

How can psychoanalysis help philosophical counselling

Robert Orgovan¹

Abstract: The paper propose that philosophical counselling can benefit from psychoanalysis, especially when it comes to the methods of analysis. I focus here on Lacanian psychoanalysis, it being the closest to philosophical counselling methods. In the first part of the paper, I show the main tools this type of psychoanalysis uses, namely, I explore the three Lacanian registers, after which I introduce the concepts of object petite a, Jouissance and the gaze. All these culminate with a discussion about anxiety, its relevance being in the fact that most of the people which come to therapy deal in some way with it. In next part I state my case about the relevance of psychoanalysis for philosophical counselling, most importantly showing that psychoanalysis is made first of all for the analyst, after which the client/patient can benefit also from it. In this case, one of the reasons are psychoanalysis helps the analyst not to put its own problems and traumas (which are most usually done in indirect and unintentional ways) on the patient/client.

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¹West University of Timisoara, Romania, E-mail: ro.orgovan00@e-uvt.ro

Introduction

When it comes to philosophical counselling, the main argument against it is usually regarding the lack of method, or the uncertainty of the way this can work. The same critique is made against psychoanalysis as well. However, it must be noted that several case studies in psychoanalysis show the validity of such an approach as psychology in general tends to follow a more universal, scientific way. This goes to show that psychoanalysis aligns better with a more humanistic approach such as philosophical counselling, which can show that philosophical counselling is not less valuable as a form of therapy.

But apart from this stigma, I can see many similarities between the two, especially when it comes to the way both fields deal with the counselling session. The lack of universality in this case is perhaps the greatest thing, because no patient/client is put after few sessions in a category with a certain medication and sustainment. Alas, the great difference is that psychoanalysis has a well-defined method which blends with singular cases, universal tools which are transformed to help individual cases, a thing which I think philosophical counselling can benefit from. In this paper I want to show that there can be a bridge between psychoanalysis and philosophical counselling, and that the later can benefit from the over 100 years of knowledge gathered by psychoanalysis. In the first part I will try to explore briefly some of the tools used in Lacanian psychoanalysis (I choose this specifically because it is most relevant for our discussion), after which I will state why I think that counselling can benefit from these tools.

Psychoanalytic tools

Imaginary, Symbolic, Real

In Lacanian psychoanalysis, the world is composed of three registers, namely the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real. The Imaginary order includes all the identifications, images or illusions we perceive. More precisely, the Imaginary is not something of the creative realm, but is the register in which the objects are presented to us. The presence of the Imaginary in children is also associated here with the formation of the ego,

and if we go back to Freudian psychoanalysis, the imaginary belongs to the domain of the ego. The function of the Imaginary is to create relationships on the basis of projections and fantasies, having as tetrapod signifiers from which, through the symbolic order, they become symbols or acquire meaning. If the Imaginary order is the one that concerns the world that is shown to us, it is Symbolic order that brings meaning to this shown world. The Symbolic includes the order of language, social structures, rules and laws that give structure to everyday life. As mentioned, the objects and the world presented to us in the Imaginary take the form of signifiers that carry with them a certain meaning or symbol. It should be noted that these signifiers are never stable structures of meaning, as the same signifier can have different meanings or represent different symbols over time and to different persons. The moment of entry into the Symbolic order occurs in the moment of acceptance of language and social rules by the child (which happens through the "Name-of-the-Father"). The Symbolic order can also be identified according to the Freudian register with the Superego, because it is the moment when the child begins to form, among other things, his identity, subjectivity and relationship with those around him.

Of the three registers, the Real is perhaps the most difficult of all to explain. The Imaginary together with the Symbolic are the registers that make up what we call "reality", the Real on the other hand is a register that encompasses things beyond reality (beyond the symbiosis between the Symbolic and the Imaginary registers). The Real is a register of existence that is outside language and symbolization, here lies what is beyond comprehension and is not possible to articulate, thereby disrupting the coherence between the Imaginary and Symbolic registers. Here one can include trauma, the uncanny or anxiety.

Like the other two registers, the Real is also linked to a Freudian idea, namely the id. Compared to the other two registers, the manifestation of the Real happens differently in the pre-symbolic and post-symbolic periods (Fink, 1995). In the pre-symbolic period, the child does not yet conceive of himself as a subject, and the world around him has not yet undergone symbolization, the experiences of his life being raw and taken as such. The post-symbolic Real consists of those things that still remain no symbolized once we have entered the symbolic register, this type of Real being characterized by the limiting dimension of language and

symbolization. The smooth transition from the first moment of the Real to the second happens with (but is not limited to) the mirror stage.

According to Lacan, the mirror stage is a stage in the life of every human being, located somewhere between the ages of 6 and 18 months old, and is described as the moment when a child first identifies its reflection in the mirror (although this way of describing it must be taken metaphorically). Before the mirror stage, the child does not yet conceive of itself as a subject, it does not yet seek things that belong to the symbolic order (e.g. social status) because it cannot yet symbolize with the help of abstractions; in other words, the child is still a “complete” being.

The mirror stage is a moment as important as it is traumatic for the child, once observed as an object in the mirror (the first cause of anxiety) it becomes forever incomplete. By looking in the mirror, although seeing himself as an object for the first time, the child realizes that there is a difference between himself and the other objects around him (e.g. a chair), at which point a moment of non-recognition of the self (*méconnaissance*) occurs. This moment of non-recognition has, like the Real, two different moments, namely before and after the child has entered into language.

Once in language, *méconnaissance* takes on a new form with the introduction of the word “I”. What differs between “I” as an object and the other objects around me is that the “I” has desires. We can say that this “I” is a signifier like the other objects around it, but the major difference is that this “I” can never be fully signified. Thus, Lacan makes a distinction between this pronounced “I” and what is the “ideal I”, the one with which the person identifies, the unified self.

Consequently, the child who has entered the symbolic order becomes both subject and object. It is a subject because his relationship with himself and others is through a network of signifiers, which is why he will always be an incomplete subject. It is also an object when he is perceived by others through what Lacan describes as “the gaze” (a concept explored and evoked in more detail in the part about anxiety).

This incompleteness that every human feels and that ends up creating anxiety, is part of the register of the Real. An analogy I can bring to exemplify what the real is would sound something like this: a lack of an object that we are aware of through its effect on other things. It is like a void or silent background that is continually present and is repressed as

much as possible by the union of the Imaginary and the Symbolic orders. To quote Lacan directly, the Real “must, once again, be apprehended in its experience of rupture, between perception and consciousness, in that no temporal locus, I said, which forces us to posit what Freud calls, in homage to Fechner, *die Idee einer anderer Lokalitat*, the idea of another locality, another space, another scene, the between perception and consciousness” (Lacan, 1998, p.56).

Encountering the real, Real is impossible, the only interaction with the Real being only partial and indirect when there are breaks in the union between the Symbolic and the Imaginary (reality). Once a person has entered the Symbolic order, it creates convenient fictions in order to be able to live everyday life, to fill the gap produced when he identified himself as a subject. This identification covers up the first contacts with the Real. To experience the Real is to destroy these fictions constructed over time and to feel a huge void, a gaping hole in which reality and its symbols crumble. The fact that the Real is like a silent background and ever-present, means that a part of the Real is always experienced through the feeling itself of the possible crumbling of the things (realities) around us. For this reason, we try to avoid it, because we cannot live in a lack of meaning or logic. What happens once a subject has contact with the Real is primarily the shattering of the ideal self. The “ideal I” is one's own perception of the self, it is the person's identification with itself or a mask that the person presents to itself. Through this “ideal I”, each of us tries to project our self in order to be seen by others, but as we have seen, this is impossible at the ideal level. Thus, all the actions we take are influenced both by the Big Other (which is the Symbolic order to which we are assumed) and by the “ideal I” which shows what our own image must be for both self and others so we can bear our own existence. At the same time, the “ideal I” also acts as a shield that keeps out the random and inexplicable in us. Through it, we come to explain (in fictional form) the reality around us at various troubling or incomprehensible times, whether it has direct bearing on us (certain things we do that are questionable but we justify as acceptable) or has indirect implications for us (e.g. blaming the outside world for our own helplessness). In any subject, the encounter with the Real is in a very personal and highly traumatic form. Phobias, obsessions, fetishes and neurosis emerge through the contact with Real. Brutality, rape or disasters

are just some of the ways in which the Real appears within a subject, shattering this “ideal I”. That is also the moment when any kind of fictional stability that exists disappears, such as autonomy and self-control. A person who goes through traumas such as rape or witnessing great disasters cannot explain the things he/she has gone through, because he/she cannot explain itself in the first place, he/she cannot refortify his/her “ideal I”. Thus, any kind of explanation is nonsensical, as language and symbols cannot comprehend the totality behind events. Even if a partial reconstruction or fortification is achieved, the trauma is carried forward by the subject throughout his/her life, so a correlation between trauma and reality can be observed here. Žižek exemplifies the theory of the register of the Real by saying that there are three types of Real. The first type of Real is the real Real, about which he says: “The real Real is the shattering experience of negation (the meteors, monsters and maelstroms of trauma)” (Žižek & Daly, 2004, p.8). The real Real can be described as a return of the repressed and encompasses the anxieties and our fears. The real Real forces us to confront the abyss of our humanity.

The second type of real is the symbolic Real. The symbolic Real can be represented in the form of complicated mathematical calculations, quantum physics, or anything of a very high abstract level. It is a composition of numbers and letters which in themselves have no meaning, but which underlie the structure of reality and which we need to understand the functions of the world around us.

The third type of real is the imaginary Real, which is characterized by something we sense or feel but which cannot be integrated into our understanding of how the world works. An example here is the feeling of love towards a person. There is something beyond perception that is inexplicable and that finally brings about the feeling of love towards a person. Žižek gives as examples here cyberspace or films that bring some transcendence between imagination and reality, such as the Freddie Krueger Nightmares series of films or movies such as Independence Day or Deep Impact that can bring a real social anxiety and a much greater catastrophe of certain events. In this case Žižek specifies how these films brought about an image of orgiastic destruction of New York and led in the collective mind to an intensified trauma (Žižek & Daly, 2004, p.10). Finally, it should be noted that Lacan places the three registers within a Borromean

knot. In this form, he tries to show that all three registers are interconnected, breaking one of the three registers makes the other two undone. The same can be said about the three types of real exemplified by Žižek. In this sense, there is no stronger influence of one over the other, no dominance of any register or absorption. It is for this very reason that a Žižek's completion of the three types of real is possible in the first place.

Object petite a, jouissance and the gaze

Before talking about the concept of anxiety in more detail, I have to put forward some concepts which will help in understanding Lacan. These concepts are: the gaze, Jouissance, desire, object petite and the death drive. The death drive in itself can be a separate paper, so I will not introduce it here, but I must mention it because of the deep connection these other concepts have with it. As we saw in the part on Lacanian registers, all three registers are brought together in the form of the Borromean knot. At the center of all the unions is what Lacan calls the object petite a (linked to the dimension of the Other). The origin of the Other comes from the moment of the mirror stage, in which the child comes to suffer division. At the moment of division, what the child sees in the mirror is not itself but the other (his or her image and imaginary ideal) in the presence of the Other (the parent and language). The child starts realizing in that moment that he is not the only object of desire for the Other, noticing, among other things, that another object of desire for the mother is also the father. The symbolic object held by the father that the child does not hold as an object of desire is the phallus. The phallus here is not the penis itself but the symbolic representation of it; it is what would need to be touched in order to close the gap brought about by the moment of division. It is through this phallus that we reach what would be jouissance. As Lacan explains: "For the phallus is a signifier, a signifier whose function, in the intra-subjective economy of analysis, may lift the veil from the function it served in the mysteries. For it is the signifier that is destined to designate meaning effects as a whole, insofar as the signifier conditions them by its presence as signifier" (Lacan, 2006, p.579).

In reality, the void created by division can never actually be filled, and what we do is just to project illusions onto certain things once restrictions are placed on them, thus becoming the objects of desire. These restrictions are put in place by The Big Other, with the aim of creating

prohibitions against one's own jouissance; a process Lacan calls "castration". It can be seen here that castration in the Lacanian repertoire has different dimensions than Freud's castration. In Freud, castration is linked to the Oedipus complex, the fear of the child losing his penis and the rivalry between child and father, whereas in Lacan, castration is linked to the child's entry into the symbolic register and acceptance of authority through the Name-of-the-Father. All these limitations brought about from the moment of entry into the Symbolic register and submission to The Big Other than create all the illusions of jouissance that man will experience over time, all of which have an object of desire. For this reason, the name "object petite a" denotes precisely an unattainable object of desire.

A good example given by Žižek in various interviews related to jouissance is a particular relationship between a man and his wife (a cold relationship), in which the man also has a mistress. In his spare time, the man thinks how wonderful it would be if the wife would disappear and he could stay with the mistress, but once the wife disappears, the man ends up losing the mistress too. By this example, Žižek is trying to say that people don't actually want to be happy, they don't actually want to get what they want. There is the illusion that the object of pleasure defines everything I want (at the moment) from life, but the moment I get to have it, something is lost and I realize that the initial void is not filled. There must always be an object of desire, and the moment we somehow reach for it, it changes again. What brings satisfaction and ardour to the object of desire is precisely the fantasy, the illusion behind the object itself.

Desire, according to Lacan, originates in (but is not reduced to) the Symbolic register, more precisely, it occurs within language. The reason is that there is an impossibility in language to say what one desires, there is a void between the subject and the Other. As Collete Soler exemplifies this: "For example, you speak with your lover, and the person who listens to you understands your words and sentences, and you can repeat them. You can even explain them. When you speak, you can develop meaning insofar as meaning is always produced between two signifiers. You can communicate that meaning and you can explain meaning, but the constant question for the listener is, what is he getting at? What is he after?" (Soler, 1995, p.50).

The fact that not everything can be expressed through language is also what produces desire, its presence being what "haunts" language.

Lacan would go so far as to say that desire is metonymy, something that appears within speech but is impossible to understand. This is most visible in young children (Soler, 1995). Jouissance is not the same as pleasure, one could say it is a kind of surplus of pleasure or pleasure to the point of pain. Jouissance is something that seems insurmountable, something that demands more and more of us. One can give as an example here gluttony, in the sense of wanting to eat more and more to the point of making oneself sick, or any kind of compulsive behavior which has the same structure.

The internal relationship is like this: there is a void that a person is trying to fill. He creates objects of desire that he tries to obtain all the time in order to fill the void. Once the desire has been satisfied, the jouissance of trying to create a void and to sustain the lack arises. But the jouissance is stopped by the Big Other through various prohibitions, so the person ends up back at the original void, the cycle repeating itself. The strange thing about this cycle, however, is that the desire only appeared once there were restrictions on the jouissance itself, a mythical jouissance that we didn't even have in the first place.

In a world where everyone acts according to their own libido it is a chaotic and dangerous world, and anarchy ultimately prevents these desires from being achieved (as we see throughout history). Paradoxically, the more freedom and selfless action there is (which would imply that satisfaction could be achieved much more directly), the more problematic and difficult the fulfillment of desires is. To cite here Lacan: "If God doesn't exist, the father says, then everything is permitted. Quite evidently, a naive notion, for we analysts know full well that if God doesn't exist. Then nothing at all is permitted any longer" (Lacan, 1991, p.128).

For this reason, it is the Big Other that prevents judgment, that the individual does not act only in accordance with his own libido and obeys, giving away some of this freedom, in order to somehow manage to coexist and make the attainment of these desires possible. Object petite represents the void that we try to fill through the prohibitions of our own judgment, and this void is what makes us create objects of desire in the first place. Object petit is not the object itself. As Sean Homer explains: "What is important to keep in mind here is that the objet is not the object itself but the function of masking the lack" (Homer, 2005, p.88). Here the difference between object of desire and object-cause of desire also becomes clearer,

the former being the object itself that we think about, while the latter being the feelings and possible things we come to feel through the object. Let's return to the broader explanation of why object *petite a* is positioned in the middle of the Borromean knot. It is a result of the relationship between the abyss of the Real, of the nothingness that lies everywhere like a shadow, and the relationship between the Symbolic and the Imaginary, whereby the Imaginary is given the object (the signifier) that contains the pleasure in the form of the symbol behind it (the signified). To be more explicit, within the Symbolic, the big Other is the one who brings the restrictions to *jouissance* that creates desire through the lack brought by castration (as we have seen thus far). The Imaginary contains all our fantasies, where the castrating Other does not intervene in the same manner, and so there is total freedom to create the illusions in which our desires become reality. In the end, the Real is the register where all our fulfilled desires return to; it is the place where desire becomes nothing, becomes a void. Being present in all three registers, object *petite a* can be placed in the middle of the Borromean knot. The idea of the gaze was taken by Lacan from Merleau-Ponty who said that there is a kind of pre-existing gaze which is fixed on us, a kind of eternal gaze of an imaginary entity. Although such an entity does not exist, what it shows is a distinction between look and gaze, and this gaze is a blind and imperceptible one, erased from the world (Quinet, 1995). The difference between Merleau-Ponty and Lacan, however, is that in the case of the former there is a kind of universal all-seer, whereas in the case of the latter there is a pre-existence of what is given to be seen. In other words, there is something given to be seen before seeing in the first place.

What the drive indicates is that there is a gaze that is aimed at the subject and is out of the field of view. It is this gaze that gives us the distinction between what is in the Imaginary register and what belongs to the Real where the drive manifests itself. We can also say that the manifestation of this gaze (through us) has as its source the scopic drive, which has as its source the eyes (or rather the orifices of the eyes). In other words, the sight belongs to the Imaginary register and is the one that gives us the images we see, while the gaze belongs to the Real register and has as its repertory the domain of the invisible and imperceptible. In the case of the former we are dealing with images; in the case of the latter, we are

dealing with drives. Satisfaction is itself paradoxical. There is constantly a tendency of drives towards an infinite repetition, which is impossible and incompatible with life. The tendency to repeat is a tendency that goes beyond the pleasure principle to impossibility. Every drive has as its source what Lacan calls erogenous zones, which are precisely the orifices of the body that are connected to the outside world, and therefore, to the Other. To better understand how the gaze works, a return to Freud and his grammatical deconstruction of the drive is needed. He deconstructs the drive into three elements, namely activity/passive, subject/object and the three forms of the verb (active, passive, reflexive). Alongside these he adds two qualities, namely reversion to its own opposite and the subject's return to itself. The reversion into one's own opposite can be exemplified by the use of the words to torture/to be tortured, and the return of the subject upon itself is made by an act of Gazing upon its own body, both coinciding with the transformation of activity into passivity (Quinet, 1995).

Freud gives as a concrete example, the relation between masochism and sadism, and applying the three linguistic elements to the word torture, the following scheme emerges: from the active he/she tortures to the reflexive he/she tortures him/her and finally to the passive he/she is being tortured. The first declension instantiates masochism, the second sadism, and the last sadomasochism (Quinet, 1995, p.141-142). Important to note in this construction and deconstruction of the drive is that the three elements are always operative within the drive, the drive having to satisfy all three logics simultaneously. Returning to Lacan, he observes that in drive satisfaction, the subject is reduced to the status of object of satisfaction. This can be exemplified within each partial drive by following the same scheme followed above. In the case of the scope drive, it appears under the form: he/she gazes, he/she gazes at it, he/she is gazed at (by the Other) etc. The gaze is closely related to all three Lacanian registers as well as to the object *petite a*. At the Imaginary level, the gaze is the object of the self and the way the person sees himself (which is touched upon in the discussion of the "ideal I"). At the Symbolic level, the gaze is that of the Other on the subject, the subject being reduced to the level of an object; through the gaze of the Other being possible to identify one's own emptiness and pleasures. At the level of the Real, the gaze (as represented at the beginning), is something that goes beyond the Symbolic and brings

with it the anxiety of the subject, bringing with it repressed thoughts and the reminder of one's own limit of understanding.

Anxiety

Lacan posits that behind what uncanny or strange lies is something much worse and more dangerous, something unrepresentable, and that what makes up the image of strangeness is like a frame that keeps the Real at a distance. As an example, brings up the case of "the Wolf Man" in Seminar X. In short, the example refers to the nightmare one of Freud's patients had, about him waking up and looking outside his window, where he sees a tree on which a pair of wolfs were standing. In this dream, the only thing which moves is the window, everything else is static.

Lacan says that the window, is exactly that frame that holds aside something much worse. He proposes that we imagine this like a painting that is put within the window. The function of the painting is to keep us from seeing what is beyond the glass, and in the case of the Wolf Man, the wolves in the tree are the painting and the glass is the frame. To quote Lacan directly: "the dreadful, the shady, the disturbing, everything by which we translate, as best as we can in French the magisterial German Unheimlich, presents itself through little windows. The field of anxiety is situated as something framed" (Lacan, 2014, p.75). Anxiety, he goes on to say, is the appearance of what has already been there, within the familiar.

Lacan's anxiety is a sensation that is very similar to a possible fear or dread. Lacan gives an example in Seminar IX to better illustrate the feeling of anxiety through an imaginative exercise (Lacan, 1961-1962, p.196-197). As far as we know, female praying mantises after sexual intercourse eat the male's head; they do what is called sexual cannibalism. He proposes that we imagine that we are in front of a female praying mantis who is about 3 meters in size, we ourselves wearing a praying mantis mask (costume) around her. The only problem, however, is that we don't know whether the mask we are wearing is that of another female praying mantis or a male, so we don't know whether we will end up being eaten or not. Furthermore, we don't know how this female looks at us and what quality or meaning she attributes to us when she looks at us. What we actually feel (the anxiety) is actually the sensation of desire of the Other upon us (Lacan, 1961-1962, p.202). Even Freud considered that anxiety is dependent on the satisfaction of the Other.

The moment when anxiety sets in is the moment when we do not know what we represent and what the Other wants from us; it is represented by the feeling of excessive proximity to the desire of the Other. Anxiety is not objectless, but the object in question is me, or more precisely, what I can be for the Other. In the case of the imaginative exercise, I do not know what kind of mask I am wearing, so I cannot know how the Other (the praying mantis) sees me, and moreover I do not know who I am through this relationship with the Other. This gaze of the Other brings with it a strong sense of anxiety and renews the reminder that there is a void in me produced at the moment of division. According to the exercise with the praying mantis, the fact that I cannot recognize myself (my subjective position) through the gaze of the Other, because I do not know how she sees me as the object of desire, is what produces a disruption at the level of the Imaginary register. To quote Lacan directly: "anxiety begins from this essential moment when this image is lacking" (Lacan, 1961-1962, p.245). While there is the possibility of asking the other person what they specifically want from us and having them tell us, and then deciding whether or not we agree to do that, there will always be a hidden desire of the other person for us, beyond what we are told and possibly even beyond what the other person imagines they want. For this reason, anxiety is precisely in the Real register, for this blanket of anxiety that gravitates to the moment when the other gazes at you is unsymbolizable.

Anxiety itself has a very well-defined role, and both Freud and Lacan consider that the role of anxiety is to give an alarm signal for a possible danger that may arise. In the case of the example, anxiety arises from knowing that you are in danger in front of the praying mantis and so you must act accordingly. If we go back to the original text from which we started this research paper, we can see that there are many similarities between the uncanny and anxiety. The uncanny is unpredictable, unperceivable and incomprehensible, and we are an object of desire in the face of such a thing without knowing how it sees us. Moments when there are noises in the house, knocks on the door or window at times when we are alone or not waiting for someone, all bring a sense of anxiety, because something unseen but which gazes at us, exists. However, a distinction must be made here between fear and anxiety, because in both cases, the purpose is to give a warning signal, a caution about something, and often,

one comes with the other. The first difference would be that fear is an affect (based on instinct), while anxiety has more of a structural mainspring. The second difference is related to the object to which the two refer. In the case of fear, there is a concrete object identified and named against which fear is felt. In the case of anxiety, it is precisely this lack of identification that produces it; there is an object of anxiety (as explained above), but this object cannot be identified or expressed, as it is more readily in the realm of the Real than the Imaginary or Symbolic (which is in the case of fear). A final difference between the two would be that fear can be rationalized and removed, there being an object behind the fear that can be managed. In the case of anxiety, the non-existence of an object makes confronting and removing it more difficult. Here is some examples to better show the difference between fear and anxiety. We can imagine, in the case of fear that a person comes up to us and pulls out a knife to kill us. What then arises is not anxiety, but fear, fear of being cut, fear of the knife and its wielder. In the case of anxiety, we can give as an example a late-night walk-through narrow streets, or spending a night in a room full of dolls. Although in the latter case one could say that there is an object of anxiety and that would be the doll, in both cases there is more of a sense of uncertainty, of something that gazes at you (through the darkness in the first case, through the inanimate object in the second), there is something that has the potential to do something to you, and the uncertainty and potentiality becomes suffocating. What is felt then is not fear, but anxiety. The moment when we look in the mirror is also a possible moment when anxiety arises, creating the phenomenon of the double when we do not recognize ourselves in the mirror (as can be the case in psychosis). Both in the case of dedublation and in the case of the uncanny, we feel a presence watching us, although it is not perceptible. In response to this anxiety, phobia is one of the possible things that can occur. At least in the case of children, Lacan sees phobia as a process of triangulation, the object of phobia being a response to the dominant proximity of the other. Although phobia is seen by psychologists as problematic and is treated as a problem, its role is a very precise and important one, namely to manage what is more existentially terrifying for the child, creating an image in which to focus all that is too foreign and anxiety-producing in the desire of the Other towards the child. Phobia in this sense is the passage into the imaginary register of

what is in the real register (imagining the real), while the treatment of phobia is the passage from the Imaginary to the Symbolic register. These will be explored in more detail in the last chapter of the paper.

Philosophical counselling with psychoanalytic tools

Through the first part, I wanted to demonstrate that Lacanian psychoanalysis has some concrete tools of interpretation which has been used for a while now in clinical studies and to demolish the stigma that psychoanalysis is purely speculative or it has no real base. As far as philosophical counseling is concerned, I think it could benefit greatly from the tools of psychoanalysis, especially in relation to trauma or something much deeper than ethical dilemmas or pragmatic problems. Both counseling and psychoanalysis deal directly with the mechanisms by which certain decisions are made or certain reactions occur. The downside of counseling is that it does not undertake to pursue this research, in a sense with good reason, for philosophy alone cannot go into the deep structures of the unconscious and unravel them or find certain patterns in order to understand them more clearly. If ever counseling wishes to take this step, I think the closest discipline would be psychoanalysis, both of which have a logical, structural, symbolic and in some cases even philosophical substratum behind them.

Even if counseling will not want to move to adopting certain elements from psychoanalysis, I think any practitioner can draw many pluses from it. As Lacan also said several times, psychoanalysis is not necessarily done for the counselee, but for the counselor, especially so that the counselor does not insert his or her own personal problems in one form or another into the counselee. This specific aspect I think should be more emphasized, not just in the case of philosophical counsellors but also in the case of psychologists or psychotherapists, mainly because I see more and more people which insert (in an indirect and not aware way) their own problems upon the clients.

Psychoanalysis here also helps to read oneself better and to notice in advance certain hidden tendencies or pleasures that the counselor may have without being aware of it. Psychoanalysis can combine very well with existential therapy, especially for the counselor.

Another distinct advantage that psychoanalysis could have in philosophical counselling is the fact that both work in ways different to traditional psychotherapy, where one way or another, patients enter in certain categories, from where emphasis goes on medication and stabilization. In the case of psychoanalysis, every case is singular and unique, and must be handled differently in certain regards. There are indeed universal structures and tools which are used, but they are shaped according to the patient, taking in consideration their place in the symbolic order, their signifiers, the way the real is manifested and in certain cases; emphasis being in the acting out of the patient and the construction of its "ideal I". I can imagine a session of existential therapy using such methods to enter into the deep problems of the individual regarding itself and its relation with the outer world. I do not say to take the psychoanalytic structures as they are, but to construct similar structures, or, take what is useful from them. In the end, more than 100 years of clinical studies can teach us a lot. I must also mention that psychoanalysis is not meant to be done only in sessions, it can be done upon characters, books and movies. Freud used to do such things on literature, Lacan on philosophy books (I strongly recommend here his seminar about love and his analysis on Plato's Symposium), and nowadays Žižek does on movies. These are good way of exercise and study the human mind without direct implication to a patient/client. Before concluding, I think that philosophical counselling with the tools stated above could overcome its fear to deal also with psychotic patients. A psychotic person after it is stabilized is a person like any of us, many of them with deep philosophical thoughts and a great amount of anxiety and distress regarding their own persona. Also, this would be a very important step to show that these people are not dumb or completely irrational, and that this type of counselling is not that limitative as psychologists would think it is.

Conclusion

During this paper, I tried to show the tools psychoanalysis uses and to explain what they are and why they can be relevant. I focused on Lacanian psychoanalysis because it seems to me to be the most relevant and also the closest to the philosophical counselling methods. I started

with the three Lacanian registers to show how the human mind is expressed in this system, after which I explored some relevant concept as build up to the concept of anxiety (which is the most common thing a patient/client can come to a specialist). These concepts are the object petite a (the object of desire), Jouissance and the gaze, all culminating in a discussion about anxiety and how it is seen in psychoanalytic lenses. In the end, I stated my case why psychoanalysis can be relevant for philosophical counselling and considering the first part of the paper, each person can draw its conclusion on the relevance of these few concepts explored briefly. As stated before, psychoanalysis is made first of all for the analyst (at least in Lacan's words) to not put its own problems and traumas on the patient/client, after which it is a tool made for helping the others. This thing can be seen also in the way someone can become a practitioner in the first place, namely, the analyst must go firstly himself through series of psychoanalysis sessions before performing them himself.

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