

## THE SPECULAR DOUBLE IN THE NOT TRIGGERED PSYCHOSES: A CONTEMPORARY PARADIGM?

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**ABSTRACT:** For an approach to the function of the specular double, mainly about its role in triggering and stabilization, this article investigates the topical regression to the Mirror Stage proposed by Lacan. It inquires if the solution found for some psychoses could indicate a proper movement of the contemporary subjectivity. It stands out an imaginary push towards, which reasons the article intends to elucidate.

**Keywords:** psychoses; double; clinical theory; imaginary; contemporaneity.

**RESUMO: O duplo especular nas psicoses não desencadeadas: um paradigma contemporâneo?** Para abordar a função do duplo especular nas psicoses, principalmente acerca de seu papel em relação ao desencadeamento e à estabilização, buscou-se investigar a regressão tópica ao estágio do espelho proposta por Lacan. Indaga-se se a saída encontrada para algumas psicoses pode indicar um movimento próprio da subjetividade contemporânea. Destaca-se um empuxo ao imaginário, cujas razões o artigo pretende esclarecer.

**Palavras-chave:** psicoses; duplo; teoria da clínica; imaginário; contemporaneidade.

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For the constitution of the *I*, of the body and the relation of the object, it's necessary the passage through the dual register of the imaginary. The experience of the specular double through the presence of the other and the alienation to image are founder for every individual. With the support of the structure of language, the specular double takes symbolic dimensions in totemism, religion, idealism, where a symbol in form of the Ideal organizes the reality and the social set.

The ancient man, mythic, religious or ideological, has the tendency to realize the universe as something integrated, where a unit would be present between itself and other things of the nature. He contemplates the recognition of himself in the mirror world. The totem, the myth or the scriptures have the function to provide coherence and protection, through language, rituals and taboos for the lived experience. Symbols and imaginary narratives perform the screen function against anxiety and give meaning to life, death and sex.

The psychoanalysis emphasizes the function of the narcissism as structure of thought that ordains the reality according to the compromise for libidinal satisfaction. The object is approached as an object of desire, what Lacan calls "the cosmic face of the object" (LACAN, 1962-63/2005, p. 47). The advent of science that marks the contemporary society just breaks with that, making the doubt and estrangement a method. The rupture with the sensible and the tradition allows the development of the science at the cost of a loss of operators ordering the common reality. However, the movement beyond the mirror world necessary for scientific knowledge is the source of helplessness for the man. The formations of the unconscious as symptoms, fantasies and delusion will arise as answers to the decline of the great narratives, through them the unconscious promotes the reading of experience data and ensure, even insufficiently and sometimes precariously, the relation of the subject with the world and the others.

Freud in *The Ego and the Id* (1923/1976, p. 53) warns that there is a part inherited of our ancestors in our psychism which could work according to the ancient logics that, once supplanted, does not disappear. He emphasizes that the concept of regression can be referred to archaic operation mode of psychism because the drive diffusion reanimates the mortal element connected to the constitution of the *I* in object relation. (op. cit, p. 71-72)

Lacan (1954-55/1987, p. 171) criticizes Freud in *Interpretation of dreams* for comprehending the hallucinatory character of dreams as a change on thought vector that, regressing from the motor pole to the sensible, would result in a revival of past memories (FREUD, 1900/1976, p. 584). Lacan defends there is only regression on signification level of the *I* and it's understood as referring to imaginary plane. The regression in dreams is the decomposition of words in elements which represent diversified images of *I* (LACAN, 1954-55/1987, p. 212).

It is worth point out that lacanian concept of signification as a vector whose direction goes from imaginary to symbolic. The "signification of the phallus" has as function to demarcate this passage insofar the phallus isn't an object, not an image, it's a signifier (LACAN, 1958/1998, p. 697). Designated by the letter  $\Phi$ , the phallus is the signifier of desire, a mark of male and female lack. Therefore there is not image of phallus, although it is from phallus that the male and female image gains a libidinal prominence.

The body phenomenon in psychoses points out a difficulty in phallic signification constitution, which function is to localize the difference between the subject, the *I*, the own body and the other. So the regression is referred to a vector that goes from symbolic to imaginary. In psychoses would occur a topic regression to imaginary of the mirror stage but, differently of dreams in which regression occurs in relation to unconscious signification structure, it happens in the form of a fragmentation of the subject identity notion (LACAN, 1955-56/1988, p. 116).

When Freud explains delusion by a narcissistic regression of libido, with this withdrawal from objects ending in a disobjectualization, this means, at the point he has attained, that the desire that is to be recognized in delusion is situated on a completely different level from the desire that has to make itself recognized in neurosis (LACAN, 1955-56/1993 p. 104).

In *On a question prior to any possible treatment of psychosis* (1957-58/1998) – English edition (1957-58/2006) - Lacan defends the possibility of an effective analytic intervention depends on a differential diagnosis between neurosis and psychosis, adjusting the analyst listening since a compatible mode with the play of the structure. The desire for recognition in psychosis is different from the desire for recognition in neurosis, in this, the unconscious already operated a first interpretation, the subject is already inscribed in the field of the Other and for this reason it is appropriated that recognize a masked unconscious desire in dreams

or in symptom. In the case of the psychoses is just such inscription that is problematized. In our view, it approaches questions and impasses of the contemporary subjectivity marked by the advent of scientific knowledge over traditional knowledge.

The main lacanian thesis about the cause of the psychosis supposes a failure in the symbolic, in its order, that reveals an archaic structure of relation of the subject with the language that disarranges the imaginary register (op. cit., p. 564; p. 582). The Name-of-the-father as a significant which orders the passage from the imaginary to the symbolic does not operate on structure, mainly in relation to the transmission of the phallic signifier that promotes the transference of the libido from the *I* to the ego-ideal. The absence of the significant complicates the assimilation of the generational and sexual difference and consequently of the own body and of the differentiated location between the ego and the other, between the ego and the object.

Thereby, in the case of the psychoses, the experience of the double may become a unique mode of alterity manifestation and may acquire persecutory characters, sometimes astounding for these subjects. However we would like to contrast that there are cases of psychosis that has not been triggered yet, such as the case that originated this study and we perceived how the imaginary line becomes the main line that makes up for the relation with the alterity and the external world, keeping them stabilized before triggering or throughout life. Such variation becomes relevant since authors of the contemporary clinic (LAURENT, 1989; COELHO DOS SANTOS, 2008; FREDERICO, 2008; ROSA, 2009; MILLER, 2012;) indicate problems in relation to the establishment of the differential diagnosis and point to a new way for subjective order that rises as an effect on the clinical field: more precarious structure in its egoic constitution, more inclined to a mooring by the imaginary way through a dual transference, keeping secure from the triggering of psychotic break.

We will examine closely the function of the specular double in psychoses, based on lacanian thesis that at the scopic level the subject is more secure from anxiety (LACAN, 1962-63/2005, p. 277), justifying the appeal and the efficiency of the imaginary register on mooring of the signification in what we denominate as a push towards imaginary. Such preposition lead us to the reflection on the subject in contemporary society and the answers against fragmentation and loss of identity caused by the scientific discourse that displaces the traditional operators of subjective order.

#### **CLINICAL FRAGMENT: THE EXIT THROUGH SPECULAR RELATION**

We will take from the clinic a fragment of a case which allows us to point some present mechanisms in the psychotic structure that enable to verify how the experiences lived by the analysand may be considered as an attempt of cure. Freud glimpsed the process of the psychosis that have been triggered as an attempt of cure (FREUD, 1924a/1976, p. 191), of repair of something that is lacking in the psychic order, a remodeling of the reality (FREUD, 1924b/1976, p. 232). In this case at which a triggering is not observed yet, it is perceived that the analysand seeks in his analysis precisely the elements that prepare him to be inserted in reality, what seems to him enigmatic at a given moment.

After three years of monitoring a 30-years-old young man, who had never been treated by psychiatry, it was notable a certain difficulty on diagnosis. Although harassed by many questions that distressed him, he kept stable through a mirroring with some people of his socializing. With respect to the management of his treatment, due to the fact that the analysand seeks the stability through the identification way, what could be observed was precisely that the analyst position seems to be constantly questioned.

The questions he brought concerned primarily “how to get a girlfriend” and progressed to “how to be a man in reality?”. It is notable how a priori the enigma of the sexes is placed for him in an insoluble way and how questions about his identity are included by this condition.

The psychosis has not the same subterfuges of insertion into reality like neurosis, which develops the function of fantasy that enables to dialect the role of the other with oneself. In relation with the love objects elected by the patient, it seems that there is no possibility of recognition, satisfaction and affective interchange. His lack is not dimensioned. His convictions about what women are and think are true for him in such a way it becomes impossible to dialect such positions.

Certain body phenomena are reported by the analysand, for example, when he was surprised at his mirror image and thought that his skin was darkening. At certain times he thinks compulsively and has invasive

ideas that torment him and loss sleep. It seems to feel urgency for order his reality, both at a physical level of the material objects and a psychic level of the elements that occupies his mental life.

One of the main characters of the analysand is his absolute lack of expression in speaking. He does not gesticulate, his voice tone does not change at any time and his gaze is empty of emotion. He only demonstrates certain discomfort when he is interrupted by questions, which break his rigid reasoning.

It is observed in these processes the first traits of regression, since the fact the analysand thinks his color is strange, related to something of his image constitution. In the process of thinking compulsively and questioning the analyst about its reality, it is perceivable the attempt of mirroring and, thus, attempt of reconstruction of the objects order, mooring symbolically which does not scribe. The analyst is summoned to think and decide by the analysand in every situation.

Then we work on the hypothesis that the analysand has a “as if” personality and the treatment rotates around the analysand task of situating the desire of the Other, which misrecognition is the cause of his anxiety.

In psychoses of the type “as if”, firstly theorized by Helen Deutsch in 1942, in *Some forms of emotional disturbance and their relationship to schizophrenia*, resumed by Lacan in *Seminar 3 – The psychoses* (1955-56/1988) – English edition (1955-56/1993) –, we see a form of compensation where the subject seeks to emulate the behavior of people close to him, and where “the emotional relation with the external world and the own ego seems impoverished or absent” (DEUTSCH, 1942/1968, p. 413 apud FREDERICO, 2008, p. 45). We can considerate this as an example of how the dual operation is sought as an imaginary compensation (LACAN, 1955-56/1988, p. 220). In such types of psychoses one observes subjects that can spend their whole lives without facing a situation where occurs an appeal for the Name-of-the-father, which results a triggering.

Miller (1996, p. 147-148), commenting a case of “as if” personality, characterizes them as “beings of pure semblance”, disabled to assume an identification itself. Quinet, on the other hand, reports to Lacan’s commentary in *Seminar 3* about the “as if” mimicry, highlighting the absence of the semblance on the conjugation between the imaginary and the symbolic as a structural category of the discourse and of the relation with the signifier instance. Thus, the mimicry operates in the place of the inoperative semblance, promoting a connection, even if fragile, between imaginary and symbolic.

As a phenomenon, the double created by the mimicry would be only a principle of a regression to a previous stage of the libidinal operation, which does not stop serving as a protection for the subject for a period, when something already guarantees the coexistence of the subject with the other. However there is a possibility of the other become very consistent and control, pursue and invade. The lack of symbolic mediation leaves the subject unable to achieve a separation, arrested in a kind of symbiotic relation, where in extreme cases the other can be localized into the individual’s body.

## **THE DOUBLE IN FREUD: FROM THE SIMILAR TO THE OBSERVER INSTANCE**

Before Freud approached the question of the double, one of his disciples, Otto Rank, had dedicated a whole book to investigation of the subject, titled *The double: a psychoanalytic study* (1914). In such work, Rank approaches the double in literature, in mythology and in anthropological studies of the primitive people. It is possible to observe that something of its content have come to inspire the text *The Uncanny* (1919/2010), where Freud discourses more deeply about the subject. Rank localizes the double as a defensive mechanism based on projection, due to the necessity of ego preservation who feels threatened by moral conflicts and annihilation fear.

In the same year, Freud highlights the paper of the libido in *I* constitution in *On narcissism: an introduction* (1914/2010), examining more deeply the problematic access to reality in the psychoses, instituting a program of investigation about the identification process and its importance for the *I* constitution and social bond. Since this concept of narcissism, a process of drive unification with the body is no longer in charge of self-preservation drives, but in charge of the libidinal investment that establishes the ego as a privileged object. This is an operation that is fragile in psychoses. In the Freudian approach of the narcissistic *I* constitution, it stands out beyond the body organization, which primary narcissism is responsible, the formation of a secondary narcissism in the ego-ideal that inherits the child aspirations after the passage by the Oedipus complex (FREUD, 1914/2010, p. 40).

In the second topic proposed in *The ego and the id* (1923/1976) Freud formalizes the discoveries about the ego formation engaged since the concept of narcissism and considers the role of the death drive in this process. Since the division of the ego, the superego comes as a regulatory instance (or disturbing), which function is exercised by the moral conscience that measures the ego in relation to the Ideal (FREUD, 1923/1976, p. 51-52). Freud highlights that this instance contains the trace elements of the influence exercised through the voice of parents and educators, establishing itself precisely from the voices heard. In some cases these sayings take a disproportionate intensity, disclosing therefore the driving aspects of this instance (FREUD, 1914/2010, p. 43)

Therefore, it is important to note that the narcissistic process of the *I* constitution imply a structure that goes from the notion of the own body, libidinally constituted on primary narcissism, to the superego's vocal imperative that coordinates this process. It is verified in Freud's second topic what Lacan has articulated in structure terms of unconscious signification to the subject, as we shall see below.

*The uncanny* (1919) highlights two essential aspects related to the double: the identification mechanism with the other and the vigilance function operated by the superego over the ego. In paranoia symptomatology, such as in the delusion of being observed, Freud indicates that we can find a regressive form of the critical function present in every normal individual (FREUD, 1919/2010, p. 352).

The double is, in this sense, more pathological, in characters taken as identical to the ego, with the characters that an exchange of thoughts occurs, or when the subject doubts about himself, feeling himself incarnated by a strange. The double makes "the subject identifies himself in such a way that he doubts who is his ego, or substitutes his own ego by a strange". This is due to the ego ability to double itself, to divide and to exchange itself (FREUD, 1919/2010, p. 351).

Freud argues that the double can acquire a pathological character when it arises as a defense mechanism from the ego, which appeals the regression to an older mental operation. The trouble is that, having overcome primary narcissism, the double before friendly, with protection function, or even a guarantee of immortality for the subject, its characters are inverted, distorted by other mental process, inducing feelings of threat to the ego (FREUD, 1919/2010, p 353).

### **MIRROR STAGE: RECOGNITION, AGGRESSIVENESS AND ANXIETY**

Lacan, inspired by ethological studies and child psychology, formulates in *The Mirror Stage as Formative of the I Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience* (1949/1998) – English edition (1949/2006) – the thesis that the ego is an imaginary function that is constituted from a mirror experience, through an identification to an *imago* that does not correspond in any way to the bodily disorganization condition, which is initial. The condition of motor helplessness finds in the external image, unifying the bodily experience at the gaze level, a founding alienation.

In mirror experience initiated at six months of age, it detaches beyond the gestaltic capture of the image in the mirror, a libidinal value of this image in *infans* psychic economy and, even more, how this libidinal value depends on the Other's assent constituted in the language field. The role of the Other in specular experience is designated by Lacan in the child movement towards the gaze and/or word of the one who protects, recognizing there the search for ratifying assent of the experience lived in mirror. This is how Lacan formalizes in an optical model the two instances indicated by Freud in *I* constitution: the imaginary of the ideal ego and the symbolic of the ego-ideal, being the first connected to the *I* image field in specular projection and the second to gaze field, which legitimizes the value of the specular experience.

It is important to emphasize that the *I* constitutes itself in order to awaken the child's desire for external reality where it captures itself. Thus, the mirror stage experience commands and guarantees the reality for the subject in function to the alterity there included.

Ogilvie (1987/1991, p. 111) observes that the "mirror" element would be a generic term, because it would be only one of the many other reference points susceptible to analogies and assimilations on the part of the child.

It is any and all behavior of another that responds himself that performs here the role of the mirror, and even any material trace left behind by the child, jet or wreck, in which he contemplates himself as being the author. For example, the cotton reel game that Freud observes in his grandson. (OLGIVIE, 1987/1991. p. 111)<sup>1</sup>

This alienation, therefore, is constitutes a trace that allows the subject operates with his body in the field of the Other guaranteeing a shared reality. Because it is a primary identification, it carries within itself an imaginary tension that could be found in all encounter phenomena with the double, which manifests themselves predominantly Maria Luiza Taveira in an intense erotization and aggressive form. In the dual plane, in a closed universe to two, the other is the one that gives marge to possibility or not of the subjective existence, seeing that the Other's endorsement assures the objects and own body order. Lacan (1953-54/1986, p. 198) considers the presence of an aggressiveness of the *I*, engendered in rivalry by the object of desire of the other. The struggle for recognition is also a struggle for prestige.

Lacan agrees with Freud that there is something in common between the initial structuring of the psychic apparatus and the same operation in psychosis. Thus, he says that, in every human being, the *I* would be essentially paranoid because it is always accompanied with this specular double that establishes its structural alienation. If the identification with the other is done without symbolic mediation, or it vacillates, the other is at the same time equal and rival. In a first approach, Lacan argues that without the passage to symbolic, "every human function could only exhaust itself in the indefinite aspiration for destruction of the other as such" (LACAN, 1953-54/1986, p. 198).

In the *Seminar 10: the anxiety* (1962-63), Lacan reviews his previous composition of the imaginary field, or, more precisely, criticizes the Mirror Stage as formulated (MILLER, 2005, p. 12). According to Miller, Lacan operates a modification in view of the necessity to localize a non-specularizable rest, non-framed in imaginary, which name the object *a*. The issues of aggressiveness detached before as proper to the constitution of the ego will give way to the examination of the experiences of weirdness and anxiety.

The object *a* is related to a dug place in psychic since successive losses of parts of the body (placenta, breast, feces, penis, gaze, voice) where it is possible operate the consciousness beyond self-consciousness promoted in specular recognition. Lacan supports, for example, the difference between the eye and the gaze. He insists that the reflexive consciousness obtained in "I see myself seeing myself" wrongly supposes the subject in the Other's place. The subject does not see himself from the place where he sees, his signification is acquired from the gaze that comes from the field of the Other, where he divides himself. This point of view adopted by the subject in the field of the Other is imperceptible, invisible and elided on self-consciousness signification, except in the cases of anxiety or in psychoses. Hence he will assert that anxiety is not without object. According to the author, "anxiety, (...) not only it is without object, let's say, deeper, the ultimate object, the Thing" (LACAN, 1962-63/2005, p. 338-339).

This is how Lacan thinks to refute the classical perspectives about the consciousness affirming that it becomes effective showing that this consciousness is attached to an isolable object in the structure (LACAN, 1962-63/2005, p. 76). With the same logic applied to the gaze, it is detached the role of the consciousness' voice in moral injunction that often imposes itself on the subject, but the voice element is not audible and detachable as in the case of the psychoses.

Opting for the return to the optical scheme elaborated in his first seminaries, Lacan introduces a hole into the scheme, a new place in the imaginary field, building the object of anxiety. The waivable objects are the forms that the object *a* assumes indicating a structure of exchange with the field of the Other around the body borders that extend beyond the mirror image. So, emphasizing the sense of decrepitude of the organs that dig the place of the object *a*, it is almost like a natural consequence the insatiability of the desire that marks all these relations (op. cit, p. 330-331), whereas there is the interruption mark on libidinal sustenance, and not the meeting with the satisfaction object (op. cit, p.116).

Next to the question of the image, it is necessary to approach the body as a border where a void is dug and the subject function is allocated beyond its satisfaction circuits. It implies that what attracts the desire of the subject depends on what remain besides the subject, while libidinal reserve (op. cit., p. 55) and not only what projects as *I* image in object relation. The subject is implicated in an interruption of libido where it reveals a gap in the amalgam offered by the *I* image.

The anxiety is essentially linked to what appears to the subject, but belongs to the non-specularizable order, nor apprehensible by the signifier. If before the totality of the objects in the world is modeled taking

the image as a prototype (MILLER, 2005, p. 12), since this reformulation of the Mirror Stage, the object *a* will be the first and the unique exception to this rule.

Normally invisible and beyond its presence in anxiety as a sign of danger to the *I*, in the case of psychoses, we would see the object *a* rises, in the gaze form or the voice form, that presents itself as an object detached from the subject. We would see that this phenomenon associated with the psychotic outbreak reveals a failure of the body integration by the way of the specular imaginary.

#### **DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THE DOUBLE IN PRE-PSYCHOSIS AND AFTER THE TRIGGERING**

It is important to draw differences between the pre-psychosis moments and the triggering in reason of an examination of the main aspects of the specular experience in psychoses. This distinction is not simple, because in psychosis “the development isn’t gradual, there are always surges and phases” (LACAN, 1955-56/1993, p. 17). Understanding these changes means understanding at what point of the discourse of the subject he is situated in relation to alterity, in relation to his own *I* and language.

In the pre-psychosis period it may be even more complex, since “there is nothing that more closely resembles a neurotic symptomatology than a pre-psychotic symptomatology” (LACAN, 1955-56/1993, p. 191). Usually in this period there is still present a mooring of the imaginary, symbolic and real and, consequently, prevails an organization of the subject within the language and the *I* in relation to reality. Thus, following the indications of Freud and Lacan, an important factor to be taken in considerations in these cases is the presence or absence of the regression, understood as one of the primary defense mechanisms adopted by the psychism in psychosis. It is in this regression phase we may witness the apparition of the double, as a species of mirroring and identification with a next other as a compensatory mechanism.

Lacan argues that the psychotic subject clings to imaginary, to the dual relation. In a pre-psychosis situation, that is, a period that there is still some stability and does not still appeal to the Name-of-the-father, firstly, the subject tends to support in identification that supply the void of phallic signification. It can be observed when the subject goes in a search for an imaginary support in the other as a model to be reproduced

What's he (the signifier Name-of-the-father) left with? He's left with the image the paternal function is reduced to. It's an image which isn't inscribed in any triangular dialectic, but whose function as model, as specular alienation, nevertheless gives the subject a fastening point and enables him to apprehend himself on the imaginary plane (LACAN, 1955-56/1994, p. 204)

Lacan (1955-56/1988, p. 233) infers that, if this image with which the subject identifies himself is very potent and isn't something with which he may formulate a pact, a coexistent order, a relation of rivalry and aggressiveness will appear. From there, the subject adopts a position most intimated and fearful, since something occurs in the order of an imaginary capture, where an image acquires a sexualized function, without the possibility of a reciprocal exclusion that allows establishing the *I* in the identification with the other.

In principle, at the beginning of the psychosis, it is produced an imaginary abundance that supports a way of language exercise and of the speech through the relations with the other. In a second moment, if the appeal to the signifier Name-of-the-father comes by the apparition in the Other of what Lacan called “A-father”, referred to as third (until then foreclosed) in a dual relation, this Other will relate everything from the world to the subject. Coelho dos Santos and Oliveira (2012) highlight that the non-symbolization of the function performed by the ego-ideal and, therefore, by the father, it is a decisive fact for the distinction between neurosis and psychosis. In this last one, the ego-ideal appears regressively as a hostile other that watch and pursue, while in the first one, the ideal formation appears as a the condition of repression.

In other words, the triggering fundamentally happens when there is “nothing more nothing less than a real Father, not necessarily, in absolute, the subject's father, but A-father” (1957-58/1998, p. 584), in other words, when the psychotic meets something that presents himself as a heterogeneous element, a third element that affects the imaginary and specular identification with the same. In this moment, “the *I* acquires the state of *you*, it's the *I* that thinks it is in the state of the double, that is, expelled from the house, while the *you* remains the possessor of things” (LACAN, 1955-56/1993 p. 277).

Even with the triggering, we can still see the imaginary field participation in delusion, if we comprehend it as a work of the signifier with imaginary effects building a new reality, being able to assume, in some cases, a symbolic function of metaphor through delirious metaphor – level where signifier and signified stabilize (LACAN, 1957-58/1998, p. 584).

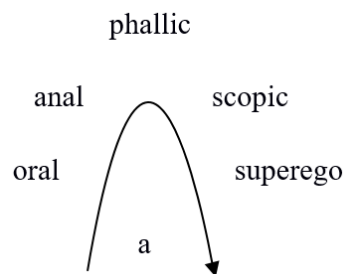
In the case of psychoses that have been triggered, such as the cases of Schreber, Aimeé and the Papin Sisters analyzed by Lacan, we can verify an intense search for an imaginary identification as the way of compensation in the beginning of the disease, however it fails and reveals its deadly aspect.

We can highlight three forms of exits for the psychoses: an imaginary compensation, the delirium and the nomination. Although the nomination is promising exit for the clinic of the psychoses, it is important to emphasize the efficiency of the imaginary compensation being the exit sought before the psychotic triggering, which in many cases it finds by this way a satisfactory stabilization. In actual clinic, the presence of an appeal for imaginary compensation isn't necessarily an indication of pre-psychoses.

### **IMAGINARY PUSH TOWARDS: IMAGE OF THE I AND THE BODY AS BORDER**

The hole present in the formulation of the optical scheme is added as what should exist for the consistence of the body image. It is in the body as a hole that the subject truly structures himself, not the image. In this sense, the phallus, represented by  $-\phi$ , appears less as a gap in the specular image (LACAN, 1962-63/2005, p. 49), and not only as the signifier of lack, before represented by the letter  $\Phi$ . The field of the Other appears as the place where it is produced a stabilization in body image through the insertion of a void, a distance, a break between the real of the body and its capture as image in the mirror where it is possible to operate the subject. This split is what gives the subject space to emancipate himself from the image, not to be its captive, prisoner in narcissist capture. The  $-\phi$  is even identified by Lacan to the *Heim*, to the home, to the security of the subject against anxiety (op. cit., p. 57-58). The *Unheimlich*, the uncanny, happens when something comes to occupy the empty place in the field of the Other, proper to the subject.

Thus, the stabilization of the body image is threatened – which is illustrated by the phenomena of depersonalization and other disturbances, for example, disturbance of the schizophrenic and his “shattered body phantasy”, cited by Lacan (op. cit., p. 133). In the case of psychosis the absence reveals through a double that thickens in the subject perception, takes possession of the image and transforms it into something radically strangeness.



From the phallic level we have the decreasing vector that advances to the scopic level where, according to Lacan, the questions about the desire of the Other appears in most outstanding way. The anxiety appears at the point of inquiry about the desire of the Other from the castration anxiety that, according to Freud, resignifies other anxieties. Lacan brings a new ingredient that refers to the fact that the anxiety, even the castration anxiety, is fundamentally at the scopic level (op. cit., p. 353). In the phallic phase the recognition of sexual difference operates as the section that individualizes the *I*. Since this comes the question “what am I to the Other?” with anxious depth, because the place of the subject in the sexual sharing and the orientation on the satisfaction possibilities are at stake. It is like we could think of a pre-oedipal mirror stage and oedipal stage that will resignify the first one.

This descendant vector obeys the reversibility structure that closes the drive circuit taking the own subject as object and finds more features to be viewed in topology. What this graph outlines will be deeply developed in the next year, in *Seminar 11, the four fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis* (1964/1990). In



this seminar, Lacan will say that the exercise of the sexuality isn't a maturation process of the phases, nothing forces the passage from one level to the other, but only the advent of the subject articulated in the field of the Other, and in this sense the scopic field is privileged, where the drive partiality can be integrated. He reaffirms his criticism to the existence of a genital drive and argues that the sexuality is linked to the structure of the *I*, not to body and its drives, always partial. He will resume the Freudian text *Instincts and their Vicissitudes* of 1915 (also translated as *Drive and their Fates*) and emphasizes that the exercise of drive reversion "love-be loved" happens only when the structure of *I* is unified. "The drives needs us in the sexual order" (1964/1990, p. 179). The structure is a structure of gap, where the drives show the same topological structure in their operation, marking a lack, the relation of the subject with the field of the Other (op. cit., p. 171).

The last level of the graph ratifies the Freudian structure of the superego and its link with words heard. It is from this vocal point that the image, in phallic signification, when appropriated to the desire through the paternal function of the Name-of-the-father, masks the presence of the objet *a* as the voice of the consciousness that is enunciated from the Other. And even more, it is from this point that the subject can take a voice and enter in the symbolic transference, which allows him to emancipate from the scopic domain of the image of the *I*.

It is evident in this period of the Lacanian teaching the prevalence of symbolic, conveyed by the word, mooring the subjective structure in a stable form. The level of the superegoic voice is the most regressed and at the same time the most advanced in terms of subjective structuring. It's worth taking the formulation of *L'Étourdit*, "that one might be saying remains forgotten behind what is said in what is heard" (LACAN, 1973/2003, p. 448) to measure how much the voice is elided in the moral statement that this instance convey, realizing the sense effects through language.

The field of the language in the form of the superego has the ascendance over the imaginary at scopic level. The Name-of-the-father, from the ego-ideal conveyed by superego, localizes the phallic signification to the subject. However there is a predominance of the imaginary. Lacan points out that the human experience is marked by the recognition function of the neighbor as similar according as it offers a protection against anxiety, because it slips away the point where the subject appears as object *a*.

To the human Other, (...), binds me something that is my quality of being his alike, and it follows that the rest *a*, that of the anxious *I do not know what object I am*, is essentially unknown. There is a misunderstanding of what is the *a* in the economy of my man desire, and that is why the so-called level four, that of the desire level, that in which the structure of desire is most fully developed in its fundamental alienation, is also, paradoxically, the level at which the object *a* is more masked and in which, in view of this, the subject is more assured about the anxiety. (LACAN, 1962-63/2005, p. 353)<sup>2</sup>

The image of *I*, *i(a)*, is the characteristic object of mirror stage, however it is an object that is inscribed in the presence of the subject in the field of the Other without leaving remains. Due to recognition, the subject doesn't register what escapes the specular image, which tampons efficiently the divided structure of the subject in the gap between the body and the field of the Other.

Thus, the shattered body experiences would remit to before the mirror stage, insofar as what will come to be a unified image is still in disorder of the smalls *a*, that is, contrary to the *I structure*. The objects *a* structure makes them improper for the unity sensation, which is egoic and imaginary. They generate the anxiety feeling for not being able to be recognized by the Other (LACAN, 1962-63/2005, p. 134). In other words:

This is the true sense, the deeper sense to be given to the term of 'auto-erotism' – or to miss oneself, (...), from one point to another. It isn't the external world the we miss, (...), but we miss ourselves (LACAN, 1962-63/2005, p. 132)<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, we see that the incidence or not of the object *a* in its real strand is closely related and depended on Other's status. Moreover, we can highlight the importance of the image as a dress to drive object. In specific case of the own image distortions, we can perceive the signs of fragility of this mechanism. The own body image being disconnected from any idea of possession or conscious control, it is possible to perceive how the libido in psychosis returns to a disorder condition and the ego sees himself at risk of being

annihilated. Many of these subjects avoid the contact with the reflecting themselves, or adopt rituals such as repeating the own name or phrases for protection, trying to placate their anxiety.

The irruption of the dual transference may be understood as a form of organization, imaginarily, in the sense of external reality, that is invaded by strange elements coming from what has been foreclosed of the psychic reality, from what for some reason wasn't be inscribed symbolically.

In actually, due the science advent, these commanders of reality are relegated. The decline of the protection to anxiety, provided by an organized symbolic around the Name-of-the-father, provides a search for the imaginary domain since, as we have seen, it offers a greater protection against anxiety.

#### **FOR CONCLUSION**

The imaginary compensation strategy witnessed in the clinical treatment, which originated this reflection, shows that such exit, although precarious, limited and even dangerous, can be effective as protection against the worst. Faced with the incidence of cases of psychoses that have not been triggered, the clinical orientation about the analyst's place as "secretary to the insane" (LACAN 1955-56/1993, p. 206) suffers a small displacement. Indicated for the non-triggered psychoses, in this place the analyst occupies the position of witness of the relation of the subject with the Other, silencing to give vent to the constructions (delirious) that the psychotic can provide about their experiences, avoiding to offer elements that place he as absolute Other, opening space and establishing another relation with alterity.

The contemporary clinic, however, points to imaginary compensation as an alternative to stabilization. The imaginary push towards, which previously could be apprehended as an index of pre-psychosis or the proximity of a trigger, is now an exit in some cases. The approach of a case in which it is understood, from an elementary phenomenon, the importance of the resource of regression to the stage of the mirror in the course of the analysis, leads us to reflect on the exercise of subjectivity in the contemporary and the role of the image in the defense against anxiety.

Would the topical regression to the mirror stage be a contemporary discourse effect marked by the science advent that debilitates the parental function, but offers other ways of imaginary stabilization? Such as in the case of psychoses that have not been triggered, can the imaginary push towards be considered an answer paradigm to the questions of contemporary subjectivity?

Lacan says that the mirror stage has a seductive aspect connected not only to the structure of each subject, but also connected to the knowledge structure marked by the good form, by gestalt (LACAN, 1962-63/2005, p. 277). His criticism is for a knowledge that constitutes itself closed.

The articulation between the mirror and the signifier is done in a rupturing structure, splitting structure where a gap is evident (LACAN, 1962-63/2005). This gap, even if it exists, was only operated by the science and the rupture in relation to the traditional and sensible apprehension of the world. The field of the language, before operated by the great narratives, was crossed by the scientific operating mode. Rupturing with the ancient and archaic narratives, scientific discourse was developed and was implanted in the world. In this way, science extends the range of the subject beyond the self-consciousness found in the mirror, forcing us to recognize it as articulated at the lack point, not at the point where the subject see himself loved for the Other. Where the importance of psychoanalysis highlights the object *a* dimension in the subject constitution, as well as understand the role of the image, *i(a)*, in this structure. What is verified in contemporaneity is the thickening of the imaginary answer, both in its destructive aspect and in the social bond form and subjective recognition.

Concerning to the impregnation of the imaginary in the face of castration anxiety, it seems natural that in the face of the inconsistency of the great Other promoted by science and capitalism in the contemporary, that the field of the imaginary is sought as an exit. It was from science that the dimension of the signifier emancipated itself from the specular apprehension, even succeeding in locating it as an achievement, as that which deceives. Science makes the autonomy of the signifier work, thus allowing undisputed advances in the field of knowledge. In the human sphere, however, the attainment of specular experience is still structuring.

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**NOTES**

<sup>1</sup> Free translation of the original passage in portuguese: “É todo e qualquer comportamento de um outro que lhe responda que desempenha aqui o papel de um espelho, e mesmo qualquer traço material que a criança deixe atrás de si, jato ou destroço, no qual ela se contemple como sendo a autora. Por exemplo, o jogo do carretel que Freud observa em seu neto” (OGILVIE, 1987/1991, p.111).

<sup>2</sup> Free translation of the original passage in portuguese: Ao Outro humano, (...), liga-me alguma coisa que é minha qualidade de ser seu semelhante, e daí resulta que o resto *a*, aquele do angustiante *não sei que objeto eu sou*, é essencialmente desconhecido. Há um desconhecimento do que é o *a* na economia de meu desejo de homem, e é por isso que o chamado nível quatro, o do desejo escópico, aquele em que a estrutura do desejo está mais plenamente desenvolvida em sua alienação fundamental, é também, paradoxalmente, o nível em que o objeto *a* é mais mascarado e no qual, em vista disso, o sujeito está mais garantido quanto à angústia. (LACAN, 1962-62/2005, p. 353).

<sup>3</sup> Free translation of the original passage in portuguese: Esse é o verdadeiro sentido, o sentido mais profundo a ser dado ao termo do ‘auto-erotismo’- ou sentir falta de si, (...), de uma ponta à outra. Não é do mundo externo que sentimos falta,(...), mas de nós mesmos (LACAN, 1962-63/2005, p.132).

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