

# SAFETY AND NATURE

*di lorenzo merlo*

How do the chamois and a Tuareg move along in security?

They didn't attend an "orientation classes" and didn't have a compass. The chamois doesn't know up to what slope, it can cross an iced flow; as well as the Tuareg doesn't listen to the weather forecast of sandstorm before the Sahara's crossing.

In a nutshell: they don't have, they don't know. Their safety is bound by the relation with the environment.

We, induced to think at the nature like a ground, where we play our passion...

We, induced to identify our self-esteem with the success of our performance...

We, induced to believe that we have to attend a *classes for...* in order to approach some activity... and induced to believe that the classes is an "initiation" and not the start of an initiation...

We're induced to deplete the safety's matter, purchasing goretex, shovel, arva (acronym of the French "Appareil à Recherche de victimes d'Avalanches" namely "device for searching for avalanche victims") and drill, consulting reports; we're rich about technical details, but often forgetful of the mountain's culture.

Differently, in the "way of relation", the safety could be realized by the observation also, the listening, the harmony's research, the moments of union with the nature and the whole. Fewer so-called "tourists" will move on an open land as on a tennis ground. Mountaineering isn't a sport, it brags about a great culture, that we're prompted to forget.

Today we've got the use of a culture, principles and logics based on the commercial standards, on the profit, on materialistic, scientific, technological standards. From those bases we get our truth in every situation of our life. One of those is about safety.

It seems that, in order to produce security, we need to "have" and to "know". Knowing techniques, rules. Having equipments and sporting facilities.

If we take an heterogeneous group of people, including professional people, and we ask them to talk about security, we can see it remains the supposition that – from the most easy considerations to the most elaborate ones – most of the people express an idea concerning something to have and to know. This group is symbolic for knowing how we devise the security concept: only from the technical-material aspect.

This is a culture – concentrated on the reality's analysis – which has failed to develop the science derived from its synthesis and spirit also. A culture that doesn't mind to listening, but it doesn't renounce to pass judgement, for this reason.

It means that now a considerable amount of human potentials – when regarded – are treated as inopportune or, at best, relegated in the religious field. At worst, they're regarded as a part of the mystique or the psychosis, etc. But spirit and listening allow a condition which would be inaccessible in any other ways. Spirit and listening are human dimensions, today omitted by the lay culture, or, at best, nurtured individually by someone;



even if all of us – at the right time – we take their advantage. This is what the pickpocket does in order to choose the technique and the moment for his misdeed. This is what the housewife does when draining the pasta for the thousand time, without the risk to end in the burns unit. This is what the kid does when he cries to get something with someone and not someone else.

All of those behaviours are originated by an observation, an harmony and a joining that – this is the point – will never be over our true reasons and possibilities. Namely on our scale, not on the rule's scale, not even on the expert scale. It's a perfect condition to spur our creativity, responsibility and growth. Three useful conditions in order to lessen the unexpected accident, to control it as good as possible, using all of the experience, the knowledge and the technique. Or in order to come back, without the renunciation's defeat, typical weak point of the ambitious-consumer-hedonistic psychology. A triptych where the personal growth isn't a value. First place is up to success performance. A perfect habitat to move over own measure, dimension, condition and motivation.

It's the "relation way" that, despite the green traffic lights, induces us to look around.

Renouncing to get in relation with nature increases the unexpected accident's risk. Committing ourselves to the green lights, abandoning the observation, opens the possibility to meet somebody that, despite the red light, is passing with us at the same time.

The "relation way" entails the acceptance of the individual responsibility. The fact to know that the responsibility isn't ours won't satisfy us anymore, because we know that devolving the command, the health, the security is convenient, but it doesn't dismiss us of the responsibility about what will happen. Mainly, we won't be able to see a bidimensional reality anymore, because the circular one will appear to us more convenient, able to demonstrate how it is true that the truth is in the middle, exactly in the "relation way".

As Messner talks about "killer technology" (italian newspaper: Corriere della Sera 28.12.09), so we can talk about our culture, our experts and our institutions. They, not by chance, find through the manners (double guardrail), the worlds ("We don't help who provokes accidents") and through the logic (a system based on the rules, maybe punitive rules also), to destroy the risk; as if security were achievable. In that case, an other estrangement's step from the heart of the matter will done.

Best way in order to reduce the risk is thinking about it as unavoidable. Attending nature in security is an oxymoron.

An organized team rescue, running into an accident on the operative land, walks on the same way – although for excellent reasons – of those who will be helped.

The right time for an accident is available for all of us, experts and non-experts (italian newspaper: Corriere della Sera 29.12.09, Erri De Luca).

Everybody increases the possibility to encounter it, depending on how we conduct ourselves.

So, we needn't a set of rules; a set which may be good for an intellectual person only, who should be able to create one in his turn.

It should be useful if the journalism courses and the editorial units dedicate some space to Messner's, Gogna's, Chourinard's and others' lessons, in order that the mountain from sporting field returns to be mountain. In this way, the last copy editor doesn't have the inertia to write "killer mountain" or connecting the sport with some mountaineering's activity; otherwise, why should Messner entitle one of his books "Survivor" and not "Winner"?

Now the best seller is *The manual of this and that*, we're waiting for the recovery of *Deep dust* by Dolores La Chapelle.