

# Enlightenment and Psychoanalysis: Will We Still Call " *λογος* " Our God?

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This article examines the proposition of “Our God, Logos” written by Freud in “The Future of an Illusion” (1927) in light of the concept of “enlightenment” as understood by Adorno and Horkheimer. We show how some current forms of clinical practice in psychology and psychoanalysis wager on the “disenchantment” of the unconscious as a course for the treatment. In dialogue with critical psychology, we show how, in intending to eliminate the unconscious from the analytical scene, these practices operate in favor of an ideological project that seeks to establish, in the insurrectional place of the unconscious, the politically compromised instance of the ego. We also propose, as a counterpoint, a Lacanian rereading of the Freudian Logos which recalls that the notion of Logos specifically refers to the function of speech [parole] and points to dimension of the “saying” [dire]. Thus, we ask what “(en)lightning” can mean for a psychoanalysis that is critical of a belief in an illuminated reason which would occlude the unconscious and at the height of the forgotten saying behind what one says.

**KEYWORDS**

Psychoanalysis, Critical psychology, Enlightenment, Unconscious

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## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Based<sup>1</sup> on the concept of "Enlightenment" proposed by Adorno and Horkheimer in "Dialectic of Enlightenment" (2002), we reflect on the "unser Gott  $\lambda\sigma\gamma\omicron\zeta$ " (Freud, 1927, p. 89) ("Our God, Logos"), invoked by Freud in *The Future of an Illusion* (1975). Bequeathed by Freud in Greek in the original German writing, the signifier " $\lambda\sigma\gamma\omicron\zeta$ " draws our attention. On the one hand, this God arrives, surprisingly, at the end of a book whose dominant tone is quite antireligious, since it is Freud's intention to highlight the illusory nature of religious beliefs, as we will discuss further in the following sections of this article. In this sense, the invocation of a God may seem contradictory, even if it is the God of the defenders of science. On the other hand, the choice of the word maintained in Greek makes this word enigmatic, especially if we remember the extent of the range of the possible meanings of the word  $\lambda\sigma\gamma\omicron\zeta$  in ancient Greek (reason, intelligence, argument, but also discourse, language, speech...). Provoked by both contradiction and enigma, we start from an inquiry in this article: which God would be this one,  $\lambda\sigma\gamma\omicron\zeta$ , to be invoked by Freud as the God of psychoanalysis? We unfold two possible interpretations of this untranslatable term, (that is to say, this term that "does not cease to (not) be translated" (Cassin, 2018), seeking to put them into question in the contrasting light of Frankfurtian philosophy and Lacanian psychoanalysis.

First, we explore the scope of the possibility of a more traditional translation: God  $\lambda\sigma\gamma\omicron\zeta$  as Reason. From this perspective, we encounter the conceptuality of "Enlightenment", as proposed by Adorno and Horkheimer in "Dialectics of Enlightenment" (2002). The articulation with Frankfurtian philosophers allows the discussion of the theoretical consequences of a possibly "enlightened" reading of the Freudian text, which supports the development of mainstream psychological theories that wager on the "disenchantment" of the unconscious, leading to clinical practices which by intentionally overlooking the historical and material conditions that produce suffering end up individualizing suffering and pathologizing the subject, who must be held responsible for his "dysfunction" and find ways to individually overcome his afflictions through techniques of "adaptation". In dialogue with a critical psychology, we show how this clinical modality, when trying to eliminate the unconscious from the analytical scene, operates in favor of an ideological project that establishes, in the insurrectional space occupied by the unconscious, the politically compromised instance of the ego, as we will show later on. Finally, we propose, as a counterpoint, a Lacanian reading of the Freudian  $\lambda\sigma\gamma\omicron\zeta$  that, without returning to the mythological record criticized by Frankfurtian philosophers, which recalls the notion of  $\lambda\sigma\gamma\omicron\zeta$  as the sender to the function of speech [parole] and discourse in psychoanalysis. This wandering between readings and possible interpretations of the Freudian "Greek bearing gift" leads us, throughout the text, to intertwine four correlated efforts: pointing out several meanings of "criticism"; problematizing the lexical and metaphorical field of "lights" when employed in the field of psychoanalytic theory; examining the history of the relations between reason and unconscious; defending a practice of interpretation by which the unconscious, far from being progressively elucidated by a principle that would be exogenous to it, operates as a cause of his own knowledge, happening like a flash.

## 2 | THE CONCEPT OF ENLIGHTENMENT AND ITS DIALECTICAL RELATION WITH THE MYTH

In 1944 Adorno and Horkheimer wrote *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, a compilation of fragmentary texts that would be published only in 1947, to explain for what reason "mankind, instead of entering a truly human state, is sinking into a new kind of barbarism" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002, p.14). In the text, the apparent contradiction between

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scientific-technological progress and barbarism is dissolved into a complaint of the processual self-destruction of Enlightenment.

Engendered amid the desire to release men from fear, the project of Enlightenment finds the directions of its action in its premises: to drag objects into the illuminated horizon of knowledge – since the idea of a terrain situated beyond that horizon is, itself, the source of anguish. (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002). Its ultimate purpose was to rid men of fear, instituting them into the position of masters, as well as to produce, through technique, ways to instrumentalize nature in order to dominate nature itself as well as men themselves.

However, unlike the Kantian sense of enlightenment as a push to intellectual emancipation, the path of the project of enlightenment is, throughout history, the path to the disenchantment of nature through the dissolution of mythical thought. Thus some forms of knowledge were replaced by others in an attempt to become less prone to superstitious thought – that is to say of explaining nature's destructive forces as manifestations of the will of gods, for instance, the enlightened spirit would stick to the description of facts and the calculation of probabilities – gradually abandoning mythological thought for scientific rationality.

But it was men themselves who gifted nature with a mythological description and its destructive forces a humanized statute in the first place. Through the advent of representation, the myth could offer to its creators the possibility of dealing psychically with their “senseless anxiety” (Freud, 1975, p. 17). Wouldn't this attempt of signification denounce the very movement of the Enlightenment project? In its fundamental wager, that is, that “Humans believe themselves free of fear when there is no longer anything unknown” (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002, p. 11), the path of enlightenment confuses itself with the one of the myths.

However, the half-light of its mythological origin escapes the eyes of the project of enlightenment and end up constituting its fundamental problem: unable to perceive its own roots, it converts itself, in the form of positive science, into a new form of mythology. And, very much like the myth, the project of enlightenment also quickly becomes a doctrine. With the distortion of reason into an instrumentalized and reified state (which we will refer to as Reason, from now on) technical-scientific progress starts to operate exclusively in favor of unveiling new forms of domination, not only of nature but also of men, which reveals its intricate relationship with the expansion of the bourgeois economy. (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002). That is to say the project of enlightenment is operated by capital insofar as it constitutes itself with it, making Reason a useful asset for liberalism, especially considering its potential to produce increasingly efficient ways to explore and dominate the working class. (Souza, 2011).

This nefarious marriage between liberalism and the project of enlightenment not only had effects on the constitution of modern sciences but also influenced the way subjectivity is produced in modernity. Effectively, the price paid by modern men for this dialectical reversal of enlightenment is his own alienation from what he exercises power over, such as a master regarding his slave. Abstracting is a condition for transforming nature into something (re)producibile – after all, the pragmatized thinking of the scientist can only access objects as long as he can also manipulate them. (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002)

### 3 | THE FUTURE OF TWO ILLUSIONS: *λογος* AND ENLIGHTENMENT

What could Adorno and Horkheimer, in their analysis of the dialectical nature of enlightenment, tell us about *The Future of an Illusion*? Perhaps a good starting point for this dialogue would be Freud's disenchanting bet. In his text, Freud expresses a certain concern about the destiny of civilization – after all, according to his hypothesis, its existence and maintenance depend on coercive mechanisms and on the renunciation of instinctual drives of those who compose it. In this scenario, religion could be considered as “the most important item in the psychical inventory of a civilization”

(Freud, 1975, p. 14). But for what reason?

According to Freud (1975), in front of the despair resulting from the failure of civilization to provide complete safety for its creators – that is, to overcome the ultimate threat of death – religious thought emerges symptomatically as a reply to the affliction of uncertainty, diminishing the human sense of helplessness through a system of representations and promises, and offering a good reward for the instinctual renunciation essential for the maintenance of civilization. However, Freud would attribute the statute of illusions to religious thought – mistakes derived directly from and supported by infantile desires – and the diagnosis of “universal obsessive neurosis of humanity” to religion (Freud, 1975, p. 43). After all, the excessive and obsessive prohibitions brought by religion were bound to be dissolved by technique, very much like in the clinical treatment of neurosis, in which the symptom recedes with the surpassing of repression mechanisms through the “results of the rational operation of the intellect” (Freud, 1975, p. 44).

Even though Freud considered that in the fall of religion there would be a possibility of reconciliation between men and civilization, the progression of science would put the maintenance of social repression and coercion mechanisms at peril, representing a risk for culture itself. In order to guarantee a safe transition, younger generations would need to pass through an “education to reality” (Freud, 1975, p. 49) mediated by scientific thought, which would rid mankind of its universal obsessive neurosis. Freud, however, assuming the role of a critic to his own thesis, questions if his belief in science would also not be illusory – or, in other terms, sustained by some sort of desire. While admitting that some of his convictions might indeed be illusions, Freud, in a seemingly contradictory and rather surprising move, enunciates the existence of a deity: “Our God,  $\lambda\sigma\gamma\omicron\zeta$ ” (Freud, 1975, p. 54), who unlike other gods might not be...:

*“...a very almighty one, and he may only be able to fulfil a small part of what his predecessors have promised. If we have to acknowledge this, we shall accept it with resignation. We believe that it is possible for scientific work to gain some knowledge about the reality of the world, by means of which we can increase our power and in accordance with which we can arrange our life. (Freud, 1975, p. 54-55)*

Furthermore,  $\lambda\sigma\gamma\omicron\zeta$  had already proven to withstand the tests imposed by reason and experience through science’s numerous and important successes. Such was Freud’s faith in  $\lambda\sigma\gamma\omicron\zeta$  that even after admitting the great difficulty in avoiding illusions, he would later state, closing his text, that: “No, our science is no illusion. But an illusion it would be to suppose that what science cannot give us we can get elsewhere.” (Freud, 1975, p. 56).

The rather contradictory Greek gift bequeathed by Freud reveals itself as more than just an intriguing choice. It introduces a serious issue to psychoanalysis and the psychological practices derived from it. We wonder to what extent this signifier, left without translation in the original text (Freud, 1927), and historically read as reason, can support the practice of a psychoanalysis and psychological practices of enlightenment, compromised with the disenchantment of the unconscious as an attempt to dominate and increase the subject’s power over his suffering by seemingly illuminating that which refuses to be known. Furthermore, we discuss what are the possible meanings of “enlightening” to a psychoanalysis compromised with rescuing the less common notion of  $\lambda\sigma\gamma\omicron\zeta$  as speech.

#### 4 | CRITICAL PSYCHOLOGY OR A CRITIQUE OF PSYCHOLOGY

In order to establish the psychological science within the ideals of enlightenment, we sustain, based on critical psychology and aided by the Frankfurtian thesis, that clinical psychology, with the intention of understanding and apprehending human behavior, makes a clear movement towards an attempt to enlighten the unconscious through the

pathways of the ego. But before we bring up such points, it is fundamental to briefly establish what we mean by critical psychology. Instead of a univocal field supported by a single epistemological basis, we understand critical psychology as a grouping of several theoretical resources that enables a critique from within psychology itself, based on an investigation of the ideological assumptions and contradictions that inhabit and support mainstream psychological theories, as well as their intimate relationship with the exercise of power. (Parker, 2020; Parker, 2007a).

#### 4.1 | The myth of the enlightened ego

By examining some mainstream clinical principles closely, we managed to establish the ideological and contradictory character of the theory that sustains it. A “not so hard” task, especially for some specific clinical models such as the ego psychology – considering, for instance, Heinz Hartmann’s (1969) approach which sustains the idea of adaptation to reality as a perspective for clinical treatment. However, adapting to reality means adapting to capitalist reality, a fact easily overlooked or intentionally ignored in mainstream psychological clinical practice. This political stance of the clinic leads to the ideological assumption that capitalism is reality, and that there is no other possible direction other than adapting to it, successfully naturalizing the conditions of exploitation and oppression which structure capitalist reality (Fisher, 2020; Parker, 2007c). This naturalized conception of capitalism allied to the widely spread understanding of subjectivity as one’s “internal world” also often leads to the individualization of suffering and to a psychologization of any possibility of political action, as if “the historical materialist critique of political economy itself served to plug a ‘gap’ or ‘lack’ in the subject”, as criticized by Parker (2007b, p. 9).

Furthermore, Hartmann (1969) suggests that the analytical process should be responsible for making known everything that escapes the “rational control of the ego” (p. 22), since the ego itself would be “a specific organ of adaptation and organization” (p. 80), suppressing everything that belongs to the order of the unconscious and keeping the “irrational instinctual impulses” (p. 49) under control. He even proposes an equivalence between adaptation and health:

*“There is no doubt that there is a positive correlation between rational conduct and adapted conduct, between rational and healthy conduct, and that these correlations have been accepted for a long time”*  
(Hartmann, 1969, p. 53).

Reclaiming the fundamental wager of the enlightenment as its own, ego psychology bestows well-defined outlines to its clinical objectives: an enlightening expedition in the cunning terrains of the unconscious, sustained only by the assumption that by making known its mysterious motivations, it would release the subject from its determinations. Even though ego psychology holds a special place in our critique because of its roots in psychoanalytical theory, it is not the only popular adaptative endeavor amongst clinical psychologists. Radical behaviorism created by Burrhus F. Skinner, for instance, seems to be the proper application of the Popperian positivistic project in the field of psychology. Although Skinner does not claim that bringing up unconscious processes (or unperceived behaviors, if you will) to the illuminated boundaries of consciousness would be a path to a satisfactory treatment, radical behaviorism wagers heavily on adaptative processes such as self-control strategies or, rather, the control of unwanted behaviors through the manipulation of contingencies by the therapist:

*“The collection of facts [of the patient’s behavior] is only the first step in a scientific analysis. Demonstrating functional relationships [between such behaviors] is the second. Whenever the independent variables are under control, these relations lead directly to the control of the dependent variable. In the present case,*

*control means therapy" (Skinner, 2003, p. 401, emphasis added).*

The basic assumption is that if the behavior was acquired through contingencies of reinforcement, it can also be extinguished or shaped by the action of other external stimuli capable of altering these contingencies. By having control over the determinations of the client's behavior, the therapist can act as a controlling agent, capable of change it according to the client's demand and to his own behavioral repertoire.

By defining behavior as the result of environmental contingencies of reinforcement and individual learning and conditioning history, behaviourism, despite its said disregard for "consciousness", actively declines the hypothesis of the unconscious and reinforces the notion of an undivided subject, losing sight of class conflicts and the historical conditions that produce suffering, focusing, instead, in particular strategies of adaptation. Furthermore, as written by Parker (2007c) in regard to Martin-Baró's concerns about psychology and colonialism, treating "psychological problems" with a strictly objective approach was to intentionally overlook the capacity of human beings to be reflexive agents, and that it was necessary to "engage in subjective 'commitment' to deideologisation' in order to give people back the knowledge that had been stolen from them" (p. 161) insofar as "what we know about the world affects what it is possible to do in it" (p. 162).

A similar critique can be extended to other forms of psychotherapy such as the ones that focus on the expansion of awareness, represented mainly by Carl Rogers's Person-Centered Therapy. According to his book *Becoming a Person* (2017), Rogers' clinical practice goals consist of suppressing negative attitudes and increasing positive attitudes towards the client's self, as well as trying to provoke a state of genuine affection and feeling of total unity (Rogers, 2017). The first stage of Person-Centered Therapy consists of allowing the organism to experience sensations and emotions that could not be perceived previously so that the client increases his self-awareness. By the end of this process, a true identification of the client's consciousness to his experience is established by transforming the subject into what he "truly" is, enabling an integral experience of full awareness, that is, a state of consciousness that would not cause any distortions to the actual experience – the client experiences the sensation of being a "complete human organism" capable of controlling itself. All of this is achieved through the therapist's facilitation based on empathic understanding. This assumes that the therapist accurately understands what has been experienced by the client and is then able to transmit this understanding back to him, bringing about the experience of awareness. Hence why so often Rogerian interventions in psychotherapy are structurally similar to a paraphrase of the client's speech (Rogers, 2017).

It is important to note that Rogers (2017) sometimes substitutes terms such as "subject", "human being" or "individual" for "organism." According to him, the reason behind this is that the latter would generate some sort of an approximation between the category of the 'subject' and its biological state. The organism however is not merely driven by instinct unlike other animals, as it is defined by the attribute of rationality, differing from other species towards a more complex state of existence.

Still in the field of humanistic psychology, Fritz Perls's Gestalt-Therapy is another form of psychotherapeutic intervention motivated by the enlightenment project values. In his book *Ego, Hunger and Aggression: A revision of Freud's theory and method* (2002), Perls seems interested in the amplification of the conscious functions and in bringing back the sense of self to those who submit to his technique. According to him, this approach "Far from making us more and more selfish (...), will make us more understanding and objective" (Perls, 2002, p. 265). Gestalt-Therapy's task, therefore, is to re-establish the analyst's contact with his patient's self.

In another book entitled *Gestalt-Therapy*, published in 1951 in co-authorship with two other systematizes of his therapeutic model, Perls, considering that Freud's great merit was to build a consistent theory of the organism in relation to the environment, investigates such a relationship as one of the pillars of gestalt-therapy. According

to him, the organism would receive care and communication, due to the “organic social nature of certain animals” (Perls et al., 1997, p. 178, our translation). In harsh criticism of the notion of the unconscious, Perls refers to the general state of psychology and psychiatry as a “fetish for the unknown” (Perls et al., 1997, p. 33, our translation), and proposes, beginning from the idea that the self is always genuine whenever situated in the present. He also suggests that psychotherapy should promote a shift in the client’s mental state by focusing on the amplification of perception, in such a way that the client gets in touch with his present experience and perceives himself as a whole, ultimately magnifying his state of awareness.

All in all, awareness expansion therapies and humanistic psychology in general work as an attempt to enlighten that which could not be perceived by the subject, betting on conscious and individual effort as a way to the cure. By following this path, humanistic psychology also fails to recognize historical and social conditions that produce suffering, shifting the focus to the malfunctioning individual, holding the subject responsible for his sorrow and subjectivizing collective matters.

## 4.2 | Psychology, ideology, liberalism

Considering that the current mainstream models of psychotherapy correspond or are inspired by the models mentioned above, it is not too difficult to notice the intricate relationship between psychology – especially in its clinical aspect – and the enlightened tradition. In complete agreement with the Frankfurtian diagnosis bequeathed by Adorno and Horkheimer, such practices are ideologically built around the idea of shedding light upon the unknown to, as a direct consequence, strengthen one’s ego and its relationship with reality.

Resuming the notion of critical psychology previously exposed, it is important to bear in mind the fact that to guarantee the effectiveness of economic models it is also necessary to manufacture a model of men and psychology that, in accordance with the assumptions of such model, would produce subjects perfectly fit for its functioning. That is to say that economic models would not only dictate economic relations, but also produce certain forms of rationality, behavioral patterns and specific ways to attain satisfaction as well as to feel satisfied (Pavón-Cuellar, 2017), transforming them into much more than mere models of economical management, but rather models of subjectivity management. (Safatle, Silva Junior & Dunker, 2021; Parker, 2007c).

Let us remember that liberalism postulates, just as psychology, its own conception of the subject, which reinforces its ideology. It is not by accident that Stuart Mill (1974) defines the economy as the science that deals with the “moral and psychological laws of the production and distribution of wealth” (p. 298, our translation). For the same reason, Pavón-Cuellar (2017) points out that other major authors within the liberal conceptual base, such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and David Hume define the human being as naturally and intrinsically competitive, individualistic and selfish, establishing an economic rationality so great that Herbert Spencer would name the human as hedonistic and, according to Safatle, Silva Junior & Dunker (2021), Adam Smith would theorize that humans are always seeking the greatest pleasures “at the lowest cost”. Based on the ideological assumption that such characteristics would be descriptive of some sort of intrinsic human nature, liberalism and neoliberalism established the illusion of an ego that would be aligned with such economic values, that is, a model of subjectivity “naturally” congruent with liberal ideals. It is as if “everything fits too well (...) how not to be suspicious of such a perfect image?” (Pavón-Cuellar, 2019, p. 29, our translation)

This perfect fit is no mere coincidence. Mainstream psychology traditionally fills the role of a discipline fundamentally guided towards attempts to generate adaptation and expand the consciousness, that is, illuminate whatever escapes from egoic control. Considering this, clinical psychology reclaims the proposal of a subject conscious of itself – a category deemed extremely dear to the bourgeois philosophical tradition (Althusser, 1984) – as mentioned

above. It would not be absurd to say that mainstream psychology functions mainly as a way of establishing and maintaining neoliberal subjectivity, which is necessary to sustain current models of production and neoliberal ideology.

Furthermore, when considering the analytical understanding that the ego is an instance of synthesis and so aims to suppress any representation that differs from itself, we conclude that the task of traditional psychology corresponds, in the end, to cast into the shadow everything that differs from the liberal conception of men, as well as to cast light into the very core of the subject's alienation, thus functioning as an ideological veil. Mainstream clinical psychology, currently, functions as the application of such project. For these reasons, and as a counterpoint to this, Lacan says that:

*"One trains analysts so that they are subjects in whom the ego is absent. That is the ideal of analysis, which, of course, remains virtual. There is never a subject without an ego, a fully realized subject, but that in fact is what one must aim to obtain from the subject in analyses"* (Lacan, 1991, p. 246)

This quote can be interpreted as an attempt to withdraw from the analytical scene the instance responsible for subjective alienation in capitalist economy, and that does not go without radical political implications. As Safatle (2020) reminds us:

*"...the clinic developed by Lacan would put into operation processes and devices of strong political resonance (...) operated on a libidinal basis that pushed us out of the relations of submission" (p. 162, our translation).*

## 5 | LOGOS, OUR GOD OF SPEECH - LACANIAN PERSPECTIVES

### 5.1 | "Critical" Lacan: contextualization elements and meanings of criticism

The critique of ego psychology, whose challenges in terms of political struggles for emancipation were mentioned above, was one of the priorities of Jacques Lacan's theoretical production from the early 1950s. Briefly resuming this historic fact of psychoanalysis very well examined by the philosopher and psychoanalyst Clotilde Leguil in the chapter "La critique de l'ego" ["The criticism of the ego"] of her essay *Sartre avec Lacan* (2012), we highlight some points which allow us to glimpse the critical scope of the Lacanian proposal, in a sense of criticism that we define in a more specific way from now on. First, it is necessary to recall the value of Lacan's participation in the 1950s structuralist fever. It was not only a question of arousing agitation and unease within the intellectual comfort of the psychoanalytic scene of its time, but also and above all provoking clinicians by denouncing and combating the "deterioration of analytical discourse" (Lacan apud Leguil, 2012, p. 86, our translation). Returning to Claudia Lemos's words, we could say that the Lacanian criticism of the ego in the 1950s was a first way to "wake up the dormant discourses" (Lemos, 2009, p. 215).

Thus, both in 1953 in the text "Function and field of speech and language in the psychoanalysis" (with the emphasis given to speech and the recognition of the unconscious structured as a language) and in 1960 with "Subversion of the subject and dialectic of desire in the Freudian unconscious" (with the emphasis given to the irreducible eccentricity of desire), ego psychology was in Lacan's crosshair, and becomes the focus of his battle for the rescue of the specificity of the psychoanalysis object: the unconscious as refuse (*Verdrängung*), whose disappearance in the discourse of the post-Freudians of the early 1950s refers, very symptomatically, to a silencing of the unconscious in the clinic. If on the side of psychoanalytic discourse one no longer speaks of the unconscious, this is the consequence



of an unconscious that, in the clinic, no longer speaks or, more precisely, of an unconscious that speaks but dies in silence, in the absence of properly analytical listening. This, which was especially significant in the context of the early fifties – and pushed Lacan to the production of "a distinction between the subject and the ego, [...] to purify the unconscious of all that is not him, and restore his Freudian sense" (Leguil, 2012, p. 87, our underscores), continues to provoke us in 2021. A criticism, in the sense of the purification evoked by Leguil – we understand: a passage to the sieve, a filtering that works as screening – remains absolutely necessary in a context of vigorous return of the pseudo-Freudian imperative of adaptation to the principle of reality, particularly strong in times of economic, political and sanitary crisis.

With this criticism, it was for Lacan, and it is still for us, a matter of preventing ego psychology's structural confusion between "the orthopedic function of the ego and the symbolic function of the subject" (Leguil, 2012, p. 89), refusing any attempt to avoid the psychoanalyst's distress – and, more generally, of a subject's clinic – to an effort to make the human being "walk right". We can say, in this sense, that psychoanalysis holds a critical potential which is consubstantial to its praxis. By welcoming a subject who is not going very well, that is, who does not walk right, whose crippling steps do not fit in the path drawn beforehand by the norms enforced in a certain society, psychoanalysis, in the wake of Freud's *Beyond the Principle of Pleasure* or *The Malaise in Civilization* and the Lacan of Seminar XI, is proposed as a practice of the slip-up. To wander. To walk crooked. To screw up. Its wobbly and paradoxical causality could be formulated by: "Il n'y a de cause que de ce qui cloche" (Lacan, 1973, p. 25, translated by us as: there is cause only of/from which goes wrong, limping, hobbling). In this more rigorously psychoanalytic perspective, "limping", dis-orthopedic and refractory to the paths previously traced, our initial question ricochets: can we still invoke, for psychoanalysis, a God Logos, which could potentially approximate psychoanalysis to an enlightened practice? And regarding the horizon of enlightenment and/or illumination, what kind of light can be cast on the unconscious? There, the question of (in)translation that mobilized us in this article finds a fundamental question of psychoanalytic praxis: that of psychoanalytic interpretation and its... illuminating scope?

## 5.2 | "Unconscious": the Freudian bringing to light

The previous movement of our reflection allowed us to establish the character both mythical and ideological of the various theories of refuse suppression. As if the unconscious constituted a dark zone which would be enough to explore with the right lamp (that of the enlightened analyst chimeric) so that, lighted and instructed, the shadow would withdraw once and for all! In the antipodes of this conception dazzled by its own fatuity, we claim that the unconscious, turbulent and irreducible, is not "enlightenable", for it is itself that illuminates.

Here, it is necessary to specify that the metaphor of the "clarification" of the unconscious, by tipping over, cannot be simply inverted. As examined by Lery-Lachaume (?) in an article which aimed to highlight the gulf between the hermeneutic approach and the ethical approach of the unconscious from the Lacanian perspective, as firm as the refusal of the phantasmatic fabulation of enlightenment there is a refusal "of the confused assimilation of the question of the unconscious to the vocabulary of shadow or darkness". We shall not substitute the brilliant "God of Reason" for a dark "God of Ignorance", but rather examine how psychoanalysis operates in light of a special form of rationality, provided by the clearness of the unconscious itself. This is particularly clear if we remember the text "Position of the unconscious," in which Lacan (1960) makes the next provocation:

*"To say that the unconscious is not for Freud what is called elsewhere would add little, if we did not hear what we mean: that the unconscious before Freud is not, quite simply. This is because it does not denominate anything worth more as an object, or anything which would deserve us to give it more existence, than*

*what we would define by situating it in the in-dark [in-noir]. The unconscious before Freud is nothing more consistent than this in-dark, that is, the set of what would be ordered in the various senses of the word "dark", refusing the attribute (or virtue) of the darkness [noirceur] (physical or moral)" (1960, p. 830 our translation).*

Here, to circumscribe his conception of the unconscious – which does not go without a position from the unconscious, that is, an ethical standpoint – the psychoanalyst restricts the field of the unconscious to the Freudian discovery. Faithful to the famous statement formulated at the opening of his first seminar, according to which "Freudian discovery is the rediscovery, in an abandoned field, of reason" (Lacan, 1953, our translation), Lacan produces a distinction between the unconscious before Freud, so little determined that it can be denied an existence, and the unconscious after Freud which, denominated, explored, and taken as an analytical object, becomes the unconscious. Freud, by the constant effort of definition and by the act of denominating, has constituted as "unconscious" what it was not, otherwise what Lacan calls in a very enigmatic (and untranslatable) way: the "*in-noir*". Here are a few words about this thought-provoking neologism. By the prefix "in-", a type of proximity to the "unconscious" (inconsistent) seems to be enunciated, disappointed soon after with the addition of a "-noir" far from "-conscious". In addition, the "in-" of the French resonates with the indefinite article "un" ("a"; "an"), but also with the pronoun ("one"). Finally, "noir" (generally translated by "black", but we preferred "dark"), also and mainly refers to "noirceur", that is, in English, to "darkness". In sum, before Freud, there was no unconscious, or not "the unconscious", but there was something like "*one-dark*": an indistinct, shady and gloomy darkness within which the reason was shipwrecked, drowned<sup>2</sup>. Does that mean that once this light is released by Freud the consistency of the unconscious is guaranteed? We respond by the negative, stating, following Lacan of the "Discourse of Roma", that such a posture of untangled and quiet objectification is a way in which the subject "tries to steal his responsibility" (Lacan, 1953). If it is true that both in clinical and psychoanalytic theory "it is not a question of moving from an unconscious level, immersed in obscurity, to the conscious level, a place of clarity, through who knows what mysterious elevator" (perfect definition of the Enlightenment illusion – Lacan), it is because "[i]t is not about [...] passing to consciousness, but of passing to talk, despite those who are obstinate in remaining closed to it" (Lacan, 1953 p. 146, our translation).

Could this "passage" not constitute, for our little "theology of psychoanalysis", the index of another way of translating the Freudian God Logos? Far from calling on the reader to trust in the progress of psychoanalytic science, Freud would instead invite us to bet on the analysis and talking (the speech of those who do analysis) and on its counterpart, a certain listening – because "it is necessary that the speech be heard by someone there where it could not even be read by anyone" (Lacan, 1953 p. 146, our translation)?

### 5.3 | From the light on the unconscious to the lights of the unconscious: Oh my God (of Speech)!

The foundation of psychoanalysis, as we have just seen, functions as a cut, as a lightning bolt (éclair). Freud, by shining light on the kind of pre-unconscious that Lacan called "one-dark", gave light and birth to the unconscious. With this, the set of heterogeneous elements so called Freudian lapsus (Freudian slips and mistakes), witticisms and, to some extent also dreams, gained an unprecedented luminosity. The previously nebulous and undifferentiated became the object of interpretation. This insight (éclairage) was given on the one hand by the delineation-objectification of the unconscious, through Freud's attentive and questioning posture and, on the other hand, by the denomination, that is, giving the

<sup>2</sup>Remembering that in- as prefix evokes both the "without", in this case, something of the order of inconsistency, and the "into", something that refers to an inclusion/submersion "inside".

anonymous one-dark its famous name of baptism: "unconscious". In other words, the birth of psychoanalysis, this speaking practice also named the "talking cure", is tributary since its genesis of an act of speech. As a rationalizing movement accompanying the psychoanalytic experience, the Logos depends on a speech event.

At this point, a question arises. Is the Freudian logophany – that is, the fact that Freud spoke about the "unconscious" – enough to hedge the psychoanalysts against the return of darkness and, inextricably, from the return to the old obscure reflexes in their practice? Leaving the unconscious "on" requires considerable effort from analysts and analysts. This effort is in the line with the ethics of psychoanalysis, which requires a constant actualization of the founding "act of speech" of psychoanalysis. The thesis that we develop now is as follows: with this actualization of the unconscious, we try at the same time to produce a theoretical elaboration capable of transmitting this "initial light" launched by Freud and also to support a clinic of this-that-passes-to-talk. It is this second point that we would finally like to emphasize, returning now to our previous statement: that the unconscious is not "enlightenable", for it is itself that illuminates.

Let us turn, to this end, to the phenomenology of the analytic session and, more logically, to the path of an analytical cure. What happens in an analysis but precisely enlightening moments, articulated in various modalities of the passage to speech? These times of illumination, however, have nothing to do with the light of the supposed "Enlightenment", but rather with "singular sparkles in the verve of confession" (Lacan, 1964, p. 231, our translation, our underscore), that is, moments of sound scintillation in which part of the shadow dissipates, sporadically illuminating this or that specific point of the subject's symptom. "Illuminate", in this sense, must be understood in a precise way, as a fleeting and instantaneous "give a glimpse", whose model is the "flash" of the Freudian Wit. Now, such praxis – which we propose to call the flash of lightning clinic – supposes a specific way of interpreting supported by a type of listening precisely oriented to what, in talking, equivocates, makes a gap, a hole. There, the criticism of the pretensions of the enlightened unconscious defenders must go through a criticism of the hermeneutic usurpation of psychoanalysis, and defend a non-hermeneutic theory of psychoanalytic interpretation according to which:

*The interpretation is aimed at a constitutive discontinuity induced by the effects of the signifier, [only able to make] the desire sound as the truth of the subject, [which] arises as an ecstasy of the signifier, shining in the speech as an articulation of signifiers (Lery-Lachaume, 2016, p. 81, our translation).*

*The interpretation is not [...] a restitution of a hidden meaning, or even the constitution of a new meaning; it is an intervention of the analyst who comes to chant the backflow of the dimension of nonsense (and thus the operation of the signifier) in the discourse. And what matters in saying it is not so much 'what is said in saying,' [ce qui est dit dans le dire] [...] that the 'said saying' [le dire dit] in a way; or better yet: to say it [le dire], in the double meaning of the statement and the act of enunciation that liberates,' like a gleam (Lery-Lachaume, 2016, p. 79, our translation).*

We see here the ramifications of analytical lightning: First, the unconscious talks and can occasionally be said; Second, psychoanalytic listening provides, in a transference situation, a sound box (a speaker!) for the unconscious, Finally, the interpretation, which is the "critical" responsibility of the analyst's glimpse, suspends the enunciation, catching in the net of the speech a detail that will only make sense in the only-after [après-coup] of that dazzling disruption time. "Waking up the dormant discourses" (Lemos, 2009, p. 215), in a second and thundering sense of the awakening.

These clarifications allow us to listen in a renewed way to the Lacanian formulation of the unconscious causality analyzed above: "Il n'y a de cause que de ce qui cloche" (Lacan, 1973, p. 25): what causes, it is what sounds

off. These words invite us, moreover, to point to the theoretical need for a rearticulation of "knowledge" as a category, fundamental in the reflection that has occupied us so far. On this subject, we leave the final word to Lacan, ironically critical and instigating, which can guide both our making theory (choice of the modalities of transmission) and our clinical practice (response to the actuality of the unconscious):

*It is an invention of pedagogues, that "knowledge is acquired by the sweat of his forehead", we will soon be told, as if it were necessarily correlated with the oil of our vigils. With good electric lighting, we dispense with it! But I ask you: have you ever... I don't say "learned" because learning is a terrible thing, you have to go through all the bullshit of those who explain things to you, and that's painful to raise... but isn't knowing something always something that happens in a flash?" (Lacan, 1968, p. 99, our translation)*

## 6 | CONCLUSION

Will we still call "λαγοζ" our God? No reason not to, but under the condition that the dimensions of contradiction, enigma, and untranslatability of this God are reaffirmed. (Un)guided by the multiple senses of "λαγοζ", we tried to reflect on the nature of the lights that sparkle when we deal with the unconscious. At first, we resume the concept of Enlightenment bequeathed by Adorno and Horkheimer (2002) as well as the reformulated notion of Reason resulting from its dialectical relationship with the myth to finally introduce a discussion of the contradictions that accompany Freud's paradoxical invocation of λαγοζ and the implications that its possible translations impose to psychoanalysis. On the one hand, the Enlightened reading of the Freudian leap of faith which by instituting a God Reason opens the way for the development of the current mainstream clinical practices that operate an attempt to disenchant the unconscious, removing it from the analytical scene. These practices seem to find their strength in the bourgeois notion of individual, conscious of itself under the aegis of the ego, and often culminate in adaptative practices. On the other hand, the lightening actualization of the God λαγοζ considered as an event, led us to support the thesis according to which, in psychoanalytical scope, there is only illumination of what highlights. This highlighting involves a kind of operative trinity which is, in fact, a triple happening: talking (of the analysant), listening (of the analyst), interpretation (of the unconscious). Talking... (say it...) saying caught (!). And, as Lacan announced on December 18, 1973: "if (the) saying [le dire] is an event, Lord knows what consequences it can have!" (Lacan, 1973, p. 28, our translation)

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