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Summary

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Tarantism: from ritual and paratheater to cultural reception

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The paper deals with Apulian tarantism, its symbols and creative representations as a feminine trans ritual, and its modern representations in terms of cultural anthropology, femininity studies, symbolism, and performativity. The applied scientific methods come from the area of the so-called interdisciplinary instrumentarium, and serve to provide an in-depth analytical, and cognitive interpretation of a topic situated at the intersection of various research areas: religious studies, cultural anthropology, semiotics, feminist criticism, new psychoanalysis, and performance studies. The Apulian phenomenon was presented as an appearance that is difficult to identify and define, broadly transcending conventional clinical, historical, cultural, religious, and ethnological perspectives, thus requiring the use of non-standard research tools. A critical approach, new on the ground of Polish research, to reading tarantism as a cultural subformation, full of contradictions and understatements, widely exceeding accepted medical diagnoses, bodily norms, behaviors, cultural and social codes, has been proposed. The main point of reference in the dissertation is the corporeality of the female participants in the ritual, which is a peculiar epicenter of tarantism, that is, physicality capable of symbolic transitions and creative transformations. Precisely in this way, tarantism resembles theater/performance, which as a rule includes the concept of transgression, a series of crossings: emotional, identity values, corporeal, and even physiological.

The first part of the paper points out the difficulties in interpreting the issue of tarantism, caused by its cultural heterogeneity, uncertainty about its provenance, and the dispersion of the discourse undertaking the reflection on the phenomenon into different scientific disciplines.

The introductory part is supplemented by a concise biographical portrait of Ernest de Martin, a researcher who brought the subject of tarantism out of cultural and social isolation.

The second chapter of the paper attempts to undertake the discussion with the old medical theories, qualifying tarantism narrowly as a mental disorder, a form of neurosis, hysteria - concepts closely related to female affectivity and gender-assigned tendencies. This section is a preliminary attempt to reinterpret tarantism as an aberrant phenomenon, made by the processes of demystification and de-tabooisation of the areas, assumptions, and symbolisms associated with taediogenic values in female physiology. The tarantistic sense was shown as a subversive space taken over by women, a terrain of female emancipation and freedom, a place that gives tarantists a sense of at least partial self-agency and control in the paternalistic Salentine reality.

The third part contains a study of the unique visual documentation of tarantism - photographic materials - photographs by Chiara Samugheo and Franco Pinna, shown in Poland for the first time; film registrations and recordings (the film *La taranta*, directed by Gianfranco Mingozzi), described and interpreted in detail, in relation to the various spaces of Mediterranean culture and its historical and social contexts of the 1950s.

The fourth chapter of the work is a diachronic account of the cultural transformation of tarantism over the past sixty years, beginning with the famous field expedition of de Martin and his research team to Salentine Greece, and ending with the representation of the phenomenon at popular music festivals in modern times. And also tracing the relationship between the performative possibilities of tarantism and theater art, especially the assumptions of Jerzy Grotowski's method and the use of dance technique in Joachim Koester's intermedia performances. The last subsection of the dissertation was devoted to Diego Carpitella's musicological research: the famous film recording of the *Meloterapia del tarantismo* dance, transcriptions of Salentine folk music of the tarantella and pizzica, and the influence his folklore studies have had on the region's contemporary musical heritage.

The appendix of the work includes interviews with artists and dancers, people associated with the culture of neo-tarantism, a contemporary alternative socio-cultural movement that cultivates the memory of a phenomenon from the past. And there are also reminiscences of tarantism researcher Prof. Luigi A. Santoro, original photos, and illustration material.