Article

Political trends in drive metapsychology

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Abstract: This article presents a hypothesis about the existence of unconsciously determined political trends, from the concept of drive. The hypothesis is justified by the recognition of the phenomenon of "reproduction of what one intends to fight against" and is developed in terms of repetition. For an apprehension of this phenomenon, it considers the drive conflict present in Freudian metapsychology and its developments in Lacanian psychoanalysis, in an articulation with left and right political trends.

Keywords: politics, psychoanalysis, drive, repetition.

Introduction

> *The similarity between the civilization process and the libidinal development of the individual had to be made clear to us.*
> (Freud, 1930/2010, p. 59)

For psychoanalysis, individuals are subjectively divided, submitted to the conflicts of their ambivalence and mobilized by the passions of the unconscious. Their conflicting drive nature is under a sociable tendency, as a manifestation of Love (Eros), while, at the same time, an aggressive tendency impels them against this unity, under the prevalence of Death (Thanatos). The civilization resulting from the libidinal bonds finds a powerful opposition offered by the enjoyment of a tendency to entropy. Freud (1930/2010), however, observes that a "struggle" is what constitutes "the essential content of life" (p. 91).

In this article, we developed a hypothesis based on Freudian metapsychology about the possibility of locating certain political trends determined by the unconscious mind[1], from the drive dynamics – the energy between the somatic and the psychic that makes up human subjectivity (Freud, 1905/1996). This hypothesis starts from the recognition of the phenomenon of reproduction of what one intends to fight against, which can be found in institutions, services, programs, and political projects, as Althusser (1999) and Castel (2011) addressed with property – as reproduction of the hegemony by the state apparatuses – and also in clinical practice. From metapsychology, this article aims to show the aforementioned reproduction as repetition of what is the object of an unconscious rejection.

Regarding the analytical clinical practice, the phenomenon brings a contribution about the place of psychoanalysts, their ethics, and the transformations an analysis can produce – so that psychoanalysts finds themselves as psychoanalysts in their clinical practice. This apparent redundancy is not random, because it includes difficulties present in one's formation and points to the subjective transformations produced in an analysis. This is to emphasize the following warning from Lacan (1969-1970/1992):

> This is exactly the difficulty of what I try to approximate as much as I can from the analyst's discourse – it must be at the opposite side of any desire, at least confessed, to dominate. I said *at least confessed* not because I have to conceal it, but because, after all, it is always easy to go back to the discourse of domination, mastery. (p. 72)

We approach the hypothesis that what goes wrong in an analysis is the longing, even if hidden, to govern. And, in this sense, it is worth remembering that the first level of the master's discourse matches the very significant articulation ($S_1 \rightarrow S_2$) that constitutes the unconscious (Lacan, 1969-1970/1992). Thus, would there be a tendency of unconscious domination?

As we consider the statement that "the unconscious is politics" – as stated by Lacan (1966-1967) in the seminar *The logic of phantasy* – and that we can infer as the memory of what is forgotten, but which is present in the unconscious mind as discourse of the Other, of the symbolic constituent of human

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1 According to Freud (1925/1996), the unconscious mind is present in several human manifestations. Scientific research has always been the "main interest" of his life, causing psychoanalysis to be not only a specific therapeutic method, but the "science of unconscious mental processes" (p. 72). In his investigations, the application (in the sense of the extension) of psychoanalysis has always been embedded in his theories and reflected in his clinical practice.

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subjectivity, we wonder whether there would be an ideology – in terms of political direction – to which the unconscious can bring a correspondence.

In this sense, Lacan emphasizes (1959-1960/1997): "To the extent that a delicate subject such as ethics is today not absolutely separable from what is called an ideology, it seems appropriate to give some definitions about the political meanings of this ethical turn of which we are responsible, we, the heirs of Freud." (p. 222). In the seminar *...or worse*, Lacan (1971-1972/2012) defines that ideology is "the same" as "discourse," that is, a structure "through which, by the pure and simple effect of language, a social bond is created" (p. 147). In psychoanalysis, ideology can be thought of, then, as a symbolic-imaginary organization orchestrated around a real emptiness, which manifests itself discursively.

For this investigation, we consider the drive tendencies as similar directions to what we find in the political-ideological conflicts present in our culture. After all, as Freud pointed out (1930/2010), if there is a similarity between the civilization process and the libidinal development, what can this similarity reveal about our unconscious? Initially, we will focus on the hypothesis of a liberal tendency of the unconscious and, then, of a progressive tendency, pondering the paradoxes contained in the right and left political trends and considering the drive ambivalence.

Although the text focuses on psychoanalytic metapsychology, it is necessary to define some terms that will provide support. With Bobbio (1995), we learn there are liberals, progressives, conservatives, and right and left authoritarians. These terms refer to historical, axiological, and ideological denominations present in the political and popular language, which go beyond the dichotomy capitalism versus communism. According to Bobbio, there are elementary criteria that allow us to grasp the distinction between right and left, since both have different programs, ideas, and interests about the orientation of a society.

While the left is linked to the historical fight for social rights and the ideals of equality and diversity, being considered progressive and emancipatory, the right tends to iniquity according to the weight attributed to individual freedom and is considered conservative because it values the status quo. This distinction is complemented by the opposition between social freedoms or rights on the left, and individual freedoms or rights on the right. For the research proposed in this article, we consider the articulation of liberalism and conservatism on the right, and the progressive, emancipatory, and egalitarian position on the left.

Is the unconscious mind a liberal?

"We are evil by nature" – this is what psychoanalysis says in the wake of other thinkers who are unoptimistic about the constituent moral of humankind. Freud wrote that there is a drive tendency in destroying, exploiting, murdering, and sexually abusing the other, and that one must strive for any pretense of altruism – considering that benevolence is an expression of narcissism (Freud, 1930/2010). Even the sociable instinct, as in the Aristotelian concept of man as a political animal, was questioned, remaining to this tendency a manifestation of a "special type of identification with the other," essentially alienating, ambivalent, and requiring efforts for the emergence of the affection of "tenderness" (Freud, 1923/2011, p. 306).

Throughout history, civilization has made it clear that both liberal policies and social-community experiences have led to excesses that put in check – each in their own way – the intended common good (Bobbio, 2003). On both sides of this story, the division between right and left persists, whose examples radicalized totalitarian manifestations, showing the impossibility of a full harmony between public and private, state and market.

Lacan (1959-1960/1997) was aware of the discussions about the geopolitical division that was devastating the world during the Cold War. When commenting on the left and right intellectuals, he associated the former to the figure of the innocent, silly, or buffoon: "The fool is innocent, silly, but truths come out of their mouth, which are not only tolerated but also find their role by the fact that this fool is sometimes covered by the insignia of the buffoon" (p. 233). On the right, he unraveled the figure of the rascal, "smartass" or "scoundrel," who even with the post-revolutionary perspective would not have escaped this subjection (p. 233).

The author mentioned a dialectical movement of both intellectual poles of his time, to the point of stating that the result of these struggles was the finding that a scoundrel or a bunch of scoundrels is equivalent to a fool or a "collective foolishness," as well as the effect of a "collective scoundrel behavior" from the left, especially when organized in mass. This is because "whatever this perspective, nothing has changed structurally," which can be understood as the maintenance of the belief in an Other embodied as the power of the market or state in a universalistic way, being revealed in policies based on the dichotomy between "friends" and "enemies" (p. 382).

We refer to "belief" considering what Freud (1927/1998) observed: "Should not the assumptions that determine our political regulations also be called illusions?" (p. 43). The author focused on the organized, long-lasting, and artificial masses, whose greatest examples are the Church and the Army. Both would be grounded in the illusion of a great leader or great idea that supposedly would bring completeness, well-being, or happiness to everyone. For the author, instead of being sociable animals, humans are herd animals led by a chief. Thus, the leader or the great idea "remains the dreaded primordial father; the mass still wants to be dominated with unrestricted force, it has an extreme craving for authority . . . for submission" (Freud, 1921/2011, p. 91).

In this sense, Lacan (1969-1970/1992) said, regarding the revolutionary students of 1968: "That is what you aspire to as revolutionaries, to a leader. You will have him" (p. 239). The author referred to a conception about the revolution as a 360° turn, paying attention to the repetitions, occurring throughout history, of processes that tend to bring up again an absolute and authoritarian Other, as in the figure of Robespierre in the French Revolution and even in the communism of the Soviet Union.

The historical experience of liberalism tended to paradoxically repeat subjection as absence of freedom. In this sense, it is as if it were an unconscious phenomenon that carries a liberal-conservative dubiety that constitutes the malaise in our culture, as Freud (1930/2010) reflected on the social pact – a compromise between life and death, self-preservation and destruction drives, pleasure and reality principles.

For Freud (1930/2010), if the program of the pleasure principle – whose drive satisfaction matches happiness – is impossible, the "moderate sense" of "libidinal economy" remains as "possible" (p. 40). The author states that men must give up part of the drive, of an alleged natural freedom without limits, in favor of social coexistence and protection, but at the expense of a dose of unpleasure and reality. For him, there are no alternatives beyond the symbolic coordinates presented as a condition for the insertion of humans into civilization. Besides that, only the Hobbesian barbarism of the war of all against all would remain. Thus, from the hypothesis of an unconscious liberalism, we find an alienation of subjects who believe they are free, even if at the expense of their subjection to an Other, subjected to a sovereign master Leviathan.

According to Freud (1921/2011), the belief in this Other is revealed as a paternal substitute, causing the members to be equally "brothers" or "comrades" by the libidinal bonds between themselves and the leader or common ideology, but under the prevalence of a conservative tendency, that is, the maintenance of the level of the drive energy in a same status quo (pp. 47-48). This drive conservatism is considered the "main phenomenon" correlated to mass formations and engenders an "absence of freedom" by the "change and limitation" of personality (p. 49). This is how we find in culture a widespread and conservative servitude – as in the expression "voluntary servitude" of Etienne de la Boétie –, even if under the libertarian aspirations, as Lacan (1955-1956/2010) also observed: "In short, behind widespread servitude, there is a secret discourse, a message of liberation, which subsists in some way in the form of repression" (p. 157).

Thus, a conservatism is repressed in libertarian pretensions (of individual freedoms or rights) and also in egalitarian pretensions (such as social freedoms or rights). However, the engendering of situations of servitude and inequality provoke reactions against conservatisms, by the same claim for their freedoms. As there are no contradictions in the logic of the unconscious, the ambiguity contained in these formulations appears as simple affirmation in both cases. Thus, one can say that both right and left contain a same foundation, given by the unconscious, that sustains a possible insistence historically found in politics and reflected in the reproduction of what one intends to fight against.

For the author, libertarian revolutions would not have been mistaken as to what they would propose, for they would have known the deception contained in their pretensions. They knew it was "ineffective" to talk about freedom, because it would be an "alienation" (Lacan, 1955-1956/2010, p. 157). It would not be random the fact of these discourses maintaining a close relationship with an alleged autonomy and gaining strength at the heart of discussions on individual rights, liberal freedoms. For the author, this view approaches delusion, because this discourse "is far from finding at some point the neighbor's discourse" (p. 158). Therefore, he emphasizes, concerning clinical practice:

> Psychoanalysis does not put itself in the plan of the discourse of freedom, even if it is always present, constant within each one, with its contradictions and disagreements, personal although being common, and always, imperceptibly or not, delusional. . . . The "I" is not reduced to a synthesis function. . . that constitutes in part the discourse of the real person with whom we deal in our experience, this strange discourse within each one as one conceives oneself as an autonomous individual. (p. 160)

Psychoanalysis would be outside this common discourse of freedom, permeated by the urgency of the integrating "I," according to its critique of Ego Psychology. But not to restrict the issue to the liberalism of the right, let us look at Freud's approach (1921/2011) on the socialism of his time: "If another mass bond takes the place of the religious one, as the socialism seems to be doing, the same intolerance occurs with those outside" (p. 54). He presented the same critical tone regarding the worldview of communism: "As has been materialized in Russian Bolshevism, theoretical Marxism has gained the energy, the cohesion, and the unique character of a worldview, but also, at the same time, a *disturbing resemblance to what it fights against*" (1933/2010, p. 351, italics added).

The author observed a disturbing (*Unheimlich*) phenomenon, something strange-familiar, a contradiction present in material and historical reality, which made the left reproduce what it intended to fight. Finally, he noted: "although practical Marxism has mercilessly removed all idealistic systems and illusions, it has developed its own illusions . . . it expects, in the course of a few generations, to change human nature in such a way that people live almost without friction in the new social order" (p. 351).

Thus, whether that right or this left, any discourse that intends to be totalizing will bring as correlate a conservative and excluding tendency, to maintain the status quo of the drive tendency. Therefore, initially, from the point of view of the unconscious, especially the

concept of drive, we find a liberal insistence – individual freedoms or rights or social freedoms or rights – that, nevertheless, reveals itself as conservative. This statement is confirmed when Lacan (1959-1960/1997) says that he follows the weekly news noting a prevalence of this ideology in political conflicts:

> What makes me enjoy this the most, I confess, is the face of the collective scoundrel that is revealed – this innocent roguery and even this quiet recklessness, which makes them express so many heroic truths without wanting to pay their price. Thanks to this, what is stated as the horror of Mamon on the first page ends in the last one in tenderness for this same Mamon. (p. 224)

Mamon is a demon found in the Gospels and also refers to a Syrian god of riches; he is an allusion to the mass of intellectuals of the left that results in the liberal rascality, that is, in the same interests confessed by the right and, thus, reproduces what he intended to fight. We find, in the meantime, a discussion that is present in the current debates, facing the thesis of the end of history. As we can suggest by an oxymoron, we would find in this sense a "liberal-conservatism," a paradox that liberalism, in the aim of concealing it, has historically shown.

Still on the criticism of Freud (1930/2010) to communism, the "psychological presupposition" in which all people would be born good, but private property would corrupt them – based on Rousseau (1755/2008) –, is considered illusory for not considering ambivalence and, especially, the tendency of the death drive[2]. For the author, there is a prevalence of the psychic economy on the political economy. Thus, despite what can be improved in civilization, the "suffering that could probably be avoided," there are "difficulties inherent to culture, which will not give in to reform attempts" (pp. 82-83).

In this sense, as Lacan observed (1959-1960/1997): "in the discourse of the community, of the general good, we deal with the effects of a discourse of science where the power of the signifier as such is shown" (p. 287). We have the ideal of a "general good" that, as it presents the functioning of the signifiers that command the discourses of the master and university student ($S(S_1$ and S_2, 2, respectively), aims at a totalization of a power-knowledge. But, according to Lacan's reading, although Freud was not a "progressive," he was not a "reactionary" (p. 254):

> he is not progressive, he does not place any faith in a movement of immanent freedom, neither in consciousness nor in the mass. Strangely, it is through this that he goes beyond the bourgeois means of ethics against which he could not, by the way, rise up, as well as against everything that happens in our time, including the ethics that prevails in the east, which, like any other, is an ethics of the moral order and of state service. (Lacan, 1960/2005, pp. 33-34)

Although Freud defended, at least in much of his life, a moderation or temperance of the drives under the aegis of the "I" and the principle of reality, he must be placed in the wake of the realistic and tragic traditions (Lacan, 1955-1956/2010). On this observation, Freud (1920/2010) mentions the conception that the principle of pleasure is precisely derived from the "principle of constancy," essentially "conservative" by aiming to maintain tension at a level as low as possible, for rebalancing or "restoring something previous" (pp. 164 and 204). He signals, however, that this principle is affected by the principle of reality that comes to postpone the satisfaction, consenting with a "long roundabout to reach pleasure," even if at the expense of a dose of temporary unpleasure and the always partial satisfaction of the drive (p. 165).

According to the example of the reel game brought by the author – from the observation of his one-year-and-a-half nephew –, the sequential utterance of the words *fort* ("went away") and *da* ("is here") denotes a cultural achievement because the game signals the "seizing" of a situation of passive suffering until then, due to the absence of the mother (p. 174). It prevails, however, an element that lies beyond the pleasure principle and that is manifested in the compulsion to repetition, in masochism, and in traumatic neuroses that, instead of pushing "to change and development" or even "to progress," is expressed by a "*conservative* nature of the living" (pp. 202-203). Because of this liberal but conservative tendency (as can be read, at last, in Freud himself), there would be an attempt of restoration towards the inorganic, even if, as observed in the *fort-da*, the belief in the subject's dominion remains.

> Conservative organic instincts have welcomed each of these changes imposed on the course of life and preserved them for repetition, and thus produce the misleading impression of forces that aspire to transformation and progress, when they only deal with achieving an old goal by old and new ways. . . . It would be contrary to the conservative nature of instincts that the goal of life was a state never reached before. It will have to be, instead, an old initial state, that the living being has abandoned once and to which they strive to return, through all the roundabouts of their development. (p. 204)

Development and progress would be the dimensions of Eros only in this half time of life, to "prolong the journey" under the prevalence of the death

2 For Freud (1933/2010), while the communist worldview articulates an economic determinism, psychoanalysis favors a psychic determinism: "not only were these factors involved in the creation of such economic relations, but also, under their control, people can only put their original instincts into action: their self-preservation instinct, their aggressiveness, their need for love, their drive to get pleasure and avoid unpleasure" (p. 350).

drive fate (p. 208). At first, it would only be possible to admit a kind of progressism if we were to pay attention to the prevalence of the drive that moves us to death:

> For many of us it can be difficult to abandon the belief that man has an impulse to perfection, which led him to his current level of intellectual achievement and ethical sublimation, and from which one would expect him to take care of his development towards the superman. It turns out that I do not believe in such an inner impulse and I do not see how to spare this benevolent illusion . . . the repressed one never gives up fighting for complete satisfaction, which would consist in repeating a primary experience of satisfaction; all the substitutive and reactive formations, all the sublimations are not enough. (pp. 209-210)

The life drive, under the power of the pleasure principle and in the list of the primary system, matches the liberal view of unconscious satisfaction – but leads, however, to homeostasis, to the lowering of tension and, therefore, to the libidinal conservatism of the entropic *status quo*. This return to the inanimate, the way to death, as Freud (1920/2010) formulated and was subsequently revised by Lacan (1969-1970/1992), indicates that every drive is a death drive. That is why it is better located "between two deaths," as Lacan (1959-1960/1997) elaborated, for receiving its vigor from the principle of reality, in the context of the secondary system, in a more progressive dimension.

Thus, if we want to articulate an ideological position based on metapsychology, we may say that the unconscious lives up to a liberal tendency – whose conservative approach is correlated. Hence, perhaps, the etiology of its historical insistence, its prevalence within politics (actions performed so that nothing changes by the reproduction of what is intended to fight) and also manifested in terms of clinical practice – as we will discuss later.

We can conceive this reproduction as a form of repetition compulsion. That is, a manifestation of the drive that presents itself as a repetitive insistence of something that has not been overcome or duly elaborated and that therefore appear as "insistence of a speech" (Lacan, 1955-1956/2010, p. 282). The "beyond the pleasure principle" is revealed by the "notion of *insistence*, of repetitive insistence, of significant insistence" inherent to the unconscious and that expresses itself by the symptom (1954-1955/2010, p. 308).

Perhaps it is not fortuitous that Freud (1920/2010) was in distress, to the point of almost abandoning the duality of the drives: "if we do not want to abandon the hypothesis of death instinct, it will be necessary to conjugate it to life instincts from the beginning" (p. 230). A year later, Freud (1921/2011) evoked the allegory of Schopenhauer's porcupines. The story tells about a necessary distance-approximation between these animals so that they do not stick, but warm themselves in winter. This intermediate zone would be necessary due to the ambivalence that integrates both amorous and hostile feelings.

Man can then be taken as a porcupine that lives between two impossibles: either alone and with cold or with the other and his thorn – which represent the impossible complementary fusion with the other. But this Freudian "middle term" does not result in a total acceptance of bourgeois morality, because the ethics of psychoanalysis considers the lack and goes in the opposite direction of the cravings for goods typical of the bourgeoisie: "There is no reason for us to constitute ourselves as a guarantor of the bourgeois reverie" (Lacan, 1959-1960/1997, p. 364).

Freud (1921/2011) stressed that the libido is directed to others in group and mass formations, engendering a barrier to narcissism through love for others, through libido directed to objects, which would allow transcending mere interest and the sexual purpose Itself. In this process of inhibition, in the case of the masses, they bring as counterpart "an impression of limitless power and indomitable danger" (p. 36). For the author, justice, aspiration for equality, and the other noble feelings and organizations arising from the hypothesis of sociability reveal themselves as cheap narcissistic safeguards.

The relationship with the other and all moral conventions are only established as a "reactive formation" to selfishness: "The first requirement of this reactive formation is that for justice, equal treatment for all, as a "reversal of a hostile feeling in a positive tone bond, the nature of an identification" (pp. 81 and 83). Thus, the common good would be nothing more than a reactive formation to the private and selfish well-being, consistent with a liberal tendency that reveals itself as conservative.

> What later appears in society as a community spirit, *esprit de corps*, does not deny its original envy. No one should want to stand out, each of which must be and have the same. Social justice means that the individual denies himself many things, so that others also have to renounce them or, what is the same, cannot intend to have them. (p. 82)

However, he signals that the libido is a condition for civilization: "As in the individual, in the development of the whole humanity is also love that acts as a cultural factor, in the sense of a change from selfishness to altruism" (p. 59). Despite the aforementioned trait of incurable narcissism, the symbolic-imaginary coordinates of civilization curb the inherent bestial component of the human, this "evil savage," as he pointed out in a laughable allusion to Rousseau's "good savage."

In collective formations, there would be a kind of possible "overcoming" of narcissism that would allow the establishment of social relations, because an Eros that "stops narcissism" becomes a "factor of culture" (Freud, 1912-1913/1996, p. 86). The thorns would be chiseled,

bringing the possibility of interpersonal relationships without resulting in a psychological mass – which are "entirely conservative" and endowed with "profound aversion to all progress and innovations, and unlimited reverence for tradition" (1921/2011, p. 27).

A progressive trend?

> *Something, of course, should remain open regarding the point we occupy in the erotic evolution and the treatment to be provided, not to individuals, but to civilization and its malaise.*
> (Lacan, 1959-1960/1997, p. 25)

Although we have found elements of a liberal tendency – and its paradoxical conservatism – in the drive unconscious, Freud left us the drive as a concept that is also characterized by a tendency that marks desire as endowed with a "fecund function" (Lacan, 1959-1960/1997, p. 12). The drive is essentially anti-civilizational, but at the same time potentially subversive, because it faces the devices of social control, the pretensions of harmony and balance arising from the entropy resulting from the pure movement of the pleasure principle.

Desire marks, in the Lacanian reading, the human moral experience as not consistent with a conservative resignation, but from the *Wo Es war, soll Ich werden* that Lacan (1965-1966/1998) retranslated as: "there where this was, there, as subject, I must come," as a positivity (p. 878). Given the impossibility of full harmony between secondary processes/principle of reality/I of consciousness and primary processes/pleasure principle/ unconscious I, it would prevail the "beyond the pleasure principle" that Lacan (1959-1960/1997) stressed as the most prominent solution.

In a first reading, the death drive can make us believe that the fate of man is fatally tragic, as signaled by the rock of castration (Freud, 1937/1996). However, if we look at what he left us, the death drive shows that it is precisely the pleasure principle that brings with it a movement of homeostasis, of inertia that tends to discharge and to hallucinatory satisfaction. Hence, the secondary processes and the principle of reality have a regulating function of subjectivity, facing the destructive tendency and, thus allowing creations mobilized by the desire that aim to occupy life before the end of our fate. The desire is then "taken by reality," which is always "essentially precarious," but that has the power to mobilize the unconscious, the primary process under the pleasure principle, which is satisfied in a hallucinatory way and tends to a destructive satisfaction (Lacan, 1959-1960/1997, pp. 35 and 43). Thus, it is by the principle of reality that the pleasure principle can be rectified.

Both principles are articulated, so the reality is, in short, constituted by pleasure. It is precisely this rectification that allows a movement towards the "processes of thought, by which the trend activity is effectively performed" (p. 46). The death drive is a principle that engenders life: "Such circles towards death, faithfully followed by the conservative instincts, would offer us today the picture of the phenomena of life" (Freud, 1920/2010, p. 205).

The drive is mobilized in the form of desire, depending on the inevitability of the pleasure principle tendency in addressing death, by the preponderance of pleasure with unpleasure. In the terms of Lacan (1959-1960/1997), the drive "calls into question everything that exists. But it is equally a will to create from nothing, a will to start over" (p. 260). The principle of reality offers, according to his reading, a condition for a possible pleasure. Here, unconscious desire reveals itself in an ethical dimension different from traditional morality. In the psychoanalytic experience, it is not the I of consciousness overlapping the It, but the subject of the unconscious who must come where It was, allowing the subject to go through the pathways of the trend.

It is through this conception of trend – which corresponds to the "drifts" that best translate the concept of drive– that the author situated the psychoanalytic experience as an ethics (p. 139). The tendency relates to the movement of the drive (which characterizes desire as a metonymic movement) in circumventing the object. It tends to discharge and thus generates a paradoxical unpleasure, but what generates pleasure in a system (conscious or unconscious) can generate unpleasure in another and vice versa. It is the principle of reality that rectifies, gives contours to the drive, allowing it to move in its movements, engendering the metonymy of desire.

It is because of the drive that, in the meantime between castration as "first death" and the ultimate end (called by the author "between two deaths"), there can be anything that pulsates. As we find in Freud (1915-1916/1996), instead of the transience of life leading in dismay or revolt, it may imply an increase in its value: "The value of transience is the value of scarcity in time" (p. 317). Thus, while the pleasure principle, due to its inertia and tendency to discharge, has the power to shorten life, representing a subjective death, the reality principle, with the advent of castration, allows one to engender a movement that goes against the liberal-conservative entropy of the drive.

From the Lacanian contributions, castration does not result in impotence or resignation, even because psychoanalytic ethics does not aim at the primacy of the genitality of a desire harmonic to the complementarity between the sexes, an aseptic morality or an I-centrism. It also questions the distribution of goods, as a possibility of public satisfaction for all, and even proposals for the unmasking of the other aiming at an alleged authenticity in orthopedic strategies of a supposed private autonomy. Analytical ethics is based on the "referencing of man towards the real" and not to the supposed centrality of the I of consciousness and normalizing moral ideals (1959-1960/1997, p. 21).

It is through the trend that one can do something different with It. The exit, therefore, is not in hedonism, in getting rid of the guilt of the subject or in fostering the perverse realization of fantasies, as in the enjoyment of transgression (an enjoyment not sublimated according to the author), but in the ethical pathway of desire. It is through the "treks" (p. 243), the trails through which one marks the "path of satisfaction" (p. 56), that one can do something different with It, as a way of possible partial satisfaction.

Unlike the modern ones that started to give "importance to the object," the ancients allowed themselves to circumvent it, living up to a possible pleasure, as Lacan exemplifies when talking about medieval courtly love (p. 125). This is a modification in relation to the ways of loving, of mobilizing the trend, occurring over time, giving to sublimation (a change in the drive economy regarding the sexual target, as in the arts and theoretical investigations) an important clinical operator in the direction of treatment, as well as "to civilization and its malaise" (p. 25). Sublimation would be the only one to "allude to a happy possibility of satisfaction of the trend," in addition to direct sexual satisfaction (p. 351).

Sublimation is related to *das Ding* (The Freudian Thing), which, being different from the objects that are located in the imaginary record and where the subject is imaginarily fixed in terms of pleasure and unpleasure, has the power to elevate an object "to the dignity of the Thing" (p. 141). There is an invention in the relationship with the object, without transforming it into the Thing itself, that is, a transformation of the object of desire in the cause of desire (*a*). Such an object is found in four modalities (oral, anal, look, and voice) that serve as a support to fantasy, desire, and also enjoyment.

Contrary to the Freudian thesis that sublimation would eventually generate satisfaction as the work of art enters the market circuit, Lacan emphasizes its creationist dimension. In any case, for both, there is a change concerning the "target" or "goal" of the drive. This includes the logical possibility that, even without establishing a goal, by reaching it, one can double the goal.

It is through an operation with the object, as the "sublimation paradigm" of the poetic of courtly love in relation to the lady shows, that one can live up to the ethical dimension of desire (Lacan, 1959-1960/1997, p. 160). But Freud (1921/2011) stresses that sublimation is not a complete operation in terms of efficiency, since there is a remainder impossible to sublimate. It is not random that, when falling in love, "the object is treated as I," that is, it implies a certain decrease of conservative narcissism. The "roundabout" of this love inhibited in its goal satisfies a portion of the incurable narcissism and does not exclude the transformations that an analysis can promote in terms of openness to the modes of direct satisfaction of the drive (p. 71).

To seize this drive economy, observes Lacan (1959-1960/1997), one must think "in creationist terms," in something that is not given or is in the condition of absent, as empty, without any substance: "The question of *das Ding* remains, today, suspended to what is open, faulty, split, in the center of our desire. . . . it is about knowing what we can do with this damage to turn it into a lady, our lady" (p. 107).

Of the three terms of sublimation: art, religion, and science, he stresses that the first "is characterized by a certain mode of organization around this emptiness" carried out by the repression of the Thing, while religion "consists in all ways of avoiding this emptiness" by a Displacement of the Thing (p. 162). As for the latter, we find the "disbelief" present in the reflections arising from the scientific discourse, but this does not characterize a "suppression of belief" (p. 163). In science, there is the rejection or exclusion of the Thing, "since, in its perspective, the ideal of absolute knowledge is delineated," where the Thing is not considered – hence its recurrent failure, for what is denied in the symbolic reappears in the real (p. 164). Thus, the analytical perspective, due to its transformative potency, brings a compliment to castration. After all, "it is more convenient to be subjected to the prohibited than to undergo castration" (p. 367).

It is through the drive tendency that one can do something with It. In the assumption of castration, we find a different imperative, namely, that of not yielding to desire, a desire that does not saturate in his its own metonymic structure and, in this sense, a possible transformation of the subject occurs against his way of enjoyment. In psychoanalysis, we find a political bet centered on a kind of emancipation of the subject beyond the rock of castration as a tragic destination, the one who causes nothing to change effectively and who reproduces what was intended to fight – as an object of a rejection that threatens to return. This is how, in an analysis, impotence becomes impossible – so one can do something different with it.

According to Lacan (1959-1960/1997), drive eroticism is endowed with a fruitful and ethical function. The roundabouts that characterize it allow a possible pleasure, that which is "the pleasure of desiring" and includes a certain dose of "pleasure to experience an unpleasure," of enjoyment (p. 189). It is important to emphasize the importance of castration in the constitution of the subject, insofar as desire is articulated with the prohibition arising from the symbolic Law and makes the subject a "fault-to-be" – which conditions his desire, as a drive movement endowed with a progressive nature.

By resuming our hypothesis, we located a psychoanalytic contribution to what we present as a phenomenon of "reproduction of what one intends to fight." Here, by the concept of sublimation and the notion of trend situated between two deaths, we have an ethic that points beyond a discouraging pessimism.

> Nowadays, human beings have attained such a control of the forces of nature that it is not difficult for them to turn to them to exterminate until the last man. . . . Now one can only hope that the other 'heavenly power,' the eternal Eros, makes an effort to assert himself in the fight against the equally immortal opponent. But who can predict the success and outcome? (Freud, 1930/2010, p. 122)

Freud relied on the "eternal Eros," in human collectivity. Without giving up the conflict inherent to the drive dynamics, he revealed that he hoped for an "effort" and a "struggle," even without knowing its consequences. There is, thus, a bet in love (especially in the side of the one who loves: in the lover) and in sublimation, as a way of treatment to the erotic of both "individuals" and "civilization and its malaise" (Lacan, 1959-1960/1997, p. 25).

Living the trend

Repression matches that which insistently returns through the formations of the unconscious. Freud (1914/1996) warned us that repetition is due to the absence of an elaboration, hence repression and the return of the repressed are the same reverse side. Therefore, one can say that a repressed truth can gain form in the reproduction of what it is fighting, both on the right and on the left.

The impulse contained in the repressed is transmitted through generations by the symbolic language (as archaic inheritance conveyed by traditions) and still as what appears as disturbing, what should have been forgotten, but returned as insistence in terms of a need for organization.

> We learned from the psychoanalyses of individuals that their most primitive impressions, received at a time when the child was barely able to speak, produce, on another occasions, effects of a compulsive character. . . . We believe we have the right to make the same assumption about the most primitive experiences of all humankind. (Freud, 1939/1996, p. 144)

Repression brings to light the insistence of the rejected as a manifest symptom in the impossible to govern. At the same time, we can find in institutions, services, political programs, and clinical practice the exercise of mastery. The master's discourse, as Lacan developed (1969-1970/1992), is based on the reading of the Hegelian dialectic (according to Kojève) of master and slave, in which the signifier of the master (S_1) in the place of agent directs itself to the knowledge of the slave (S_2) to use his know-how. We have a knowledge that intends to be absolute, causing a remainder to emerge in the failure of the one who proposes to govern. Remainder that manifests, however, the impossibility to govern the desire of those who, in the condition of subjects, insist on the desire to desire.

This impasse, well grounded in Freudian theories about culture, shows a paradoxical phenomenon: reformist or revolutionary libertarian and egalitarian pretensions can conceal a latent conservatism, in state of destructive power. In the clinical practice, such a phenomenon is found in what Lacan observed about the ease of slipping into the mastery. This emerges as a trend against what, precisely, psychoanalysis rose up by abandoning the hypnotic suggestion by the free association:

> I would have a greater tendency to believe that someone who, in hypnotism, seeks to make the subject his object, his thing, make it malleable as a glove to give him the form he wants, to take from him what he wants, is, more than Freud, impelled by a need to dominate and exercise his power. (Lacan, 1953-1954/1986, p. 38)

It is a certain poetic, a creationist manifestation, that opens the possibility of a place where we find the lack as a political factor – one that considers the ethics of desire (Quinet, 2009). To the extent that the phallus, as what imaginarily would bring completeness, is precisely what one should give in when the assumption of castration is presented (highlighting the phallus as signifier), it is the full enjoyment that is lost with symbolic castration. Here, one can give up the phallic illusion, the illusion that there would be at least One on the right or the left that would end the malaise and thus advance the drive tendency.

This is about experiencing the contingency given from the psychoanalytic ethical scope, from an organization around an emptiness. According to Dunker (2015), there is a bet on "productive experiences of indeterminacy" before the excess of "unproductive experiences of determination" that match the symbolic-imaginary coordinates that capture the subject in his/her way of living (p . 169).

Hence, psychoanalysis takes into account the lack/desire as a political factor – without being left before an impotent resentment –, making possible an operation towards the impossible in the sense of a creationism. Secondly, an analysis operates on illusions – of the beliefs of completeness, of the demands of happiness and well-being – towards a subversive act marked by desire.

Attentive to his time, Lacan (1969-1970/1992) said: "I am not a man of the Left," calling attention to the origin of fraternity – in allusion to communism – being segregation, which means that a fraternity originates from the segregation of some (p. 120). And later, he said:

> I am liberal, like everyone else, just to the extent that I am antiprogressive. *Only that I am involved in*

> *a movement that deserves to be called progressive*, because it is progressive to see the basis of the *psychoanalytic discourse*, to the extent that it completes the circle that could perhaps *allow you to situate exactly what it is that you fight against.* Which does not prevent this from continuing to work well. (p. 218, italics added)

The psychoanalytic experience would be located in a progressive position, as the analytical discourse is located as the reverse of the mastery and points to a subversion of the subject. However, as Lacan positions himself, he did not identify as a man of the left in the sense of what the communism of his time promoted: to reiterate what it intended to fight. Therefore, and from analytical metapsychology, the one in which the unconscious is politics, we have a possible solution to the question we raised earlier: the unconscious, from the psychoanalytic discourse, can come to a non-whole liberal-progressive (neither restricted to the condition of a liberalism that reveals itself as conservative nor, strictly, to a progressive that makes emerge an illusion).

The place of psychoanalysts is always outside, to the left of the left and beyond, showing what the right represses. After all, it is from the place of foreigner, as observed by Koltai (2000) and Quinet (2009), from "extraterritoriality," according to Lacan (1955/1998, p. 327), that we find the conditions of efficacy of a "treatment that is expected from a psychoanalyst" (p. 331). The one who concluded an experience of analysis, went through symbolic-imaginary limbos, could experience a radical transformation in his subjectivity, and then finds himself in the position of sustaining a practice in which he "has already resigned power" (1958/1998, p. 647). From there, it is the unconscious that brings a precise political direction: the lack.

This study does not exhaust the complexity of this investigation, nor does it indicate any review in the ethical, clinical, and political orientation of psychoanalysis, as it discusses precisely addresses how right and left political trends can be apprehended as phenomena arising from the constitution of the unconscious, especially from an articulation with the concept of drive. However, unlike a position that would naturalize such phenomena, an analysis experience leads to subjective transformations that, by implicating changes in the way the subject relates and is in the world, also produce social transformations.

Tendências políticas na metapsicologia da pulsão

Resumo: Este artigo apresenta uma hipótese sobre a existência de direções políticas inconscientemente determinadas, a partir do conceito de pulsão. A hipótese se justifica pelo reconhecimento do fenômeno da reprodução daquilo que se pretende combater e é desenvolvida em termos de repetição. Para uma apreensão desse fenômeno, considera o conflito pulsional presente na metapsicologia freudiana e seus desdobramentos na psicanálise lacaniana, em uma articulação com as tendências políticas de esquerda e direita.

Palavras-chave: política, psicanálise, pulsão, repetição.

Tendances politiques dans la métapsychologie de la pulsion

Résumé: Le texte présente une hypothèse sur l'existence de directions politiques inconsciemment déterminées, à partir du concept de pulsion. L'hypothèse trouve sa justification dans la reconnaissance du phénomène de la reproduction de ce qui est destiné à combattre et est développée en termes de répétition. Afin de comprendre ce phénomène, nous considérons le conflit de la pulsion présent dans la métapsychologie de Freud et ses déploiements dans la psychanalyse lacanienne, dans une articulation avec les tendances politiques de gauche et de droite.

Mots-clés: psychanalyse, politique, pulsion, répétition.

Tendencias políticas en la metapsicología de la pulsión

Resumen: Este artículo presenta la hipótesis respecto a la existencia de direcciones políticas inconscientemente determinadas a partir del concepto de pulsión. La hipótesis se justifica por el reconocimiento del fenómeno que reproduce lo que se intenta combatir y se desarrolla acorde a la repetición. Con fines a la aprehensión de dicho fenómeno, se considera el conflicto pulsional presente en la metapsicología freudiana y sus desdoblamientos en el psicoanálisis lacaniano, por medio de una articulación con las tendencias políticas de izquierda y derecha.

Palabras clave: política, psicoanálisis, pulsión, repetición.

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