

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE: A CASE STUDY OF FORERUNNING CONSCIENTIAL-PARADIGM CHARACTERISTICS

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ABSTRACT

Florence Nightingale, founder of modern nursing, was a complex personality. Whilst she wrote several reports in the fields of social and health sciences, showing her rational, scientific character, she had a worldview based on strong religious foundations – although she had not followed any specific religion. Furthermore, she experienced remarkable parapsychic events that influenced her engagement in assistance works. However, she considered such events to be a ‘God’s call’. Florence’s idiosyncrasies lead us to hypothesize that she was part of a group of personalities that had forerun conscientiology ideas, but, because of her religious traits, among other negative characteristics, she had just orbited the periphery of that neo-science that would be established only in the 20th century.

Key-words: Forerunner, Conscientiology, Florence Nightingale.

INTRODUCTION

Personality. Florence Nightingale (FN) (1820–1910) is known as the founder of modern nursing. She wrote papers, books, memoranda, and technical reports in other knowledge areas as well. Besides that, she exchanged a lot of correspondence with people from many countries. All those materials, plus the biographies, allow us to conduct a deep study of this personality.

Idiosyncrasies. FN showed several idiosyncrasies. Known as the ‘Lady with the Lamp’ for visiting patients in the night to comfort them during the Crimea War (1853-1856), she had, at the same a bad temper and was somewhat cold.

Evidences. Another interesting point of her biography is her religious-mystical side, which contrasted to her intellectuality and scientism in dealing with statistical data. For using statistics in favor of social reforms and public health policy-making, with her famous polar diagrams that anteceded the sector graphs, she was included in the book *History of the Great Mathematicians*. (Flood & Wilson, 2013). Precisely this paradox in FN’s personality is an indicator of FN’s forerunning

characteristics with regard to conscientiology¹, since in that Science, according to Kauati (2014), parapsychism is assessed by means of scientific methods and scientific criteria.

Method. The method used in this work was the biographical analysis of the personality FN, who lived in the 19th century, looking for evidences towards some idea, even if subtle, involving the concepts of the science Conscientiology, founded in the 20th century. FN's manifestation was analyzed at first with regard to the consciential paradigm's foundations; afterwards, ways of thinking and acting differing from her time and nearing conscientiology were scrutinized.

Purpose. The purpose of this research is, summed up with other personalities studies, to examine whether there are people who had begun to envision the neo-science conscientiology before its actual establishment. Our research question is: did several personalities before the 20th century foresee the appearance of conscientiology?

Structure. This paper presents, at first, Florence Nightingale's minibiography, followed by an analysis of some possibly forerunning characteristic, ending up with the Discussion and Conclusions sessions.

1. MINIBIOGRAPHY

References. This Florence Nightingale's minibiography was mainly based on Brown (1993), Webb (2002), and Bostridge (2009).

Birth. Florence Nightingale was born on May 12, 1820, in Florence, Italy. Her parents were William Edward Nightingale and Frances Nightingale.

Home. The family had two villas: the main residence was in Embley Park, Hampshire, whereas the summerhouse was in Lea Hurst.

Education. Florence was educated at home by the father, the governess, and preceptors. She studied Greek, Latin, Philosophy, Mathematics, among other disciplines. However, her strong dedication to Math was against her family's will, since at that time only men studied that discipline.

Parapsychism. The first significant parapsychic event, which impacted FN's future assistance, has been recognized by her as a 'God's call'. That has happened on February 7, 1837, in Embley. There have been four 'calls' along her lifetime – in 1837, 1853, 1854, and 1861.

Marriage. Against the 19th century England habit, she turned down three marriage asks, thinking that wedding would destroy her opportunity to serve God.

Vows. In 1850, in Greece, she vowed obedience and chastity, even without following any specific religion.

Background. In 1850 she started her nursing training in a Catholic hospital, the Saint Vincent of Paula Institute, in Alexandria, Egypt. In 1851 she went to

1 'Conscientiology, a subjective-empiric neo-science, is the study of the consciousness in a cosmoethic, self-conscious, bioenergetic, multidimensional, holosomatic, integral approach'. (VIEIRA, 1994).

Kaiserwerth, Germany, for a three-month training in the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses. She then worked at the St. Germain Hospital, directed by the Piety Sisters, in France. Back to London, in 1853, she volunteered as Superintendent in the 'The Establishment for Gentlewomen during Temporary Illness.'

Crimea. FN became known as the *Lady with the Lamp* because of her work in the Crimea War in 1854, when she went to Scutari with 38 nurses.

Notes. She published the book *Notes on Nursing* in 1859. Although that book had been written to teach domestic nurse cares, it became the curricular basis for the Nightingale School and other nursing schools around the world. The book became popular worldwide.

Professionalization. In 1861, she opened the *Nightingale School of Nursing* at the St Thomas Hospital, the first training school without any religious affiliation (Vicinus & Nergaard, 1990). From her loft in London, FN followed at the distance every School's operation detail. Florence 'invented' the modern nursing as we know today, creating a new image for nurses, seen before in a degrading way. Before FN, sick people were mostly assisted by drunk women and prostitutes for extra money.

Writings. In 1862, she sent a 1,000-page report to the India Royal Commission with her observations concerning this country's sanitation problems. In all, FN has written 200 books, pamphlets, and papers, besides over 12,000 letters.

System. In 1864, Florence created a separation system to better treat the different diseases and situations, planning elderly homes, maternities, hospital for mentally ill and poor people. Before FN's work, there were no specific ambiances, and everybody shared the same space.

Decoration. In acknowledgement for her relevant nursing services during the war, FN has been awarded with the *Royal Red Cross* in 1883 by Queen Victoria.

Invalidity. Permanently confined in her bed since 1896, from 1902 on she read and wrote with great difficulty.

Merit. Florence was the first woman awarded with the *Order of Merit* in 1907, by the king Edward VII. This distinction was conceded in recognition for her inestimable services in the armed forces, Science, art, literature, or in culture promotion.

Death. In August 13, 1910, FN died in Mayfair and was buried in the East Wellow family grave, under the single inscription: "FN 1820. Died 1910".

2. CONSCIENTIOLOGY FORERUNNING-CHARACTERISTICS

Analysis. The analysis of someone's forerunning characteristic concerning conscientiology is practically a set of several hypotheses, since biographic research itself is already subject to the researcher's bias. For that reason, Schünemann (2003) suggests that 'the ideal is to read biographic works in a heterocritical way, detecting the author's characteristics and bias'. Nonetheless, in order to minimize

research error, the analysis should be performed with much criterion, always considering that, at the end, the conclusions are speculations. Perhaps we will never know if they are true.

Principles. By analyzing FN's life compared to conscientiology's² basic principles, one observes that:

1. **Self-research:** One of conscientiology's main goals is to speed up one's evolution. And the tool used for that purpose is self-research, that is, the research on oneself. According to Alexandre (1998), FN has decided to undergo a more serious self-scrutiny every 7th day in the month, an act that approximates our current idea of self-research. However, there are no data indicating any multidimensional and multiexistencial approach; or any critical use of recycling techniques³.

2. **Bioenergies:** Conscientiology considers that the Universe is composed just of consciousness and energies. No mention has been found about FN knowing how to control energies or at least understanding that concept.

3. **Holosoma:** According to conscientiology studies, it is admitted the existence of four manifestation bodies: soma or physical body; energosoma, the energy body, also known as holochakra; psychosoma or emotional body; and mentalsoma, the discernment body. Nothing was found that could be correlated to that in FN's writings.

4. **Interassistance:** One of the main tools to speed up the consciousness' evolution is interassistance, especially the assistance based on the clarifying task (claritask)⁴. Although mostly unconsciously, FN's most works are based on education (Attewell, 2013, p. 1 to 11), permeating all areas of her life. The book *Notes on Nursing* clearly aims at clarifying, as it teaches, in a quite technical way, laypeople to assist an ill person. Besides the Florence Nightingale School, which has become a world reference in nurse formation. However, since FN never talked about multidimensionality and multiexistenciality, her clarifying task was still very incipient – although she was already going beyond pure consoltask⁵ actions.

5. **Multidimensionality:** The consciousness manifests itself in multiple dimensions. For Alexandre (1998), Florence was interested in metaphysics and was considered a mystical woman, at a time when mystical people studied multidimensionality somehow. Another evidence are her studies about Teresa of Avila, a parapsychic clergywoman, among other mystical people, like in her personal notes

2 Those ground principles have been selected by the author having as reference the books: *700 Experimentos da Conscienciologia* (VIEIRA, 1994), *Nossa Evolução* (VIEIRA, 1996), *Projeciologia: Panorama das Experiências da Consciência Fora do Corpo Humano* (VIEIRA, 1999), and *O que é Conscienciologia* (VIEIRA, 2005).

3 The term *recycling* when referring to a person is used in the sense of changing oneself for the better.

4 *Claritask* (*clarifying task*) is the longer lasting, libertarian assistance through the clarification of the assisted, without generating dependence.

5 *Consoltask* (*consolation task*) is a primitive assistance task, a mere mitigating means, it does not actually teach.

in the book *Notes from Devotional Authors of the Middle Ages, Collected, Chosen and Freely Translated by Florence Nightingale*. The manuscripts research by Vallée (2003) has never been published by Florence. However, FN's religiosity has led her to consider the communication with someone from another dimension as the God's voice.

6. **Seriality:** The consciousness is multiexistential and multimillenary, undergoing a series of existences in this dimension. There are evidences that FN believed in resomas, as in the fictional essay 'Vision of Temples', where Florence writes that, for not understanding God's nature, the Egyptian kings reincarnated to increase their wisdom and discernment (Calabria & Macrae, 1994). Stressing the idea, Vicinus & Nergaard (1990) wrote that Egypt has consolidated the reincarnation thoughts.

7. **Cosmoethics:** FN is a homeostatic scruple reference⁶ for Vieira (2013). An incipient notion of the cosmoethics⁷ concept is possible here. Nonetheless, Florence's ethics was closer to religiosity, involving guilt and pain. Besides, FN has never stood by against wars, stresses Fernandes (2007): 'Florence was omissive before a very serious matter: she probably never criticized bellicosity. She has always treated soldiers without reflecting about war itself'.

8. **Universalism.** Considering the zeitgeist, FN presented a good universalism level⁸, assisting many countries through consulting services for hospital improvements, like Portugal, Holland, India, France, and Prussia (Gorrell, 2005). Even if they were at war against one another, FN helped both sides with advices for the improvement of military hospitals. France and Prussia, for instance, have awarded Florence medals after the 1870-1871 war between those nations (Gorrell, 2005).

Concepts. Besides considering conscientiology bases to analyze FN's forerunning characteristics, other relevant points in the conscientiologic studies are worth mentioning:

1. **Evolutionary Duo**⁹. Florence obviously had several affective issues to solve, considering that she had never married and remained secluded for many years. Nonetheless, she had the idea that the greatest and truest love is when two

6 Vieira's (2013) definition of scruple is: 'Quality, strongtrait (strong trait) or condition of the consciousness endowed with a cosmoethic sense, expressing an accountable character with carefulness, rigor, and detail through its thosenic manifestations out of a discerned intentionality'.

7 'Cosmoethics is 'the ethics or reflection upon cosmic, multidimensional morality, or the cosmic moral code, which defines holomaturity. Cosmoethics surpasses social, intraphysical morals of those morals presented within any human classification'. (JOURNAL OF CONSCIENTIOLOGY, 2008, p. 67).

8 Universalism is the set of ideas supposing universal laws that coordinate the consciousnesses' evolution, thus making senseless some ideas, like prejudices and territorial behaviors.

9 Evolutionary duo are 'two consciousnesses that interact positively in joint evolution; the existential condition of *cooperative evolutivity* of a male and female human consciousness, who coexist in a close and intimate long-term relationship'. (JOURNAL OF CONSCIENTIOLOGY, 2008, p. 70).

people worked together for God's purpose, pushing fearlessly forward to do their job (Webb, 2002). Such idea could be a forerunner of conscientiology's Evolutionary Duo, who have as one of their goals the Proexis attainment optimization, obviously removing any religious matter.

2. **Invexibility.** One of conscientiology's great techniques is invexis¹⁰. For Nonato (2009) and Nonato *et al.* (2011), FN is an example of intuitive inversion and, according to Fernandes (2007), 'Florence's life has approximated more rather than distanced from the invexis technique'. This is perhaps the item that brings her the closest to Conscientiology under a practical viewpoint, showing some forerunning invexis. In several works addressing this technique, Florence is considered an invexis forerunner, even if in an intuitive manner because of her practice lacking any proper technique and lucidity.

3. **Parapsychism.** Importantly, parapsychism mattered in those life's decisions that led her to assist in large scale. Parapsychic events made her leave a peaceful life for a dedication to unthinkable works for an English aristocrat, like being a nurse and going to the war. It is worth stressing that before FN's works, nurses in England used to be considered as drunk women and prostitutes; but Florence's seriousness about parapsychically obtained information made her stronger to face both family opposition and the social values of the time.

4. **Proexis.** The life-mission that Florence so much valued neared Conscientiology's proexis¹¹ concept. FN looked for life meaning through God's mission, which in her case was to do some kind of assistance. FN valued her life-mission so much that she concentrated all her energy on it. Five facts exemplify that:

a. **Study.** She woke up before the others and studied secretly when she was a young woman living in her parents' home.

b. **Marriage.** She has never married, so that she could dedicate herself to her life-mission, in a time when marriage for women was primordial, even for financial reasons, since heritage went for male relatives only.

c. **War.** She went to the Crimea War with a 38-nurse staff, when she became known as the Lady with the Lamp, precisely because she visited the sick at night.

d. **Writing.** For many years, she wrote up to 12 hours a day (Bostridge, 2008).

e. **Vacations.** According to McDonald (2001), in 1866 she took her first vacations in 10 years.

10 Invexis or existential inversion is 'an advanced evolutionary technique consisting of inverting sociocultural values and projects in human life. It is based upon the prioritization of and the full-time dedication to the execution of the existential program, beginning at a young age.' (JOURNAL OF CONSCIENTIOLOGY, 2008, p. 70).

11 Proexis or existential program is 'the plan of actions for the current intraphysical life that an individual devises, prior to birth, supported by his/her evolutiologist, aimed to achieve the greatest holokarmic and evolutionary outcome possible within his/her lifetime.' (JOURNAL OF CONSCIENTIOLOGY, 2008, p. 71).

Extrapolation. Another important point to analyze are some personal interests that hypothetically would make Florence become interested in conscientiology if she lived today, like:

1. **Parascientist**¹². FN wrote reports, papers and books supported by data statistics, showing a scientific character. Nonetheless, she used information from parapsychic origin in her life's decisions. Conscientiology is a recent Science, and one of its pillars is the interaction with other dimensions, that is, parapsychism. Would it be natural for Florence to seek to better understanding her parapsychism, had she not been so religious?

2. **Paralegislogy**¹³. According to McDonald (2008), in order to orient her insights toward the discovery of God's laws, Nightingale has developed an efficacious methodologic approach. Her sources have been a statistician (L.A.J. Quetelet), and a philosopher (J.S. Mill). On support of that idea, Calabria & Macrae (1994, p. xii) reproduce FN's following text: 'God is the divine mind who organizes the universe through scientific laws. Those laws or organizational principles are discovered through the study of statistic patterns.' Extrapolating it to conscientiology, that interest for God's laws would be the same as trying to understand the Cosmos' laws. The difference is that, in this science, it is not affirmed that there is God or not, because that would be a matheologic discussion, considering the lack of available information to affirm or deny such hypothesis. Studying the laws ruling the Cosmos is the aim of conscientiology' field of research known as Paralaw¹⁴. Would this conscientiologic area interest FN?

3. **Paratechnology**. For Kauati (2014), in the eventuality FN had an area within conscientiology, that area would be Assistance Paratechnology¹⁵, since FN's written productions have been hospital management methods mostly, concerning patients care and sanitary conditions improvement, besides innumerable technical reports upon a statistical ground whenever possible. What conscientiology methods, to do what kind of assistance, would Florence be interested in?

12 'Parascientist is the consciousness researcher, man or woman, acting theoretically, at the same time, with 4 talents corresponding to 4 outstanding personalities within the very parascientist: The participant inquirer, the parapsychic, the Holophilosophy's philosopher, and the philologist of Lexicography, Encyclopediology, or Conformatics' (VIEIRA, 2013).

13 'Paralegislogy is the science applied to the technical and paratechnical studies, theoretical researches and pararesearches of compilation, analysis and systematic dissection of the principles and paralaws described according to the Cosmos' synchronic and cosmoethic flux, able to evidence the function mode of the Universe, of consciential manifestations and of life existence in general.' (MARCHIOLLI, 2013).

14 '*Paralawlogy* is the science applied to the study and research of Paralaw and Paraduty, grounding, through self-lucidity and self-discernment, the consciousness' cosmoethic multidimensional conduct, and the theoretical implantation of advanced neosciences and neorealities, among which the World State, Parapoliticology, Paradiplomaciology, and Holophilosophy.' (PEREIRA, 2013).

15 '*Assistential Paratechnology* is the Conscientiology area applied to the theorical, systematic and specific studies of assistential, multidimensional techniques, under the holosomatic approach and their consequences.' (KAUATI, 2014).

CONCLUSIONS

Strength. FN's strongest conscientiology-forerunning characteristic is large-scale assistance through education, since interassistance is one of conscientiology's most important points to self-evolution. Besides, parapsychism has been primordial to FN's decision to dedicate herself to interassistance instead of enjoying the social life possible to someone like her, coming from an affluent family.

Limitation. Nonetheless, for personal limitations, Florence could not extrapolate her assistance into the consciential paradigm, and her written works bore just the views either of this dimension or the religious view. In *Notes on Nursing*, for instance, if there were any explanation about the use of bioenergies to assist patients, Florence could be surely considered as one of the Conscientiology forerunners.

Weakness. FN's weakest point, considering her conscientiology forerunning characteristic, was the fact of neither studying parapsychism in a scientific mode, nor propagating more the ideas of multidimensionality and multiexistentiality. Her strong religious disposition made her believe excessively on her paraperceptions, lacking criticism about their origin and the quality of the information. Moreover, she had never positioned herself against wars, considering that her worldwide influence could clarify a lot of people if she had publications on this matter.

Forerunner. It is then considered the hypothesis that there is some level of forerunning characteristic in FN concerning conscientiology, even more when the 19th century England's zeitgeist is taken into account. Florence, regardless of any possible foresight regarding conscientiology, was a woman ahead of her time, opposing the expected from the aristocratic society within which she lived. She has never married, and volunteered, as much as possible, on behalf of the others.

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