

**MANIA: A SCARCELY VISITED NEIGHBORHOOD**

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**Abstract:** We seek to draw a broad picture of conceptual and referential diversities about what we prefer to call “manic states”. We start with the Freudian proposal that mania would be the expression of triumph over the same complex of melancholia as to problematize it. We suggest that mania cannot be entirely covered by melancholic logic and that many aspects of this picture have been neglected by psychoanalysis. We examine authors as diverse as those from the Lacanian school and Melanie Klein, to formulate the hypothesis that there are at least two views on mania that need to be better articulated.

**Keywords:** mania; melancholia; contemporary clinic.

**Resumo: Mania: um bairro pouco visitado.** Procuramos traçar um panorama amplo sobre as diversidades conceitual e de referentes sobre o que preferimos denominar de “estados maníacos”. Partimos da proposta freudiana de que a mania seria a expressão de triunfo sobre o mesmo complexo da melancolia, para problematizá-la. Sugerimos que a mania não pode ser inteiramente recoberta pela lógica melancólica e que muitos aspectos deste quadro vêm sendo negligenciados pela psicanálise. Examinamos autores tão heterogêneos quanto aqueles provenientes da escola lacaniana e Melanie Klein, para formular a hipótese de que há pelo menos duas visadas sobre a mania que precisam ser melhor articuladas.

**Palavras-chave:** mania, melancolia, clínica contemporânea.

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## INTRODUCTION

Mania, derived from Greek - which went through occidental history and survived many semantic transformations - still produces inexhaustible fascination and fear. This fascination is related to the seeming omnipotence and independence of the human world that the maniac would be able to experiment. Even in environments, in our perspective, unfavorable, some of us feel or behave as if redemption would be close, as if there were no limits to our actions, as if the love of the other were a guarantee, as if the world would be so close to himself that this person seems to guess all his needs. Unstoppable happiness, elation, euphoria and experience of bliss are some of the expressions used to qualify his emotional states. Unquenchable energy, continued pro-activity, stable feeling of urge to act and sudden opening of creative channels are some of the expressions used to qualify the universe of action of such episodes. Our fear, on the other hand, is driven to gradual shutdown of the relational environment present therein, once it displays a self-sufficiency and the other becomes, if existent at all, spectator. The world in which the maniac seems to have a radiant intimacy is not the same we assume to dwell. As this apparently joyful epiphany progresses, we soon notice him. That is to say, the maniac let us touch a universe from which we defend ourselves, once he subverts the ground where we can barely socialize. And the maniac always pays a high price for exploring some of the limits of our civilization and humanity. Admiration and hatred, envy and bigotry, dream and nightmare, are some of the elements that translate our fascination and fear. Irritability, unavoidable stage in mania, is the crossroad where our rendezvous with such individual occurs. As the words of Kay Jamison (2002), American psychiatrist who reported in the book *An Unquiet Mind* the features of the manic states, points out:

But, at some point, everything changes. The fast ideas are too fast; and they emerge in excessive quantities. A crushing confusion takes place of clarity. Memory disappears. The humor and delight on the face of friends are replaced by fear and concern. Everything that once was right now is rather upsetting – you become edgy, angry, frightened, uncontrollable and completely tangled in the nastiest cave of the mind. You have never known that these caves exist. And this never ends, since, the madness carve your own reality. The story goes on endlessly, and finally only the others' memories of your behavior are left – of your frantic, bewildered, absurd attitudes – for the mania has at least the bright side of partially removing memories. (JAMISON, 2002, p. 79-80).

It is, therefore, an encounter with a mismatch aspect. According to Jamison, the compliance of the world quickly disappears with the upsurge of exaltation and the answers from others becomes increasingly restraining of the apparent subjective defining expansion of one's condition. Our description deliberately starts with the irritable manic phase and not with the euphoria and triumph stage that is usually earlier, for two reasons. First, because we easily forget about this presentation that has been named by psychiatry as "dysphoria". Thus, we see only the economic release process that the mania produces in relation to the melancholic state. Secondly, it is exactly in the most severe cases that this imbalance with reality and the surroundings takes place. We are interested in focus our lenses on such processes, differentiating it from other states, equally manic.

The result of this unfortunate encounter is represented by the maniac's struggle to rediscover a complacent world, which he came to feel as real and the answer from the surroundings to suppress any trace of this idyllic universe. The heated and irritable mood is an imprint of this "coming-across". The mood, as we will see, is an element of our emotional life, scarcely tackled in psychoanalyses. It is, in our perspective, not intentional and atmospheric, beyond the mental boundaries with otherness featuring ill-defined outlines. The hypothesis we intend to develop refers to the proposal of a stable change in mood, such as it occurs in mania, pondering primary and secondary emotional experiences, which will serve as matrices for our affective experiences, the only ones organized and intentional.

This article aims to promote awareness in the readers on a theoretical research project in its beginnings, which must be unfolded in clinical research on the analytic trajectory of individuals that experiment manic states. We will present its motivations ahead. Our flight plan – a manic metaphor – will cover critically the paradigmatic proposals about this subjectivity in psychoanalyses, underlining some points which seem central to us. Starting from Freud and scrutinizing other authors, we will discuss the following aspects: 1 - the relation of opposition, *regarding an equal complexity*, between mania and melancholia; 2 - mania as a triumph regarding the complexity related to the lost object; 3 - the role of mania in mourning; 4 - the role of manic defenses in the object separation process; 5 - the heterogeneity or the homogeneity of the manic states; 6 - the role of manic defenses and experiences in the healthy processes and 7 - the scarcity of psychoanalytic studies on states of humor.

As can be seen from the topics raised above, our objective is eminently exploratory. We start from the hypothesis that the lack of interest from psychoanalysts towards mania, comparing with the great amount of literature in this field about melancholic or depressive states, leads to certain stereotypies regarding this intense form of suffering. The correlation between mania and happiness is only one of them. Our clinic experience – one of us is also a psychiatrist – makes us assume that the range of the manic states is much broader than we thought.

### **SOME MOTIVATIONS**

Our first motivation is directly related to the clinic. Our intention is to conduct a clinical research with subjects who have experienced or experience symptoms or manic states. One of us coordinates a research core, NEPECC (<http://nepecc.psicologia.ufrj.br/>), along with Teresa Pinheiro and Regina Herzog, which has been conducting clinical research since 2002, offering psychoanalytic treatment to individuals of various subjective configurations. We have developed a methodology called psychoanalytical study of multiple clinical cases (VERZTMAN, 2013; VERZTMAN & VIANA, 2014) in which we propose a strategy of comparative study of cases around a previously defined axis or filter. We believe that the manic symptom, due to its heterogeneity, its few references in our literature, besides its still enigmatic aspects, is a good object of study, considering our methodology. We find a great example in the literature to encourage us in this investigation. In the 1940s, a group of psychotherapists led by Frida Fromm-Reichmann ((FROMM-REICHMANN, 1978) extensively studied a set of twelve cases of manic-depressive psychosis constructing hypotheses and a set of interesting data.

The second motivation does not come from the psychoanalytic clinic, but it is directly interested in it. It is about the incorporation of certain manic aspects by the contemporary culture. There is a growing interest in manic functioning on the part of our community, within the perspective of fascination and fear already mentioned. We bring the study of the American anthropologist Emily Martin as an instigator of certain issues. This author, in her book *Bipolar expeditions* (Martin, 2007), discusses the growing fascination of American culture with mania, as well as the way in which aspects are considered manic for everyday relationships, for entrepreneurship and for the construction of ideals. She warns us that her ethnography has found an extensive polysemy for the word mania in the most varied contexts, but we think that it is exactly a polysemy of that order that ratifies the cultural impact of a given semantic set.

Martin gives several examples of public figures who have had their performances associated with manic-depressive pictures with enviable or feared results. Our goal in bringing up this theme is simply to reinforce the hypothesis that there may be solidarity between a form of social bond and certain expressions of suffering. If manic elements are increasingly involved in our sociability, this probably indicates that there are manic aspects in our object relations to which we must be attentive. The maniacal subject may roughly explain

something that builds the bonds between each of us and our fellows today. And the growing popularity of this form of suffering may be associated with building new ideal models.

## **MOOD STATES**

The distinction between affectivity and humor, constructed by authors of "classical psychopathology" or "phenomenological psychopathology" (BINSWANGER, 1987), has always seemed to us as a useful tool both for clinical evaluation and for theoretical exploration. In this notional framework, humor is a durable emotional disposition that serves as the ground, context or outline for our affective bonds. It is a kind of condensation of our potential for interaction with the world, always in a certain way. Depending on our moods we experience radically different affects on aspects of the world that seemed to us to be equivalent and build a qualitative and intentional emotional life in our relationship with the environment. In order to better develop this distinction between humor and affectivity, we will use some formulations contained in a recent book by Giovanni Stanghellini and René Rosfort (2013):

In Short, the distinction can be summed up in the following way: affects are responses to a phenomenon that is perceived as their motivation, whereas moods do not possess such directedness to a motivating object (...) Affects are focused and intentional and possess directedness. Affects are felt as motivated; they are more determinate than moods and more articulated. Affects do not open up to broad horizontal awareness, but occupy all my intentional space (STANGHELLINI; ROSFORT, 2013, p. 164).

And then, the authors suggest:

Moods have a horizontal absorption in the sense that they attend to the world as a whole, not focusing on any particular object or situation (Ricouer's fundamental feeling). Moods often manifest themselves as prolonged feelings as opposed to the more immediate nature of affects (STANGHELLINI; ROSFORT, 2013, p. 164).

We can deduce that humor is the ground that builds stability and coloring in order to experience the affections. That is a lasting and prolonged feeling. Even conceiving the articulation between affection and humor as a dynamic relation, the characteristic of humor to address the world, makes us think of a form of envelope, of a matrix. Humor does not construct a discrete value universe, just like affects. We assume that humor is the element of our emotions most shared with the environment. It is our first way of attuning to everything that happens in us and around us. Perhaps it is a primary form of apprehension of the other. This entire paragraph is composed of conjectures to be developed in the future insofar as a reflection on the mood is still in its infancy in psychoanalysis.

Psychoanalysts, since Freud, use the expression 'mood' [humor] without giving it a status of a fruitful concept. Freud, for example, uses precise expressions to refer to mood swings, or "states of mind" in Group psychology and the analysis of the ego (FREUD, 1921/1980, p. 166-167). We conclude that mood is what enables us to experience the world in a certain way, because it is also of the world. But the theoretical interest in such "spontaneous oscillations of mood" (idem) continues in a state of hibernation between us. Rectifying this affirmation above, we imagine that the theoretical building of psychoanalysis has already produced many original elements to think about mood; however, these elements have not yet been articulated in order to allow a notional solidarity.

Unfortunately the picture provided on the affection/mood distinction is much simplified and does not bring the scale of the problem. Even so, we decided to include the theme in this article to draw the attention of psychoanalysts to its relevance. We know that mood can take the place of an atmosphere, or even of a 'style of being', from which investment and affective disinvestment in objects can occur.

### **FIRST INCURSIONS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS IN THE FACE OF MANIA**

It is a commonplace in works dedicated to mania by psychoanalytic literature, the recognition that this condition, unlike melancholy or depression, is little studied and known by psychoanalysts. We can verify this scarcity in the writings of Freud, who dedicates few extracts in his seminal *Mourning and melancholia* (FREUD 1917/1980), or *Group psychology and the analysis of the ego* (FREUD 1921/1980), and a brief mention in *Humor* (FREUD 1927/1980). Even the first great psychoanalyst to research the subject of "manic-depressive psychoses" in close collaboration with Freud, Karl Abraham (ABRAHAM, 1924/1970), recognizes the asymmetry between the conceptual edifice erected for the understanding of melancholy and the relatively emptiness dedicated to mania. This would not be a problem, since for Abraham, as for Freud, the knowledge of melancholy produces all the elements sufficient for the intellection of mania (ABRAHAM, 1924/1970, p. 130).

The Freudian suggestion that both conditions derive from the same complex - one representing submission and the other triumph over it - would keep us attentive to their common roots: the peculiar relation that such subjects establish with the object and how they react to loss.

It soon draws our attention to the accession of Freud to the psychiatric category "manic-depressive psychosis", which had been conceived 50 years earlier by Falret and Baillarger (VERZTMAN, 1995; BERRIOS, 2000; HEALY, 2008), but whose final touch was given by Kraepelin at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This means that we are still assuming that the understanding of the manic pictures is a small appendix of our view on melancholy. Making an analogy with the relationship between hysteria and obsessional neurosis in Freud's first topical, where the latter was considered a territory or a dialect of the former, mania would be a small suburb of the city within the great melancholy metropolis. A kind of averse in which the common structure of the metropolis would manifest itself inverted only to confirm its metropolitan and cosmopolitan logic. We need not deny the similarity between the neighborhood and the rest of the metropolis, not all the common features among its residents, nor its belonging to a larger homeland, which some call psychosis and others narcissistic pathology. We can, instead, reverse our perceptive logic, in order to look at aspects still little known about what is happening in the neighborhood and look at the metropolis with a provincial view. We thought Freud's interest in mania was a brief digression of his brief entrance into the subject of melancholy because his goal was never to understand the relationship between melancholy and mania. His main attempt was to compare melancholy with the process of mourning and a cyclical picture such as mania, presenting us with such distinct affections of depressive coloring, seemed to him ideal to discuss the ambivalent and dependent relationship of the melancholic with his primary objects. And Freud achieves his goal unequivocally. Mania would be another fate related to the impasses of the grief-stricken for the melancholic. It seals the narcissistic wound that causes the object to impose itself and colonize the self, either by demanding its submission, or by bearing an apparent triumph, which is always Pyrrhus' victory. Fundamental questions, however, were not even formulated because they were not part of the main objective of the author. What does mania add to the picture of melancholy? What can mania teach us about the way out of the melancholy impasse? Does passing through a manic picture alter the depressive picture of the manic-depressive? Does the manic experience have any mnemonic impact, even if it does not take the form of remembrance or inscription? Does the cleavage mechanism have the same extent and quality in the manic-depressive and the melancholic? Does mania and melancholy imply similar impasses regarding the problems of mourning and loss of the object? These are some of the questions, among many other possible and pertinent ones, that can construct a provincial and parochial view of mania. A "local perspective". An attempt to see the metropolis with the lenses of the neighborhood. What we lose in generalization and overall view, we gain in approximation with certain singularities. Unfortunately we are not in a position to answer any of these questions, but the conceptual vacuum intuited by them is exactly the motive of this project. Maria Rita

Kehl (KEHL, 2011, p. 30-31), in her commentary on mourning and melancholy, also refers to the Freudian restraint on mania and launches inquiries that present some points in common with our quest.

The points that disseminate Mourning and melancholia (1917) and the writings of Abraham (1924) for the psychoanalytic community, focus on the mourning economy and its waywardness in melancholy. Mania would be a distinct form of melancholy, in its coloring, to bypass the impossibility of the loss of the object. It is the energy released by the ephemeral triumph over the complex, the heuristic element constructed for the understanding of manic symptoms. The conflict between Ego and moral conscience that foreshadows the second topic - and which, for melancholy, represents an explanatory model - will not constitute in this text of 1917 a fruitful conceptual field for the intellection of mania. Only in Group psychology and the analysis of the ego will a dynamic conception be used in order to make us intuit the manic festival. Freud's hypothesis will focus on a near-fusion between ego and ego ideal to provide the euphoric state. Undoubtedly, the melancholic model is the fundamental context for the construction of a Freudian conception of mania. Other possibilities of manic experiences are not examined, nor are the non-pathological aspects of the manic experience in the early relations with the object discussed. On this last aspect, it is important to emphasize that Abraham proposed some paths based on the development of libido, which would be reworked by Melanie Klein.

### **TIME, RHYTHM AND TRIUMPH**

In mania, the adherence of the individual to a rhythm that obliterates his relation with the world and with himself, causes him to live in a time that at one stroke is "before and after". A universe in which there is a pasteurization of affections and there is also a profound denial of affectivity as the terrain where our values are expressed. In mania, affections do little to affect the general mood. The symptom that psychiatry calls affective lability, that is, states in which in a few minutes it passes from a convulsive cry to contagious joy, shows that affections do not reach enough duration to produce subjective transformation. The individual can circulate, with a certain degree of platitude, by places, connections, and discourses, shattering his value field. This circulation is the manic subject itself. It becomes a state of pure humor - we believe that mania is more representative of this experience than melancholy - and this is undoubtedly the element that provides the image of freedom that the maniac evokes. A freedom only apparent in more than one sense. The connection with a primitive ambivalent object, in a model described by Freud as narcissistic identification - or, inspiring us freely in Roussillon (2013), identification with the shadow of the object - loosens itself in the mania paradoxically. On the one hand, the subject seems detached from the object in its bulimic gluttony of elements from the environment. On the other hand, the difficulty with bonding due to this extensive and rapid system of non-procedural incorporation makes the object a kind of potent aspirator of all the effort of the maniac subject.

The evaluative planing of affective life in mania, the speed that prevents connections, except for what has just been lost, makes the maniac revolve around gravity without the center of his mood. He becomes an atmospheric individual. He takes refuge in an experience of less intentional attachment to the world as the intentionality of emotional life leads him to a dead end and a loss he is unable to cope with.

Freud's aspect of triumph before the complex related to the lost object is one of the facets of this circuit. We can refer to the approach between mania and festival, in Group psychology and the analysis of the ego, as the culmination of this notion. But mania as triumph is not the only aspect of this paradoxical freedom. The explication of an economic model that makes the process of mourning a natural reaction to the loss of health or in neurosis, makes mania an enigma in melancholy. As recognized by Freud, in most melancholic subjects, equivalent work bereavement occurs even though this is a different and prematurely unfinished work. It is a cyclical pathology. Such work removes the subject, in some measure, from the tyranny of the shadow of the object for a certain time, until the complex returns to prevail. Now, if there are other mental tools to deal with this narcissistic wound or this hemorrhage in the bosom of the ego, what causes the summoning of a state as

diffuse and bizarre as mania? What does mania reprint in relation to the object? What does it add to the melancholic process? How does it differ from this, to the point of perceiving in certain individuals an attachment to this condition?

### **TRIUMPH OR SUBMISSION?**

Paul-Laurent Assoun (2010), chooses a specific path to discuss the uniqueness of mania. For him, mania is the culmination of melancholy. This revealing potentiality of mania as the place of arrival of the relation of the melancholic object puts in check, in our view, the supposed triumph present there. Mania, in this view, would be the most exceptional and eccentric result of the melancholic process. It adds something to this process that was neither visible nor predictable by the subjection to the object shadow characteristic of melancholy. What is added are new destination opportunities for mishaps of mourning. Assoun suggests three possibilities of reaction to the loss in the mania that imply, in our view, increasing levels of intensity of the process of shutdown of the object:

Ainsi ce qui est surmonté, c'est : 1. <la perte (de l'objet)>, 2- <le deuil de la perte> (d'objet), 3. <ou peut-être l'objet même>. La jouissance maniaque procéderait du triomphe sur la perte, le deuil e finalement – peut-être bien – sur l'objet même. Cette dernière formule-limite placerait la manie du côté de la folie pure en quelque sorte, qui se nourrit de se débarrasser, de l'objet en personne. <Rejet de l'objet> à entendre quasiment avec la portée d'un <rejet de l'inconscient. (ASSOUN, 2010, p. 51).

In our opinion, Assoun perceives qualitative differences in the individual's relation to the melancholic complex. The last stage, which seems to us characteristic of the manic condition, as we generally know it, produces the conviction that we are facing a psychotic process. This is the last step within a vast field of possibilities. The two denials before this in Assoun's proposal, however, the denial of the loss and the denial of mourning, do not necessarily imply this radical form of defense and may play some role in response to the impossibility of mourning in other settings. We suggest that this set we call, as does Assoun, manic states, may contain heterogeneous forms of reaction to loss, which do not necessarily imply the denial of the object and, therefore, the triumph before him. This assumption leads us to another: manic states can be triggered in reaction to other forms of loss - in a more contemporary vocabulary, depressive forms - that are not confused with characteristically melancholic processes (PINHEIRO; QUINTELA; VERZTMAN, 2009).

The relativization of triumph in mania receives some emphasis from authors of Lacanian inspiration. Lacan, unlike his interest in paranoia or melancholy represented abundantly in his seminars and writings, dedicated few excerpts to the subject of mania, as well as most psychoanalysts. Two aspects defended by Lacan deserve to be highlighted: 1 - this form of subjectivity is another aspect of melancholy moral cowardice and 2 - it is entirely allocated in the field of psychoses. This last assertion implies the role of forclusion in its morbid production. Rejection of language and rejection of the unconscious - as Assoun suggests - have been the aliases used by Lacanian psychoanalysts to refer to a specific form of the return of the real that occurs in mania. This is the hallmark of his belonging to the psychotic structure. Nympha Amaral (2014) provides a discussion of the main proposals of Lacanian authors on the subject and while acknowledging differences between these, there is a certain common agreement in relation to the points raised above. In short, they refer to the mania as the extension of the Lacanian hypothesis on "moral cowardice" "... for it is the rejection of the unconscious, it lands in psychosis..." (AMARAL, 2014, p. 111). The supposed freedom of the maniac in his infinite and rapid gliding through the signifying chain, whose paradigm is the flight of ideas, would, in fact, represent blind obedience to the super-egoic imperative of "more enjoyment". It is emphasized that instead of triumph over the melancholic complex, the maniac submits radically to an imperative of enjoyment, even with other forms of presentation or affections involved. It is a form of subjection, as we have seen, defined as the other aspect of melancholic moral cowardice.

Among the Lacanian-inspired analysts, we cannot fail to mention Marie-Claude Lambotte. Her ideas about mania (LAMBOTTE, 2007b) are related to her conceptions of melancholy, which are highly criticized by other Lacanian authors. Within the vast field she conceptualized to describe melancholy, we highlight her notion of "denial of intention" (LAMBOTTE, 2007a). For Lambotte, the paradoxical contact that the melancholic establishes with objects and the world is based on the recognition of a shared but deeply devalued reality, which makes him seek "behind reality", the encounter with an object that would have the status of absolute. This paradoxical relationship with reality and with castration makes Lambotte not agree with the definition of psychosis for this form of psychic organization. As for mania, the author will seek all her understanding elements in the melancholic discourse. And a point of prominence is the application of the denial of intention to the intellection of this state of excitement (LAMBOTTE, 2007b, p. 128)

Et nous retrouvons là cette figure pathologique de la castration propre au sujet mélancolique que nous avons désignée sous les termes de <deni d'intention> et qui s'appliquerait également au sujet maniaque: toutes les objets de la réalité se valent e sont substituables les uns aux autres; la réalité ne peut offrir qu'une juxtaposition d'objets équivalentes et, par conséquent, dépourvus d'intérêt. (LAMBOTTE, 2007b, p. 128).

We can conclude that, like other authors who have dealt with mania, Lambotte also applies a methodology of analysis that places on this form of subjectivity, the same elements of melancholic logic. The authors of Lacanian inspiration, including Assoun, have the merit of complexifying the notion of manic triumph suggested by Freud. They fall, however, in the insistence of reducing mania to melancholic logic, except to some extent Assoun's work. The proposal of moral cowardice also does not count on our sympathy nor our agreement.

## **THE MANIC DEFENSE**

From now on we will discuss a proposal quite different from the previous ones on manic experience. The articles A contribution to the psychogenesis of manic-depressive states (KLEIN, 1935/1948), The manic defense (WINNICOTT, 1935/2000) and Mourning and its relation to manic-depressive states (KLEIN, 1940/1948), brought to the psychoanalytic field a new set of key questions. We shall leave aside in this writing Winnicott's ideas in order not to excessively prolong this presentation. We stress that this author complicates greatly the Kleinian proposal.

In the 1935 article, Klein began to delineate more clearly the notion of "depressive position", later elevated to the basic concept of his work. In this writing, the author would play with four asymmetrical terms. First, there are two subjective positions that represent different modes of relation to the object. A first position, in this article called the paranoid (later called the paranoid-schizoid position) and a position called depressive. The other two terms that make up this general framework are not called positions, but defenses or mechanisms. Here we have the manic defense (possibly called in the article of maniac position) and the obsessive defense. The difference between positions and defenses can be defined as follows: while positions imply the set of anxieties derived from a modality of object relation, the defenses are attempts to get rid of these threats. It is important to emphasize that defenses can play important roles in both health and pathology. As is well known, but unavoidable, the paranoid position expresses a process in which the relation of the infans occurs with a partial object, produced by the mechanism of splitting or scotomization. This process creates a set of internal elements that represents satisfactory or unsatisfactory relationships with external objects. So, in this manner, the universe of good objects and evil objects will be constructed. The anxiety referred to this relational modality concerns the need to preserve the ego from the attack of evil objects. The depressive position, in turn, is a later conquest and refers to the possibility of relation with total objects, or rather, whole or complex objects. An important point to consider is that the possibility of access to complex objects is closely related to the reflection that this relation will project on the infans. The infans



will also be more complex there. In this way the good and bad objects will be in some measure integrated, as will the components of the id and even the elements of an early form of superego suggested in a polemical way by the author. The complex introjection of the good object, an essential achievement in this position, will direct the field of anxieties to another focus. A protosensus of responsibility already reached will lead the psyche to an attempt to ensure the preservation of the good object, against the attacks of the evil objects, as well as against the aggressive impulses of the id. The depressive preoccupation will have as possible exit the restorative activity.

After this extremely simplified scenario, we will discuss the peculiarities of manic defense. Klein uses manic defense when the subject can reach the depressive position, that is, when he already possesses the mental resources of the depressive position, having integrated the good and bad aspects of the object and its ambivalence. He has, therefore, been able to introject complex good objects, but innumerable factors make him unable to cope with the challenge of depressive anxieties. At this point, instead of regression to the position less complex, the paranoid-schizoid, he makes use of a resource forward (KLEIN, 1935/1948, p. 298). This forward feature denies and satisfies, in the same operation, the problems arising from encountering complex objects. Its most noticeable aspect is the denial of the threat to the survival of the good internalized object. The importance of this to the individual is deflated to such an extent that the entire internal world undergoes a process of destruction based on this negation. On the other hand, says Klein (KLEIN, 1935/1948, p. 298), the purpose of manic defense, when controlling and equipping the objects, is both deny the threat of being experienced and enable its repair. The paradoxical manic repair is a point that we would like to highlight, as it illuminates processes that we are less accustomed to seeing in situations in which manic defense is activated. The author states that just as the destruction of the inner world is the fruit of omnipotence, this same omnipotence makes it possible for individuals in a maniacal state to permanently resuscitate destroyed objects. We can deduce that the subject in manic defense performs, in his own way, the designs of the depressive position. In destroying and resurrecting the internal objects at breakneck speed, this individual keeps them ideally safe, so that he can control them. Obviously, the excess of this operation leads to psychic devitalisation, to the preponderance of the process of destruction and to the inability of a productive reckoning with the other, depending on its intensity. The need for absolute control of the primary scene, characteristic of this defense, generates a subjective discontinuity, transforming the maniac into an exceptional figure expressed, in extreme cases, by his delusions of grandeur.

We would like to bring three points for discussion, which are related to the previous sections of this article: 1- the presence of manic defense in health, 2- the role of manic defense in the process of mourning and 3- the relationship between manic defense and melancholy.

The possibility of manic defense participating in health processes is closely related to its restorative activity:

The reparation-tendencies which play an all-important part in the normal process of overcoming the infantile depressive position are set by different methods, of which I shall mention two fundamental ones: the manic and the obsessional defenses and mechanisms. (KLEIN, 1935/1948, p. 309).

It seems evident that manic defense can, to some extent, participate in an interplay with other defenses in order to make the depressive anxieties related to the safety of good objects bearable.

The Kleinian articulation between manic defense and the mourning process also has surprising consequences. Melanie Klein develops this correlation in her 1940 text and there we perceive original considerations about manic triumph. At one point, Klein suggests that in normal mourning a number of psychotic anxieties are reactivated (KLEIN, 1940/1948, p. 321), making mourning, in his point of view, a sort of mild and transient illness. And this pathology is undoubtedly a transient manic-depressive condition.

Returning to the subject that interests us, one of the elements that makes up this disease in health is exactly the triumph over the lost object. In Melanie Klein's opinion:

The passing states of elation which occur between sorrow and distress in normal mourning are manic in character and are due to the feeling of possessing the perfect loved object (idealized) inside. (KLEIN, 1940/1948, p. 222-223).

The assumption of a role for manic defense in the slow development of mourning brings new insights into the delicate process of introjection liable to make the subject bear the loss of the object. The omnipotent introjection of the idealized object, a manic aspect in its nature, is fundamental for overcoming certain depressive impasses. Figueiredo (2018), comments extensively on the peculiarities of this defense and also indicates its possible participation in both health and in the process of mourning.

Finally, it remains to evaluate whether the notion of manic defense transforms or complicates the Freudian assumption that mania is the other aspect of melancholy. So far melancholy had not been mentioned in our presentation of Kline's ideas. The term depressive position may confuse us in its psychopathological nomenclature. As we have seen, this is a central modality for the possibility of the subject experiencing ambivalence in the contact with complex objects. In this way, this position cannot be confused with the melancholic exit.

Klein supposes that good objects in melancholy become crystallized in objects endowed with perfection (KLEIN, 1935/1948, p. 288). The perfect object is precisely the one that attacks the ego, which cannot meet its voracious demands. The main link between these two defenses, if we can call it all that also concerns melancholy, is the participation of the perfect object in its unfolding. We are not in a position to define whether this would characterize a relation of simple opposition between mania and melancholy in her work.

Systematizing what we could observe about the kleinian notion of manic defense, the possibility to participate in restorative processes in health, to be part of a common mourning work and not be reduced to the logic of melancholy, helps understand the undeniable contributions of Klein to the understanding of manic states.

### **PROVISIONAL CONCLUSION**

What we could deduce from this first theoretical approach to mania and manic states was its extensive polysemy, conceptual heterogeneity, and diversity of referents. Besides being a notional and psychopathological field still incipient in psychoanalysis compared to other areas of interest of this discipline, we can highlight two theoretical and clinical universes that did not find, so far, capacity for dialogue and mutual enrichment. On the one hand, we have mania as a condition strictly found in pathology, which represents a final process of defense against the impasses of narcissistic fragilities such as melancholy. It is the mania present in the manic-depressive states, closely related to the melancholic complex and which represents a mode of suffering derived from the element "revolt", as Freud said, against the object that colonizes the interior of the self. On the other hand, we have the mania as a defense against striking threats in the depressive position, based on the omnipotence of an artificial interior, taking the place of the self and producing disdain for the world of objects. While the first conception is extremely restrictive on the subjective aspects of mania outside its most spectacular presentations, the second conception produces an intellection about primitive processes of object relations, but it becomes so comprehensive that the understanding of certain psychopathological configurations is lost. New articulations are necessary to bring these two views into contact.

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