**death/死亡(Sǐ Wáng)**

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| European Perspective | Didier Sicard | 31 May 2022 |

**DEATH IN WESTERN COUNTRIES (Phenomenologic aspect and evolution)**

Death is not simply the end of life, it also implies the relation between this very end of life, and the social and cultural environment in which it occurs.

Culture still leaves its mark there. Eventhough major cultural differences exist, particularly in relationship to rituals, Western countries both in the North and the South, the view of death remains quite common. even if there is a maintenance of old tradition of ceremony or incineration in Italy, Spain ,Greece and Mediterranean islands The major difference lies in Orthodox countries where the dead body must remain exposed to the sight of the survivors for a period of a few days, whereas Christian culture countries limit the wake to a couple of hours before placing the corpse in the coffin or before closing the coffin. The only novelty regards the “white steps” during the tragic death of young people. The place of the family in the funeral is less important than before except for important actors or personalities

The relationship to the body (cf. “The Body”) has consequences on death. The body-soul dichotomy is replaced by the dichotomy during life, Körper-Leib or Zòe and Bios , that is to say the separation between the organs of the body on the one hand ,the felt and the social body on the other hand. Death separates more the Körper and the Zòe than the Leib and the Bios which constitute a sort of memorial for a period of time .The vision of eternity is gradually disappearing.We no longer talk about immortality (except “the Pantheon “) which welcomes the most famous people.

Therefore the relation one has with his/her own death is not just an intimate matter .The historian Ariès has just identified several historical periods :”the tamed death “ through its collective rituals characteristic of the Middle Ages (Dante’s hell 1308 AC),the “death of self”of the last part of Middle Ages -which places the dying person at the center of death process, (the painting of Quattrocento 1400,) reinforcing the theme of the possible punishment or the preparation of a good death, which would lead to heaven. Then, "the death of you", which highlights the feelings and emotions at the time of The Enlightenment. (1700-1800) .Finally, the "inverted or reverse death", which is that of our time. The dying person is deprived of his/her death as he/she dies more and more alone. Death must be concealed, put at a distance and must not hinder the life of the living. In other words, "the death of him" along with the weakening of the life-death boundaries, an extension of the quality of life over the quality of death. The place of religions is facing can a little except at the time of most mortem rituals. The catholic extrëme anointing has disappeared.

In the latter part of the 20th century a fundamental change occurred. Simultaneously, therapeutic advances substantially push back the time of death and society increasingly excludes death from the daily social space. The collective emergence of medical efficiency has rather reduced public and private rites. Dying has become a matter of medicine with the nagging question of shortening the agony or anticipating it by dying (euthanasia in Benelux), assisted suicide (Switzerland, Spain, certain American states, etc.). These medical deaths account for about 5% of end-of-life. They are encouraged by militant associations that give them significant media coverage. The concept and practice of palliative care is a form of medical support at the end life.

After death, cremation practices increase to the detriment of burials, reducing headstones and sepulchers in favor of funeral urns. Belief in the afterlife is constantly diminishing as the bodysoul relationship disappear ssubjects. The death of young people is increasingly experienced as one unbearable drama and emotion remains great. The death of old subjects is considered an outcome.

Finally, during the past 40 years the death penalty has disappeared in most countries. In Europe, it only remains in Belarus and Russia. It is prohibited in the Constitutions of 108 countries throughout the world. Among the 144 countries where there is no law against it, they no longer put the death penalty into practice.