a new community. The force of law is not only present in this new regime but also is the ground of the organization.

Therefore, public celebrations or spectacles such us World Soccer championship, horse's career, gladiator's fights have historically intended to create legitimacy in moment of disorder and instability. Besides, since legitimacy and power does not live forever in hands of rulers, alternative mechanism to reproduce a symbolic order are needed. In other words, Cohen writes "*there are always for the individuals and groups means and whishes - some idiosyncratic for the individuals, others more extended - of competing for power in quantities bigger than possible their rights allows anytime*" (Cohen, 1985).

With basis on political concerns, even though many scholars have devoted significant attention to nationalism, little was given as to how Public spectacles may contribute to consolidate a social self-esteem as well as a common identity. There is unclear what are the elements involved in neither a nationalism process nor the points where legitimacy and power found the basis of authority.

Under such a context, the construction of "national symbols" have captured attention and have been tackled off in many studies. Likewise, Durkheim assured having found a direct bondage between the native symbols and Ancient Cult of "sacred-fire" at roman home. The pater (protector) was not only in charge of feeding the fire at home anytime but also constituted a cult where he plays a protagonist role like a priest. The authority of the father was concentrated in the likelihood to remain alive the flame of ancestor at home. In the transformation and consequent collapse of Roman society, the Cult of Fire was fallen in disuse but recycled somehow in patriotic symbols such as the flag, tradition and national hymn; today this kind of symbolism reminds the presence of fatherland in a secularized world (Durkheim, 1992) (Coulanges, 2005).

Other scholars like Deutsch considers that the construction of nations have been originated with a linguistic interaction resulted from a posterior economic exchange; Deutsch was strongly interested in studying how the reciprocity may shape organizations of a broader nature like community. Originally, men joined in little communities were satisfied all their necessities; regarding to the form as to how these groups interacted among them, cooperation or conflicts predominated and organized the mythical archetype of society; as a result of this, ethnocentrism has been forged the frontiers wherein identity works, for that reason, it not surprising that tribes had more likelihood to exacerbate the social conflict as a form of organization in opposition to the neighbor than others which are situated further away (Deutsch, 2007).

In short, there are many points that merits to kept into account at once of forming a State-nation such as monetary interactions, hoard process, mass migrations, new legal-formal education, a military organization, new communication channels, expansion of stereotypes symbolic codes conforming a real systems of ideas (ideology) in which ground is shaped the social identity (Wolf, 2004:7) (Bailey, 1968).

For British anthropologist Evans Pritchard, interaction was only possible based on space and time. For that reason, (as we have previously mentioned) In Africa, tribes compromised with common resources have more probability to enter in conflict that tribes geographically situated in remote zones. To be more exact, said Evans Pritchard, "*structural distances means the distance among people's groups in a social system, expressed in function of certain values. The nature of the region determines the distribution of villages, and therefore the distance among them, but values limit and define the distribution in structural terms and naturally provide a conjunction of diverse distances*" (Evans-Pritchard, 1977:127). Evidently, Anthropology has showed that there was a linkage between kinship, reciprocity and conflict.

Following this explanation, Wallerstein examines the modern Nation State inception and labor division as a part of a broader process embedded in capitalism. From his standpoint, not only racism but sexism are resulted from a new logic which assigns a hierarchical order creating material differences among different components. This idea supposes that economic production is based on exclusion and conflicts repression (Wallerstein, 2006). "Blacks or whites" are considered on top or bottom of social pyramid depending on the role played in the process of production; their practices not only work as an attribute which distinguish one from others but also are legitimated by an economic consumption.

Also, in public events two contradictory logics coexist: innovation and traditionalism. People need from a constant search for victory not only for demonstrating a supposed "superiority" over the rest of the world but also to regulating that mentioned tension; For one hand, authoritarian orders pursue the future as a sign of golden times whilst evoke the glory or pride of the tradition. Besides, even if ideology -in a positive side- may promote the social cohesion; under a negative perspective, it distorts the reality and intoxicates citizens with the sweet flavor of fantasy. (Ricoeur, 2000)

Hegemony and the continuous search of victory

Focusing in daily life of little town named Winston Parva, geographically located in United Kingdom, sociologist N. Elías studied as to why some group were self-oriented to feel superiority

and how those beliefs were sustained in the time (Elías, 1998:83). According to this concern, Elias found that two antagonistic groups were in conflict excluding them-selves mutually. Not only these groups -at hand- did not have any substantial difference that distinguish them, but also privileged group demanded to members a sacrifice with the end to demonstrate their loyalty (Elías, 1998). Basically, Elias argued that any imposed stigmata over ones is a clear effort to empower and remain domination over others. Superiority and inferiority are two side of a same coin.

In this sense, public games are controlled rituals wherein fortune outlines “divine wishes” on the human profane world. The possibility to win or loss implies an equilibrated reciprocity between all involved participants. As a consequence of that, the mythical histories should make reference (as in most of the cases they do) to supernatural beings, endowed with considerable and splendid powers and abilities, wise entities, or extra-mundane forces. In moment of turbulence and uncertainty contexts these type of ritual gained more acceptance than contexts characterized by stability; whenever chaos surfaces society pursues the need to expiate and purify the own sins (Eliade, 1968) (Berger, 1971).

As G Mead reminds convincingly, the game and sport look to be part of same phenomena. However, meanwhile game is intended to socialize children inside a fantastic world, sports appear to combine specific aims with method to achieve the success. Whenever a warrior or sportsman obtain the success, losers feel admiration and support. For another hand, social superiority feelings are expressed by means with "national prestige". It is evident how a kind of "pride" (in the search of excellence) in combination with honor creates the necessity of domination. In fact, winners are immersed in the capacity to subdue to all who had not that ability that they show (submission). The proper skillfulness is determined randomly including and excluding all whose skills are in opposition to present mythical archetype. Based on this point, all dictatorships incline to exacerbate the own image or biography at the same time, they think others deserve to be humbled (Mead, 1999).

Not only Malinowski but also Claude Lévi-Strauss confirmed myths worked actively in social life by ordering, expressing, coding and exalting the values and beliefs. The Legends we are accustomed to hear once and once again -in form of story or poem- are active forces whose tendency resides in explaining all symbolic contradictions in our world (Malinowski, 1998) (Lévi-Strauss, 2003) (Mauss, 2006). Thus, sometimes hero is recognized by an extraordinary attribute or feature that interconnect human beings with their gods.

Conclusions

The present review have been intended to respond some questions around the role that usually play public games in politic realm. In sporting competitions emerge two elements which are more than important to mention: an interest of conforming a selected personality that conjugates physical dexterity in combination with extra-ordinary features; not only a evident need to prevail over others competitors but also the tendency to link the winner to the own community. For better or words, feats contribute directly to mythical hero conformation (archetype). A policy aimed at exacerbating sporting competition is associated with an obsession for domination. The fact is that political power is strongly interested in gaining acceptance on the orchestration of the conspicuous consumption and prestige ceremonies. Truthfully, the State explodes the pleasure and prestige to win just there where others have failed (Veblen, 1974).

Technically, many societies and diverse civilizations have been compounded by two types of strata: to) a productive class dedicated to technical work’s development, and b) “a leisure class” that makes reference to the search of prestige. The sportsmen, academics and politicians would be included in the second type since their interests do not follow technical purposes but abstracts. Certainly, these groups in question seem to be a product of certain accumulation surplus which has taken place in specific social and historical contexts (Veblen, 1974).

At first instance, the problem should be re-considered in utilizing four variables: a) charisma which can be deemed as a mechanism of social distinction, b) nationalism should be understood as a vehicle toward the identity reinforcement, c) hegemony helps learning as to how a competition create discursive differences among human beings d) the mythical archetype of heroism comprises the blessing of divinity and evokes its protection and e) social values and stereotypes are shaped by the action of education in early socialization process. Although, in futures studies an empirical demonstration would be necessary, no need to mention that all these issues provide a coherent frame-work to understand as to how “hegemonic nationalism” works in context of social disorder.

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