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THE FOOD AS A HUMAN RIGHT AND RISK IN A COMPLEX SOCIETY¹

O ALIMENTO COMO DIREITO HUMANO E O RISCO NA SOCIEDADE COMPLEXA

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Abstract

This work aims to analyze the theme of food as a human right and risk in a complex society from the angle of the Study of Risk an Ecology of the Human Rights . Here, risk condensates a particular symbiosis of future and society, allows the construct of communication and describes the chance of reflecting about the future. It is based on two questions: the semantic load underlying the terms security, insecurity and risk; and how the food insecurity modality is present in contemporary society. The idea is that civilization has advanced trying to abolish the imminent perils of catastrophes, but it did not find sustainability or a favorable balance to eliminate the complex social problems it produces. Thus, from the very decision structures risk is fomented. It concludes on the paradoxical aspect of this society, whose events operate on risk productions: the more food production, more food insecurity the more communication and education, more disinformation; the more knowledge, more un-knowledge.

Keywords

Food – Risk – Complex society – Communication – Education

Resumo

O objetivo deste trabalho é analisar o tema alimento como direito humano e o risco na sociedade complexa pela perspectiva do Estudo do Risco e da Ecologia dos Direitos Humanos . Aqui, o risco condensa uma particular simbiose de futuro e sociedade, permite o construto da comunicação e descreve a possibilidade de refletir o futuro. Pauta sobre duas questões: a carga semântica subjacente nos termos segurança, insegurança e risco; e como a modalidade de insegurança alimentar está presente na sociedade contemporânea. O argumento é de que a civilização avançou tentando abolir os perigos iminentes de catástrofes, contudo, não conseguiu encontrar sustentação ou equilíbrio favorável para eliminar os complexos problemas sociais que produz; assim, das estruturas de decisão fomenta-se o risco. Conclui sobre a paradoxalidade dessa sociedade, cujos eventos operam nas produções de riscos: mais produção de alimentos, maior insegurança alimentar; mais comunicação e educação, maior desinformação; mais saber, maior o não saber.

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Palavras-Chave

Alimento – Risco – Sociedade Complexa – Comunicação – Educação

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Introduction

The study of risk in complex societies, a project elaborated by Niklas Luhmann and Raffaele De Giorgi, presents a discussion on the ways how contemporary society started to fight the oppressive mechanisms produced by itself. For instance, Amazonia's deforestation is often vindicated in defense of economic development. On the other hand, we know deforestation destroys the environment and causes damages to health, to food security, to the ecosystem. Therefore, even though the dysfunctional techniques for treating the oppressive mechanisms created by modern society; the strategic inoperativeness of security, the lack of health and education planning, of quality food, "of networks braided with unhealthy formulas for cohabitation, known as global risk"², are still unresolved, one must understand that the harm caused by those actual paradoxes compromises the future of society itself. In that sense, not knowing how to solve the inoperativeness, the dysfunctions and the absences, may incur in what De Giorgi calls the "abyss". According to the philosopher, the abyss, in that context, has something of grotesque, since we have: "The risk of knowing that is produced, and the risk of the risk of not knowing that may be hidden"³.

The non observation of what might be a risk, in a complex society, merely allows to present it as a state of things (situation: the risk is being smaller or bigger); a condition or an entity doted of elements that guide the object of study (to be or not to be; I accept or I don't accept; determined or undetermined); or a mere possibility. In those conditions, one does not expose risk to knowledge as it should be while decision, because the pretense of contemporary society is to assume the risk of its own decisions, that is, in the fact of deciding to assume, considering all possible assurances it may obtain. That means that one must observe risk and decisions that confer the character of risk, for finally getting out of common sense, whose idea is that risk should be avoided, and for such the most diverse safety measures are created. "Safety techniques are invented; risk and hazard are produced according to the observer and the recipient; risk experts are trained and risk is hidden from experts"⁴.

Risk is commonly seen as a kind of reality produced by acting, "an action on individuals or action on social systems. Risk is a kind of reality of threat, or one type of threat of a reality kept in silence"⁵. However, risk is a paradox instituted by contemporary society, and in this society it is seen as a given, a subjective information, and it is linked to decisions and actions directed to the future. Seen this way, risk does not receive a negative value, consequently, there is not how to avoid it, to hide it, because risk breaks the natural order of time continuity, establishes a difference between past and future.

For that reason, in order to deal with food and risk in a complex society, it is necessary to understand the semantic load underlying the terms/themes security, insecurity, and risk. Because risk is not an opposition to security, but a relational modality with the future; "it is a form of determining the indeterminations according to the difference of likeliness/unlikeliness"⁶.

² Raffaele De Giorgi, "O risco na sociedade contemporânea", Revista de Direito Sanitário Vol: 9 num 1 (2008): 37-49.

³ Raffaele De Giorgi, "O risco na sociedade... 38.

⁴ Raffaele De Giorgi, "O risco na sociedade... 38.

⁵ Raffaele De Giorgi, "O risco na sociedade... 56.

⁶ Raffaele De Giorgi, "O risco na sociedade contemporânea", Sequência num 28 (1994): 53.

In that case, conceptualizing security as an assumed certainty, in a rational way, becomes the alternative category for risk, that is, in the present case, food security, legal, political, economical, educational instruments, and the meanings originated in its formulation, if well rationalized, are the alternative to risk that justifies some food insecurities in modern society.

Further on, it approaches food insecurity related to the question of starvation and the risk questions intrinsic to this discussion, since the engagement of technologies as means to enhance food production, with discourses serving to the propositions of satiating hunger in the world, passes through political, scientific, economic, preventive natures, and others, for society's future. The idea here is to reflect on the paradox of contemporary society, whose model underlines some undetermined determinations, such as: the more technology favoring agricultural development and food production, the more advances in education and communication, larger the hunger and/or food insecurity. Another observation: in a complex society, the way how food is produced and consumed will constitute another order of socioeconomic and cultural nature in that society. That is, so the differences between individuals will be marked: rich and poor; healthy or unhealthy; conscious and not conscious; knowing and un-knowing.

There resides the need for a new form of un-knowing⁷, because being conscious of that un-knowing situation implies trials, experiments and chances of enhancing human life through food, in order to build a better future, without hunger, obesity and malnutrition, among other illnesses and ailments of society caused by feeding modes or their absence. It is occupied, in that perspective, in observing and describing, through a theoretical analysis, the modes by which society produces a communicational bond with food and the future, relating to the legal, political, economical, educational subsystems, or others. In this context of study there is also reflection on the formulation of the subject and his condition of decision making. The invention of the individual as the subject unit, rational and free at the same time allowing the understanding of semantic structure that made possible the development of human rights in modern society; its function and special contribution to the evolution of society; the specific character of the function of Human Rights, on the paradoxes of its semantics, its contribution to the production of otherness and the surplus of this production proposes to show the horizon, what De Giorgi comes to a possible Ecology of the Human Rights. According to De Giorgi⁸, the literature on Human Rights, even when it is concluded, presents nevertheless consistent features: it expresses expectations that oscillate between hope and resignation, between disappointment with the present and certainty of better futures. The Human Rights, according to the philosopher, have been treated as guarantees of the recognition of people's individuality, of their dignity, their freedom, their impossibility of repeating the human person⁹. From it, De Giorgi points out, derive the principles of property, equality, protection against the state, and then protection by the state. Then one can find the systematic violations of those rights, which justify the calls for them to be respected. At the highest level of claims are the protests for obtaining its judicialization¹⁰.

⁷ Niklas Luhmann and Raffaele De Giorgi, *Teoria della società...* 169-246.

⁸ Raffaele De Giorgi, "Por uma ecologia dos direitos..." 325.

⁹ According Dieter Grimm. Dieter Grimm, *Die Zukunft der Verfassung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1991); Dieter Grimm, *Die Zukunft der Verfassung II - Auswirkungen von Europäisierung und Globalisierung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2012) e Luigi Ferrajoli, *Diritti fondamentali. Un dibattito teorico* (Roma: Editori Laterza, 2001).

¹⁰ Allow me to refer to my contribution. Raffaele De Giorgi, "El futuro de la Justicia de los derechos humanos: Argumentación Jurisprudencial." Memoria del IV Congreso Internacional de

Risk, Security, Insecurity And Their Meaning Effects

The process of legal, economic, political, educational civilized advancement caused impacts on the social systems' structure, either due to the new rights being required to attend to complex demands, or by the legitimation of power through economy, politics and education, or even because the function of complexity reduction inherent to each system's function, increments their own complexity.

It is through communication that this complexity is originated, since it structures a social system. After all, through communication we make things work in the world, give them positive or negative values, guarantees or not, be functional or dysfunctional. It means to say that the things' meaning reside in the ways how subjects determine how they will interact. Communication is, then, the interactive process, the link, the being with the other in the sense of being equal here, now, there, anywhere; it guides and gives functionality to universality; it gives sense and serves as a premise for the elaboration of all human experience; it frees or oppresses people. Thus, the meaning of things presents itself as a surplus of references of a given posterior experiment within the possibilities of experimenting; meaning is the very immanence of things.

Through communication, one may give the impression that a considerable part of the population lives in fear of the future, feeling unprotected or protected, secure or insecure. It means to say that the events which cause harm or protection pass through communication, or even, through the meanings that move the causes and their consequences. It is society itself who produces and at the same time becomes the recipient of communication, "continuously repeating operations so as to assure its self-maintenance and self-creation"¹¹.

In order to assure this operation, there are the dimensions of semiotics (of meaning), conferred in semantics, syntactics and pragmatics. In that proposition, attention falls on semantics. It is in the semantic dimension that one selects the sign and operationalizes the relations between things or objects; it is the place where "meaning while form of meaning may be defined then as the possibility of transformation of meaning"¹². In other words, producing meaning is to transform a given meaning; meaning is not only what words say, but above all a direction. Through semantics, society is sensitized in order to learn the meanings of social practice, the social practice of meanings, and to form relationships of these with the objects produced by it for the functioning of the social system. In Niklas Luhmann¹³, "semantics (*semantik*) is society's conceptual legacy". In sociological terms, it is possible to define semantics as a reference to the concepts of meaning, or, it is through semantics that the production and the effects of meanings of security, insecurity and risk are apprehended in the social system.

The social system is, therefore, self-produced through the circularity and reflectivity of their own elements and meanings, that is, communications. Thus, communication does not close on itself, in its mere reality, it constitutes uniquely as a reference to other possibilities of communication; communication is thought, consciousness, and as such it

Argumentación Jurídica: Justiciabilidad de los derechos (México: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2014).

¹¹ Raffaele De Giorgi, *Direito, Democracia e Risco: vínculos com o futuro* (Porto Alegre: Sergio Antonio Fabris Editor, 1998), 81.

¹² Algirdas Julien Greimas, *Dicionário de Semiótica* (São Paulo: Contexto, 2008).

¹³ Nicklas Luhmann, *Luhmann in glossario. I concetti fondamentali della teoria dei sistemi sociali* (Milano: Francoangeli, 1996), 192.

goes together with reality and is founded on contextual terms. It means that communication is self-referenced, that is, it may refer to another (a thought to another thought; a consciousness to another consciousness; a meaning to another).

According to Luhmann and De Giorgi, society is a large system, inside which other social relationships operate and reconstruct from their own elements (*autopoiesis*). In that perspective, one may mention the right to feeding, for example, as a subsystem of Law that has mechanisms of self-organization produced by society to communicate on the right and the access to healthy food, within another system, the case of the National Food and Nutritional Security System (Sisan -- Law n. 11.346/2006), which in January 2, 2019, through the Provisional Measure 870/2019, passed through revocations and modifications in its text, among which the functional mechanics of the National Council of Food and Nutritional Security (Consea).

That expresses what Raffaele De Giorgi points out: "The forms that had allowed complex self-descriptions of modern society, as it seems, become obsolete"¹⁴. That is what may be inferred from the case of Sisan and Consea, above mentioned, when one thinks that the system that may generate food and nutritional security is functioning, other systems come up, such as political and economic power, and it self-references in such a way as to construct other meanings and values; so, in the self-descriptions could always happen obsolescence. Therefore, the descriptive potential of the distinction security versus insecurity, based on a semantics according to which it stabilizes within structures that produce certainties, tranquilizing in face of a formal and material rationality, may no longer explain or analyze the values that characterize the parts of the distinction marked within that semantic opposition. If living in a condo is safer than in a slum; if eating four times a day is to have food security; in that frame of description there is no aesthetic event, no complexity to be analyzed.

Hence a complex society may be defined by three basic elements that try to legitimize its conception of society, in its own era: i) truth; ii) values; and iii) security. The understanding of the world each of these elements will create depends on the communication established between the social subjects, because, as De Giorgi¹⁵ formulates, "social relationships only exist through communication employed in solving divergences".

If a badly elaborated communication generates divergences, the right to feeding, in that specific case, absorbs social diligences and process them as a solution for the demand. In an analog case, people without food may generate processes to demand from public authorities measures to solve the problem of food scarcity. However, if the processes are not well formulated and instructed with effective legislation, which guide to solution, there will be no truth, neither will it reach the communicational aims. Thus, if the process contains legal failures it may lead to a transgression of the legal, educational and feeding subsystems; as an example, demanding other actions and values capable of re-establishing security and to immunize society against the lack of food and of food education, among other needs pertaining to the theme.

For that reason, the emission of an information about feeding modes is not in itself communication. Communication is performed uniquely if understanding is attained, in the

¹⁴ Raffaele De Giorgi, *Direito, Democracia e Risco...* 185.

¹⁵ Raffaele De Giorgi, *Direito, Democracia e Risco...* 86.

case, if information is understood and the responsibility of the other's emission is interacted with the first one.

To the present analysis, one communicates about feeding properly in order to express about something related to production, to supplying and consuming healthy food; therefore, one believes the producer understood what is expressed in the information -- to produce healthy food; the supplier in disposing the healthy produce in the market; the consumer in acquiring and feeding in a way as to protect his health. Thanks to the above mentioned communication in that process, one gives continuity to that cycle, taking into account the elementary credits of truth, values and security, starting the process of understanding what signifies to truly feed with security regarding human health. Here the function of understanding is to continuously open the space of impenetrability for the occurrence of a possibility of consensus in contemporary society. After all, in that model of society, the terms security and insecurity, determination and indetermination, stability and instability are simultaneously reinforced.

Still according to De Giorgi¹⁶, "if the considerations we develop are plausible, it means that modern society's structure is paradoxical, and that today that paradoxicalness became a communication theme".

It is important to highlight that, differently from what it is possible to observe recurring to ancient distinctions, the paradoxicalness of distinctions that we have just pointed out consist in this: there is one part of the distinction precisely because there is another. In other words, in contemporary society there is more poverty, precisely because there is more richness, there is more insecurity because there is more security, and so on¹⁷.

In that context, to think the communicational unlikelinesses that may arise in a complex society is another reflection that emerges on food in its time, after all, the guarantee of having food or of feeding exist in several legal instruments, there is communication between the political and economic systems to surpass the uncertainties of not having it, food education to guide consuming to a healthy life, discussions on illnesses caused by food insecurity. However, one observes that there is a communication void, or a non-communication space, in which some food insecurities are found. That inoperativeness may arise because food acquires a different meaning in the communicative acts of the state, economic, educational, legal power systems, generating a lack of understanding and uncertainties about what may be the production and supply methods or models and a responsible and proper consuming of food. In the same way, the concept and/or meaning immanent in food security structures, since for a good functioning the security concept is a certainty assumed as rational¹⁸. With that once again the un-knowing occurs, after all: "If it is true that indeterminations may be avoided, it is even truer that statistics don't tell us anything, and that it is possible to avoid them, since one is willing to make possible other indeterminations that cannot be known"¹⁹.

And more, considering the communicational improbabilities inherent to that condition, it also makes impossible to unveil the indeterminations that might be avoided regarding food insecurity.

¹⁶ Raffaele De Giorgi, O risco na sociedade... 6.

¹⁷ Raffaele De Giorgi, O risco na sociedade... 6-7.

¹⁸ Raffaele De Giorgi, O risco na sociedade... 7-8.

¹⁹ Niklas Luhmann e Raffaele De Giorgi. Teoria della società... 191.

Indeterminations, Contemporary Society's (Un)Certainty And Risk Formulation

Among the indeterminations that deserve being analyzed, we find (un)certainly in knowledge directed to the theme of food security concerning economic power or social status. In that modality of knowledge the idea is predisposed that those who have economic power are more inclined to food security and education; that food production serves to responsible consuming and, consequently, the technologies to avoid feeding order disasters transform economic insecurities of social order -- inequality, poverty, discrimination, sickness and others -- into guarantees to the human beings' dignity. However, if that were true the complex society would not have statistics such as mentioned by the United Nations (UN) showing that in a world of abundant food human beings are starving:

“UN needs 4.2 billion euros until the end of the month to avoid a catastrophe in 4 countries: Yemen, Nigeria, Somalia and South Sudan. [...] “Every year, one third of the food produced for human consuming is lost or wasted. It is the case of 20 million people in four countries [mentioned above] which, if they don't get immediate help, will be in risk of death in the next six months”.²⁰

Wars, climate changes and pressure on natural resources; many are the elements conjugated to make those nations more vulnerable, even in a "world of abundance", as described by UN's secretary-general, António Guterres. He reminded this week that "there are no excuses for inaction", mainly in the case of "a tragedy that may still be fought in order to avoid becoming a catastrophe"²¹.

If we want to reflect on Human Rights in a more realistic way, we want to ask what is their function, we want to see how they operate, and we want to take seriously the meaning of the terms that are used when talking, precisely, about Human Rights. In other words, we want to ask ourselves: *What is behind Human Rights?*²² With this question we also reflect: what lies behind the hunger-keeping project in a society that produces food and wastes it? Or who deforests, burns, exploits forests with the justification of producing food to satiate hunger?

According to De Giorgi:

“Human Rights are an inheritance of the ancient natural law. They work in a strange way: they activate when law breaks its bond with nature, but they resort to nature to justify its universality. They are an inheritance that materializes when the reasons of law are no longer determined by the quality of persons, which are precisely natural, but are fixed in reason. Law finally finds its reasons in the universality of reason²³.”

This major acquisition, says De Giorgi takes place in Europe as early as the 17th century. This new rational determination of law makes the law accessible to all; everyone

²⁰ Carla Mucavi, “Tackling hunger crises in South Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria and Yemen requires \$4.4 billion – Un”, Nova York: UN News, 2017. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2017/02/551992-tackling-hunger-crisis-south-sudan-somalia-nigeria-and-yemen-requires-44>. (13.03.2020)

²¹ Helena Tecedeiro, “20 milhões em risco de fome num “mundo de abundância” (Lisboa: Diário de Notícias, 2017). <https://www.dn.pt/mundo/interior/20-milhoes-em-risco-de-fome-num-mundo-de-abundancia-5703682.html>. (26.05.2018)

²² Rafaelle De Giorgi, “Por Uma Ecologia... 325.

²³ Hans Welzel, “Naturrecht und materiale Gerechtigkeit, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen” (1990) Apud Rafaelle De Giorgio, “Por uma ecologia dos ... 324–340.

may be entitled to the law to the condition that each one is able to access law. Being able to access law means being *your own master*, as Kant will say²⁴. The right is attributed and recognized, it is a demarcation that determines the space of action within which acting is lawful. Reason provides the criteria that allow to universalize and specify this right, at the same time.

For all this to be possible, it is necessary that those to whom the right can be attributed, the right-holders, are no longer regarded as the *object* of law, but as *subjects of law*. Only rational subjects are able to exercise the right. As it turns out, here we are faced with a paradox -- because the subjective right is always an objective right as well, as Kelsen says²⁵, that is, a right that builds as its object the subject who is allowed to exercise it --, but the paradox is very fruitful. For this operation of the subject construction to work, in turn, it will be necessary for the subjects of right to be considered as individuals, as individualities, as differences, as particularities. That is, they must be treated by law in their integrality, in their entirety. Only then can actions be imputed to singulars, that is, individuals, to unitary complexes that cannot be divided²⁶. Those unitary complexes, called individuals, can precisely coordinate actions and establish relationships between ends and means: that is, they can be the subject of rational action. Of course, the subject of imputation must be presupposed as free, otherwise the action could not be imputed to him or her.

So it can be said that it is understood that "richness does not guarantee knowledge, which, in its turn, does not guarantee power, which in its turn does not guarantee health"²⁷, neither food security. Therefore,

"[...] the social systems and psychic systems, coupled with each other, become unstable from themselves, control themselves and, when controlled, are surprised, learn from themselves. Structures of that kind cannot be assured from the exterior, neither assure the exterior"²⁸.

So, if there is food insecurity due to the waste of food, and that causes irreversible damages to human beings' health, the government should educate for production and supply, create price indexes for basic foods, teach responsible consuming. While the waste and disinformation conditions are not overcome, insecurity becomes something normal and acceptable, without the due consciousness of the threat that affects some humans around the world.

By way of information, in Figure 1, the numbers expose the case related to children who are in "imminent risk" of death by starvation.

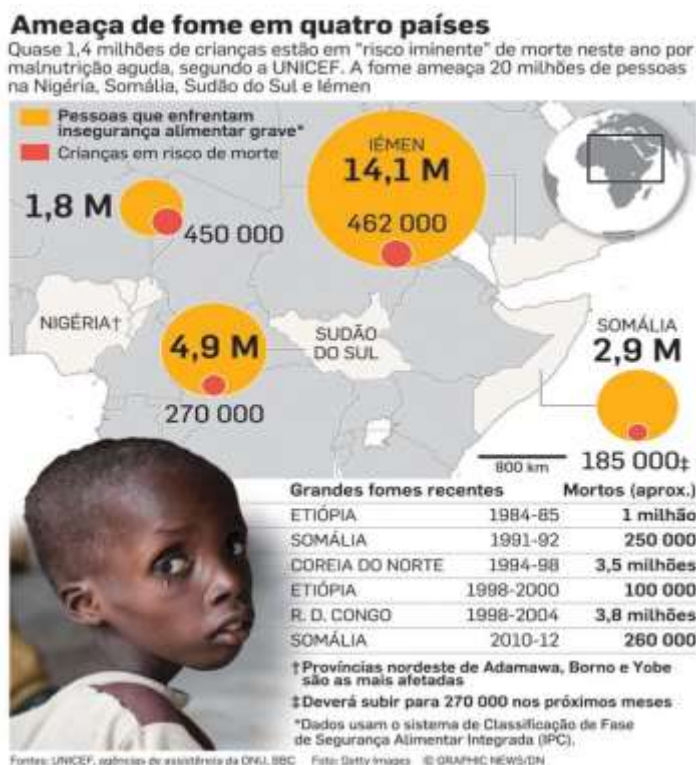
²⁴ Immanuel Kant, "Die Methaphysik der Sitten", In Die Qualität des Menschen, sein eigener Herr (sui iuris) zu sein, eds., Wilhelm Weischedel (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1982).

²⁵ Hans Kelsen, Reine Rechtslehre. Einleitung in die rechtswissenschaftliche Problematik (Leipzig: Franz Deuticke Verlag, 1934). Apud Raffaele De Giorgi, "Por uma ecologia dos direitos..."

²⁶ Tat heißt eine Handlung, Suffering without its Gesetzen der Verbindlichkeit steht, Folglich auch, Suffering from the Subjekt in derselben nach der Freiheit seiner Willkür betrachtet wird. Der handelnde wird durch einen solchen Akt als Urheber der Wirkung betrachtet, und diese, zusamt der Handlung selbst, können ihm zugerechnet werden. Immanuel Kant, "Die Methaphysik der... 329.

²⁷ Raffaele De Giorgi. O risco na... 40.

²⁸ Raffaele De Giorgi. O risco na... 41.



Source: Carla Mucavi²⁹

Figure 1
 Threat of hunger in 4 countries

Social structures of this nature, when they self-operate from themselves for their own operations, become unstable and unpredictable. The instabilities/unpredictabilities may indicate, once again, that the food security and education concepts, among others that make part of that systemic and/or structural disposition, are deprived of any favorable sense of operating stability. Hence, one may estimate the negative chances (lack of trust) constant in the certainties disposed in so-called objective, technologically sophisticated, measures to overcoming the threat; if the concepts are deprived of values for the catastrophe reversion -- death by inaction, one cannot also find trust, security and stability for the treatment of complexity produced by complexity itself.

Instability and unpredictability, in that context, confer complexity, people starve to death when the food production and consuming are used in an irresponsible way. Irresponsibility/responsibility, in their turn, are co-related to society's decisions regarding its future. If in the past it is no longer plausible to search for answers for the present problems, it means that the past did not confer stability. Therefore, the immanent problem here regards the future. In that model of society, "the only chance we have to build links with the future is risk"³⁰.

After all, risk in contemporary society has the function of rationalizing fear -- according to which people may starve to death, notwithstanding the food waste. Thus, risk means to impute an eventual damage to a decision, in the certainty that another decision

²⁹ Carla Mucavi, "Tackling hunger crises in South Sudan..."

³⁰ Raffaele De Giorgio. O risco na... 42.

might avoid the occurrence of hunger's damage. Risk always depends on the decision of those who act. Well, the food insecurity agent producer's action -- hunger, human starvation from inaction, for more complex it may be, departs from the choices of society itself (for that very reason, complex), the same that produces the systems of food security laws, the content of food education and responsible consuming, guidelines for the production and supply of proper food, and so on.

According to De Giorgi³¹, "risk is a question that interests to time, or better, to temporality, that is, to that dimension of event production that makes possible the experience of duration, notwithstanding change". As much as risk events relate to the future, in the defense of possibilities of building a better future; risk events manifested in the discourse of food producer markets, suppliers and consumers, which have appropriated of technologies in order to rebuild social order and create stable expectations: to satiate the world hunger, deforestation areas are expanded; to favor the agribusiness, one may disfavor family farming; and so on.

Given those formulations on the decisions taken, it is worth retaking part of the history of the great challenge of global climate changes and, consequently, what it has caused to the food question. At the Cassandra Conference, organized in Texas in 1988, Paul Ehrlich and John Holdren³² have opened the theme of global changes making an analogy with the myth of Cassandra. The goal was to call the attention to what the prophetess of ruin or death, daughter of king Priam of Troy, had cautioned, that is, that the Trojans tragedy happened in virtue of their acceptance of the huge wood horse as a gift from the Greek.

The analogy made by the speakers on the natural resources and human plights, focused on the themes about "natural resources, energetic availability, acid rain, toxic residues, economic-ecological models, and a revisitation to *The Limits to Growth* (Ehrlich; Holdren) -- associated the problems humans would face if adjustments were not made to the development models adopted at the time.

That meeting, organized by Ehrlich and Holdren, produced documents considered polemical, but which, added to others, mainly those originated in Rio-92 and its periphery, offered a lucid and sensible analysis on the condition and the consequences of the human/nature interaction. [...] Despite so many "Cassandras", imprudence goes on. We keep "opening our gates", under the most different arguments and discourses, to harbor "gifts" in their fascinating packages³³. It happens that Cassandra's myth also suggests the humans' recklessness before temptations presented to them. For example, Vitousek³⁴ points out that the modifications in land's use affect climate, locally and regionally, in several ways. Depending on the planting activity on the land, it may intensify the concentration of carbon, methane and nitrogen oxides in the atmosphere, etc. It happens that even knowing those perils, humans keep using the soil in an inappropriate way, favoring the gathering of financial wealth, that is, the temptation of financial wealth is above environmental causes that may favor the collectivity as a whole. In that logic, the question of food and risk in a complex society is inserted.

³¹ Raffaele De Giorgio. O risco na... 43-44.

³² Paul Ehrlich and John Holdren, "Conference Cassandra - Texas (1988)", In Educação Ambiental – Princípios e Práticas, eds., Genebaldo Freire Dias (São Paulo: Gaia 2003), 43.

³³ Genebaldo Freire Dias, Educação Ambiental – Princípios e Práticas (São Paulo: Gaia, 2003), 244.

³⁴ Peter M. Vitousek, "Beyond Global Warming: Ecology and Global Change" Ecology Vol: 75 num 7 (1994): 1861-1876.

The concept that the food question was strictly related to production capacity also served as foundation to the Green Revolution, in the decades of 1960 and 1970, when a new agriculture era started, with the acceleration of mass production, mechanization and the use of chemical inputs, from fertilizers to pesticides. In that time, therefore, food security was predominantly related to farming mass production³⁵.

The creation of stable perspectives, according to which there are no problems in deforestation or disfavoring family farming, or others in the same direction, have also generated uncertainties and violations of the food rights. However, one must understand that those expectations have a duration in present time; the present is the space for the occurrence of that simultaneity, because only in this time it is possible to escape from the future, turning it into something irreversibly actual. And regarding the future? According to De Giorgi³⁶, if the future is open, the time of un-knowing, in relation with the future, the contemporary society can only choose. How? Through constructions linked to time, turning them into strategic constructions of normative stabilization of expectations. If in the 20th century there was hunger, independently of the abundant food produced, that occurrence should not build links with the 21st century, nor with the future. Produced by right, education, communication, politics, food economics and other systems, "the normative stabilization of expectations make possible the maintenance of its own expectations in case of disillusionment"³⁷.

In that conception, another strategy is the one that allows a prospective future damage to be imputable to a decision in the certainty that another decision might have prevented the damage occurrence. "This way of building the future, this time bond, is called risk. Risk, therefore, is correlated to un-knowing and to the need of choosing³⁸. The fact may be exemplified as follows: the discovery of the illness caused by hunger makes clear the ignorance of its treatment, therefore the risk of death by inaction. The creation of instruments to eliminate hunger and food waste makes clear the ignorance of the consequences. In contemporary society, with its social complexities, the bigger the knowledge, bigger the un-knowledge; the bigger the knowledge on a certain occurrence, damage, illness, bigger the un-knowing of its results. That makes clear that one can only avoid the risk of starvation with the condition of exposing to another risk, without knowing exactly what. If risk is the chance of a future damage that another choice might have prevented, for that reason modern society is described as a risk society; in that pitch, risk becomes a mode of relation with the future; it is a form of determination of indeterminations according to the difference of probability/improbability.

Food security and un-knowing in a complex society

Food is the result of several gestures and ideas, which overlap along history. That result starts in the choice of the prime matter that one recognizes as eatable or drinkable, until the choice of wares to compose or keep the food, the utensils selected to savor them, the accessories to serve wine or to drink water. In that course, nothing is obvious or insignificant: each moment is marked by choices and decisions, risky or not, culturally loaded

³⁵ Patrícia Santos Prêcoma, Pellanda, "A sociedade de risco e o princípio da informação: Uma abordagem sobre a segurança alimentar na produção de transgênicos no Brasil" *Veredas do Direito* Vol: 10 num 19 (2013): 91.

³⁶ Raffaele De Giorgio. *O risco na...*, 47.

³⁷ Raffaele De Giorgio. *O risco na...* 43.

³⁸ Raffaele De Giorgio. *O risco na...* 43.

of significance, and which contribute to its elaboration. Food taken to the mouth is only the last stage of that process, which right away gives a start to another and others of physical-biological nature. According to Roland Barthes³⁹:

“Food is perceived as a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of uses, situations and behaviors. What does it serve to? It is not only a collection of products that may be used for nutritional and statistic uses. It is also, and simultaneously, a communication system.”

Why do animals feed? For necessity, of course, but not only that. For humans, pleasure is added, by a mysterious mechanism that pushes to the volition of food. Moreover, they feed in search of health, that the ancient medical science, in all civilizations and cultural traditions, considered a priority for the body maintenance. At last, one eats to share, to communicate [communion] with the other the food one has and makes, to serve, making of those gestures so essentially individual an act of sociability. Here is another extranutritional reference, the experience of feeding: the food is related to symbolic, metaphoric, imaginary values.

While a construction of communication, in order to have simultaneously healthy and nutritional food, one must invest in a whole arsenal of rational techniques so that insecurity may not self-reproduce during the process; more, it is necessary to understand the historical-cultural operationalizations that found food and the act of feeding. That means that food security is not structured or becomes possible from the singular technology structure, because it happens based on time and place, on culture and synesthesia, on communication and education. The economy and technology systems, in the context of food production, have long been distant from the food security question as it should be supported.

Nowadays, before the demands of the food production market, and before that reality of generating deep chasms in order to differentiate, or even estrange, or put apart the other for their way of feeding, the circumstantial un-knowing of that reality has to do with the future of humanity. Interventions that hamper the existence of the very causality of food insecurity, for that reason, are harnessed to food security policies that do not work. Other times, the empirical exercises performed in food education campaigns and risk prevention are shown with recipients that did not pass through the food insecurity risk that one wished to prevent.

The differences, thus, are not related to the outer part of the system, but to differences that occur through the universal exclusion of all differences. That is how the universal inclusion generates universal exclusion⁴⁰. In that way, society may face the future of food, and of human beings' dignity in their right to food, enhanced by means of law. Those possibilities of building the future by means of law, education, communication, have before them another possibility that is always excluded in the present, and as mentioned before, by risk.

In this point of the analysis, the idea is to make clear the paradoxical and circular structure of risk, although it is observed as a risky increment, since all systems function with risky operations. That means that food -- feeding -- may be transformed into risk. The one who has better conditions of feeding within the food security standards is assured against

³⁹Roland Barthes, “Pour une psycho-sociologie de l'alimentation contemporaine”, in *Oeuvres complètes*, eds., Eric Marty (Paris: Seuil. 1993-1995).

⁴⁰ Raffaele De Giorgio. *O risco na...* 51.

the risk and is led to practice a risky behavior (food waste, inadequate feeding, etc.), precisely because in the hypothesis of checking the food insecurity risk, that is, hunger, he or she feels secure. But the complex society often does not understand that behavior may be analyzed as a peril to others. Those who pass through food insecurity live the risk of illness (hunger, malnutrition, diabetes, cholesterol, obesity and others) as a danger from which they cannot run and against which they cannot act until the effective production of harm. At last, the catastrophes of hunger and illnesses brought about by food insecurity, waste, deforestation, beyond being understood as dangerous, are risks, because knowledge and technology tend to transform them into risks.

Conclusions

In other societies, un-knowing was not to know what one would eat before nature's will: climate (sun, rain, drought, flood) or seasons or time for sowing, that is, before the human needs of feeding there was also the order of nature. Today, un-knowing in a complex society is of another order, because one has the notion that the bigger the food production, smaller the hunger in the world; more techniques for food production, preservation and conservation, more consuming and healthy food; however, the reality we know is not exactly that.

In that sense, in order to understand the communication produced by a complex society one needs to differentiate what means food security/insecurity in that model of society and what are the meanings produced in that difference. From there, the justification for the understanding of what means danger and risk, to observe how risk is formed, referred to and related with the future in the context it is produced.

So, it is worth highlighting the danger existing in the confidence and the certainty of contemporary society regarding social structures and the bonds with the future it produces, because the characterization of risk is precisely the decision taking, and the way how decisions are taken has to do with attributive action, which means to impute to someone the power of decision. Yet, we understand that in risk, harm is the consequence of a decision, that is, in its imputability. The duration in time and space of the decisions taken may determine or indetermine future, therefore it is up to the power systems the decision of fighting hunger, educating for production, supply, adequate consuming of food, in virtue of their own activation. However, that time is the present, because one should not incur in the past decisions if by indetermination one has not conferred the desired food security. If later measures aiming at fighting food insecurity are not effected, "they may only dislocate the problem in those events' production time or space"⁴¹ in the same direction of insecurity.

That is, therefore, the differential: in danger, harm is attributable and imputable to external factors, while in risk harm is attributable to the choices/decisions taken. Thus, the alternative to risk is food security, because security is the certainty assumed in a rational way that in the future one has the choice of resolving the food insecurity problem in virtue of the large food production, of technology, knowledge, responsible consuming. Thus, one denies the external contingency, the chance of certainty of food security is enlarged; in risk, on the contrary, one reduces the future uncertainty.

Here, anyway, arises the food right that has to do with the future and with un-knowing, because it is the food right that operates regarding the future in a very simple way;

⁴¹ Raffaele De Giorgio. O risco na... 41.

if something happens that transgresses the human beings' right to feed, then a consequence is produced, or a sanction is promoted. The security one has is not that the food right will perform the final justice -- according to which all living beings in the planet will have healthy food --, but that the right to feeding a reasonable number of times a day, with nutrient-rich food (worthy food for a worthy humanity), will be promoted; that healthy food will be produced, consumed and transformed based on rights; that the decisions of producing worthy food for all, independently of social class, will be taken according to rights, as well as the canceling of harmful productive and technological methods, based on rights. All may have the right, but only through the law. All may know, but only through education. All may incur a risk, but only if they communicate about the risk.

Moreover, the theme of danger and risk in a complex society helps us to justify that it is necessary to reflect on the ways how that society will act in order to solve the conflicts inherent to the mentioned anguishes and concerns, because in the world scene is revealed the paradoxical line between the development of technology, agriculture, industry and others, with the presence of the danger of the scarcity of food to satiate the world's hunger, of the increase of illness, the eclosion of disasters of anthropogenic origin, followed by dangers of environmental catastrophes.

That line of thought justifies the theme's relevance, considering that in contemporary times the technology for promoting development transits between the known (objective) and the unknown (subjectivities), between risk and uncertainties; not differently transits the concern with food security, a subject to be observed in the scope of insecurity due to the inexistence of an effective juridical system that rules food production and distribution to the world.

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