

Art Expression as a Form of Complaint in Chronic Patients

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to reinvigorate psychoanalytic theory through the development of a close relationship with biology in general and with cognitive neuroscience in particular. It follows that most mental life takes place on the unconscious plane, and can become conscious only as sensory perceptions, such as words and images. The use of the term chronic for patients is due to their lifelong artistic manifestations that can be interpreted by integrative psychoanalysis. At the same time patients may have chronic diseases and thus be psychologically improved by integrative psychoanalysis interpretations. There are examples in art, especially in painting, that illustrate the main idea. Joan Miró, one of the great masters of twentieth-century painting, was certainly intelligent, but some of his paintings, such as, for example, "Flame in Space" and "Naked Woman", represent a very regressive state, even seeming that there was no use of the prefrontal lobe, indispensable for the process of formalization: if the development of this brain area is interrupted, a child will not be able to perform a complete drawing. The same fact seems to have occurred with the Rio de Janeiro painter Frank Schefer, who used only nuances of color; and with the São Paulo painter Henry Victor, who portrayed only children's themes. In the twentieth century, from Cézanne to Mondrian, plastic artists turned to the structuring of composition and, in a formalist stylistic approach, reposed the organization of syntactic elements of the manifestations of the Neolithic cultural universe. The creative work not only enlarges the universe but also enriches and expands man inwardly. If we had, in addition to psychological tests, psychiatric examinations of these artists, we would be able to deepen our knowledge of the causes of their works.

Keywords

“Integrative psychotherapy“, Art therapy, Chronic patients, Interpretations, Painters, Psychoanalysis.

Introduction

Psychoanalysis has a broad spectrum of techniques to intervene in a patient's understanding of himself, starting from mathematics and molecular biology to art expression for example. The use of the term chronic for patients is due to their lifelong artistic manifestations that can be interpreted by integrative psychoanalysis. At the same time patients may have chronic diseases and thus be psychologically improved by integrative psychoanalysis interpretations. The

purpose of this paper is to reinvigorate psychoanalytic theory through the development of a close relationship with biology in general and with cognitive neuroscience in particular.

Hopefully that by joining neuroscience in developing a new and thought-provoking perspective on the mind and its disorders, psychoanalysis will be able to develop with biology and contribute to important studies such as:

- The nature of unconscious mental processes.
- The preconscious, the unconscious, and the prefrontal cortex.
- Psychopharmacology as a treatment combined with psychoanalysis.

Procedural memory or implicit memory is completely unconscious. Constant repetition can transform declarative memory into procedural or primitive memory. Diverse emotional states involve the amygdaloid nucleus; the formation of new motor habits requires the function of the neostriatum; Learning new motor behaviors or coordinated activities depends on the cerebellum. It follows that most mental life takes place on the unconscious plane, and can become conscious only as sensory perceptions, such as words and images.

In addition, significant moments lead to behavioral changes that increase the limit of action of the procedural strategies of being and acting. Moral development can also be developed by procedural means. We point out that people generally do not consciously remember the circumstances under which they assimilated the moral rules that govern their behavior. Such rules are acquired almost automatically, like grammar rules. The individual learns that one stimulus predicts the other. The conditioned stimulus predicts the unconditioned stimulus. Amygdaloid nucleus is important for emotionally charged memory; It coordinates the areas of the thalamus and cerebral cortex responsible for processing sensory stimuli, and the neocortical limbic association areas (prefrontal and cingulate cortex). Stressful experiences during childhood, such as abuse or neglect, cause important behavioral changes.

Stress-induced glucocorticoids cause hypothalamic atrophy. As well as severe and prolonged stress it causes loss of pyramidal cells. Stressful experiences early in life caused by the separation of the child from its mother produce a reaction in the child that is stored primarily in procedural memory. Patients with lesions in the areas of prefrontal association have difficulty in achieving realistic goals, as a result, they often achieve little in life, whose daily activities are diminished, showing the importance of the prefrontal in the individual's behavior [1-3].

The prefrontal represents some aspects of moral judgments. Bach was Bach not only because he had the right genes, but probably also because he began practicing musical skills at a time when his brain was more sensitive. To reject the new scientific knowledge of neuroscience and psychosomatic medicine is to return to Plato's critique: "the epithet of high boots trickery is foolishness (plus confusion of high foolishness) and arrogance of those who do not want to know and progress."

In Amati-Mehler's article on "Creativity", the author begins with a history quoting Cennino Cennini in his "The Book of Art", in which he writes: [...] this is an art that requires fantasy, to discover and form, by means of the hand, things that are not seen, hidden in the shadows of nature, in order to show that what is not, will be" [4].

For Winnicott, creativity consists in being able to maintain during life something that belongs to the childhood experience of "creating the world" [5]. Gaddini suggests that the origin of these initial fantasies is related to primitive mental experience and its specific physical functioning, i.e., they are associated with food, skin

contact, etc. Such initial fantasies (proto-fantasies) are defensive and play a crucial role in psychosomatic illness. The artist, in particular, is engaged in the task of creating a whole world as a means for a symbolic restoration of his inner world and his inner family [6]. Perestrello in his work "The Artist and Psychoanalysis" writes: "The creative work not only enlarges the universe but also enriches and expands man inwardly" [7].

In Salvador Dali, in the painting "Autumn Cannibalism", one can see the genital relationship fantasized by the child's mind: the father eats the mother's breast and the mother devours the penis - hence the impotent or schizophrenic individual feels afraid of the "combined figure", which is always persecutory, out of envy and guilt. In the "Metamorphosis of Narcissus", Dali manages to transform thanatic destructiveness - disease of the neutral, anorexia nervosa and slow suicide - into creativity through a flower, the Narcissus.

According Miller de Paiva [8], through the reflected image of Narcissus, Dali would be seeing, inside him, his evil mother, which prevented him from loving other women. Caravaggio's painting of "Narcissus" seems to confirm this observation, for the figure reflected by the lake is evidently very sad. In "Weaning from the nurturing mobile", the theme chosen by Dali shows how this painter must have felt his own mother: an object without affection or life - very helpful, useful and nurturing, but without reverie. Perhaps, for this reason, and also due to other unconscious fantasies, he had homosexual behavior, like the poet Garcia Lorca, but he was able to make reparation through "a good mother", his wife Gala. His painting "Last Supper" is also a restorative, constructive and liberating way of interpreting the teachings of Christianity, leaving out the discreditor thoughts of the apostles (basically, the fear of being accused by Jesus Christ). René Magritte, in his painting "Bourdoir's Philosophy" and in "Menacing Murderer," allows us to construct an interpretation: we all have tender guilty feelings, motivated by the "murders" we practiced in the molding periods, thanks to our unconscious fantasies. On the other hand, Cândido Portinari, in his impressionist "The Family of Migrants", emphasizes not only the emotional conflict but also the social misery. Dorothea Tanning, in her beautiful painting "Bridal Night", depicts a beautiful woman impregnated with tree branches and united with a vampire monster. This is how many impotent men fantasize about the figure of the "medusa woman," a femme fatale with a toothed vagina and castration powers.

Joan Miró, one of the great masters of twentieth-century painting, was certainly intelligent, but some of his paintings, such as, for example, "Flame in Space" and "Naked Woman", represent a very regressive state, even seeming that there was no use of the prefrontal lobe, indispensable for the process of formalization: if the development of this brain area is interrupted, a child will not be able to perform a complete drawing. The same fact seems to have occurred with the Rio de Janeiro painter Frank Schefer, who used only nuances of color, and with the São Paulo painter Henry Victor, who portrayed only children's themes. Other painters reveal not only their fantasies, but also the unconscious of humanity through the ages.

The regression can manifest itself more intensely, as Oliveira [9] writes: "In the twentieth century, from Cézanne to Mondrian, plastic artists turned to the structuring of composition and, in a formalist stylistic approach, repropose the organization of syntactic elements of the manifestations of the Neolithic cultural universe". In the construction of abstract art, let us remember that the traditional architecture of Japan has much of the style of Mondrian and Neolithic art, even influencing Impressionism. If we had, in addition to psychological tests, psychiatric examinations of these artists, we would be able to deepen our knowledge of the causes of their works.

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In memoriam: Luiz Miller de Paiva.

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