

Anorexia: the risk of a suicidal nihilism to survive in adolescence

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Abstract

Death as what makes possible the anorexic subject's referring to other, in the happened admission of the unsubstantiality of what in which he previously pleasing, strove himself: the assurance of the Other's *jouissance* (Lacan J., 1973). The «will of nothingness [...] turned against the most basic life's presuppositions» (Nietzsche, 1887) imposes itself in the dislike for human and corporeal, as what allows a feeling of uniqueness and extraordinariness that soon reveals the subject as a prisoner of the conformity and homogeneity of an “uniform- body” which springs the reality of its sacrifice from the pain's need in order to build a memory.

Key-words: anorexia, suicidal nihilis, adolescence , lacanian perspective

During the physical and mental period of adolescence, the individual experiences those biological-body changes that will lead his own infantile sexual life to its final structuring.

The transition from childhood to adulthood involves the discovery, conquest and loss putting into action «one among the most painful psychical performances of puberty», the detachment from the authority of parents from whose he has depended on and he depends, but to whom it is now facing the challenge for the claim to autonomy which will mark «the civil progress, of the new with the old generation» (Freud, 1905).

In the experience of inconsistency and disbelief for the collapse of the father authority, the teenager failing to "family duty" is alone facing the guilt of which the parents' complex is bearer (Freud, 1910), and the guilt linked to the possibility of winning himself if he didn't manage to complete this betrayal. The "duty to be lived" is the complaint of a period of the existence for which it's not be sought a cure but it is sought ripening, and where anorexia finds time and space to be structured as a tragic possibility for the subject to "challenge" the family Other «in an environment where dependence is met and which you can count it is met» (Winnicott, 1965 a), in the desperate attempt to improve the fortunes of a real Self threatened with annihilation by a False Self that gave itself up on a basis of obligingness, it didn't accomplish its defensive function but it was assumed as real.

So, the only possible defence for the subject to cope with the already occurred catastrophe of a violation for which the only possible destiny for False Self is to organize suicide, takes place in the not violent suicide (Lacan, 1938) perpetuated by anorexic consumption: in fact it is a typical issue of adolescence the time in which the individual acknowledges that the legitimacy of a compromise - solution can not

be permitted in front of the stake is so too high that the True Self cancels the complacent Self (Winnicott, 1965b).

By taking the anorexic position, obligingness as the designed possibility to preserve themselves from guilt and to protect others from disappointment, is abandoned by the person that realized the bankruptcy nature to be in blending significant, concretises a primary experience of autonomy in the constriction of the Other from whom has depended, to depend on attentive blackmail implied in the choice of being disappeared (Lacan, 1957a) pursuing like this, the need and the commission of his existential question, assuming a pathology that takes place only in devastation, as a result of a forged filiation in which the construction of the environment has been working to support lie (Lacan, 1957b).

«The ardour with which we desire life and the heat with which we hurl ourselves upon its natural obstacle, the pain» - Schopenhauer wrote in Libro IV of *Il mondo come volontà e rappresentazione* (1819) - «drive us to destroy ourselves; the individual will prefer to put down into body its visible manifestation, rather than it let itself break by suffering»: in the denial's abyss in which the anorexic subject founds and let himself down, he doesn't give up the "wanting to live" but "living". Inanition and inertia to which he abandons himself, denounce the fit of power's will in the occurred choice to join a "suicidal nihilism" to which succumb in the devious nature with which it involved - without he didn't realize it - the failing of a method able to ratify the line between life and death.

By taking on the anorexic position, in fact they assist in the real to the subject's *nirvanizzazione*, in which existence - simplified and reduced to a mere observance of a methodical practice - certifies through the body's mineralization (Recalcati, 2000) the completion of a not symbolic but real devitalization in which subject subdued to his passion for annihilation, though assailed by «fear "to be not human" and by the terror "to stop living"» (Bruch, 1978) since «bodies without affinity, without a tendency, or- as Jakob Böhme, would say - without a desire, without a passion, do not exist» (Schopenhauer, 1819), he can not only continue to die realizing paradoxically what he fears in death, in other words the individual's destruction, because he uses in what Lasegue describes as «power of inertia», a terrible manipulative power through which he can operate into perversion, the blackmail manoeuvre to afflict the Other; using body in psychosis, as an hostage, as a barrier- body to defend himself from the Other or at last - being disappeared - he makes himself object of the Other's lack only to be missed by him (Recalcati, 2002).

So, the subject suffering the problem of his meaning, reveals the inability to give rise to the fundamental metaphysical question on which humanity directs its own history and for which the absence of an answer to "the all-embracing why" opens the doubt's way about the type of existence lived: in the anorexic refusal which says «no on the action's level» (Lacan, 1957 a), the subject in fact operates the denial of any answer because none is able to meet the infinite feature of his question in front of the family answer can only reveal itself as impotent.

Then, death reveals itself in its being what makes possible the anorexic subject's referring to other, in the happened admission of the unsubstantiality of what in

which he previously pleasing, strove himself: assuring the Other's *jouissance*, of the Other that "doesn't lack nothing" and in whose *jouissance* «it isn't the love's sign» (Lacan, 1973). The will to live to which is addressed indifference, reveals itself vain: in the dislike for human and corporeal, it's indeed clear «a will of nothingness [...] turned against the most basic life's presuppositions, and it is yet and it remains a will!» (Nietzsche, 1887) which identifies in the affirmation of its own emaciated body's image and in the waiver of the life's pleasures, the aesthetic and moral way through which realize dying of inaction, «the passage into the inane vacuum of nothingness» (Schopenhauer, 1819).

So, the assumption of the anorexic position seems to offer to the subject- through the replacement according to a perverse mode of functioning, of the Ideal's absence with the *jouissance*'s object of his own skinny body's image reflected in the mirror that dazes and exceeds banishing him "to become mummified"- a temporary satisfaction of the emerged needs with the subject's entry into adolescence: «To Avoid the false solution; To Feel real or bearing to not feeling at all; To Challenge» throwing out to society such a provocation able to make clear its antagonism and to which associate his own (Winnicott, 1965 a). Indeed, the subject alienated in a symptom's identification, lacks space for questioning himself about the meaning of this suffering will soon revealed not in a primary feature of a modality that creates a feeling of uniqueness and extraordinariness, but in the adhesiveness to an uniform-body's conformity and homogeneity in which he is forced and he experiences the paradoxicality of a *jouissance* «neither of the profit's order nor of the good's one» (Recalcati, 2001) which makes suffering, and of a suffering which pleases and for which the meaning of "taking care of himself" into "hurting himself" is produced and

protected.

In this lack of meaning, the anorexic subject's will to destroy himself is a "will of nothingness" where the sacrifice's daily rituality made putting pathology into practice, takes its origins in the pain's need in order to build a memory (Nietzsche, 1887) in which the obsessive thought of his own body sets its priority and exclusivity because a tragic comprehension between body and mind is possible only through pain.

If the God's death founds the historical process of nihilism, as what its end is seen and admitted from only who is able to go out from obviousness and he is meeting with the loss of the reference's value that bereaved of the possibility to know where we are, or to argue about what up and down or top and bottom are with the consequent failing of the link between subject and aim, the wandering in the infinite nothingness and the spreading of a doctrine for which «everything is vane, everything is indifferent, everything was!» (Nietzsche, 1897), then, the impossibility of admitting the death of a father never born founds the anorexic subject's choice to give himself up to a "suicidal nihilism".

Freud writes in *Un ricordo di infanzia di Leonardo da Vinci* (1910) «The psychoanalysis has shown us the intimate link between the father's complex and the faith in God; it showed us that psychologically, a personal God is an exalted father, and every day it testifies us how young people lose their religious faith when the

father's authority collapses»: the taking on of the anorexic position realizes for the subject, the supplementary form of the primeval signifier of the "Name- of- the-Father" (Lacan, 1963), acting in the real that "no" of which the never produced paternal metaphor should have to overburden itself at a symbolic level starting up that separation's manoeuvre which would have saved subject from the imaginary fusion with mother and it would have decided his entry in the symbolical register. The origin of *jouissance* as a body's event, takes place exactly in the default of prevailing of «the sublimation's value of the Father's function» - given by faith and law on which the paternal tie is founded- on the «manifest carnality» of the maternal tie (*Ibidem*), from which is derived the default of the subject's passage from the imaginary delivery in which the couple mother-child gave itself up, to the Oedipus second time of the paternal interdiction and the qualification for desire.

In tendency to homeostasis daily made through the calories' calculation, the control of everything that enters and leaves body, the obsequious observance to spent hours of gymnastics, jogging and swimming, the subject accedes to the Other's nihilism sealing «in the automatism of resorting to food, checkable in its consumption and expulsion, which takes the relationships' place» (Comelli, 2004) his own closure in an autistic isolation that realizes the «contemporary cynicism» that for Jacques Alain Miller (1999) implies the pursuit and the experience in solitude of a direct *jouissance* that rejects love and friendship substituting the human partner with the object of *jouissance* (Freda, 2001).

So they authorize themselves to flee everything can threaten their attempt to set up as a monolithic block that expresses the anorexic passion as a passion for «calculation, number, formulas, for a knowledge able to control the real of a drive body» (Recalcati, 2005), without anything could stop or diverge the obsessive productive chain with which they flatter themselves to fill the lack and eliminate the possibility of empty spaces in which they could light the desire's dimension and so make the creative experience possible.

Therefore, in a society where the norm is no more moral and the imperative is the duty to *jouissance* as what we can't choose but to which we comply with, anorexia realizes in the rigour and formalism with which it completes its practice, the dream of the "capitalist's discourse" theorized by Lacan in 1972, in which the illusion of being able to solve and fill the constitutive "fault to be" of the human existence is nourished in an unstoppable infinite consummation. The capitalist logic pledging the everlasting offer of an object to consume traduces the anorexic experience of temporality, as it was presented by Bruch (1978) referring the time's perception of one of her patients: «time seemed tremendously accelerated and yet the days were endless».

The return to the undifferentiated through an asexual body denies in the impossibility to awake the libidinal excitement through the non- development of its beauty, the possibility for the anorexic subject to think of physical changes which characterize adolescence as a proof of the individual's sexual maturity for Klein (1932), a positive sign in order to nourish «trust to the possibility of reaching the sexual gratification and motherhood». Indeed, the anorexic subject inhabited by "the

death's appetite" for which he reverse the concept of beauty as a research and a care for details, and he really rejects the possibility of the sexual drive to serve the procreative function becoming said in this way «altruistic» (Freud, 1905) denying like this «the imposing of the will over the individual life, certifying so that, together with the body's life, it is also suppresses the will of which body is its manifestation» (Schopenhauer, 1819). Thinking body as the only possible thought in which perpetuating a process of desire's ossification, it lacks the experience of being immersed in that "bath of language" in which the «man's desire finds its meaning in the other's desire, not much because the other holds the keys of the desired object, but because its first object is to be recognized by the other» (Lacan, 1953). The perception of "having a body" had no way of structuring itself through the experience of an environment able to recognize, desiring and thinking it, so that «being body- in anorexia- means being thing» (Selvini Palazzoli, 1963) rejecting and excluding radically the Other.

So in the anorexic refusal a question that has the feature of infinite is hidden, exacting an answer that is beyond the inadequacy of family's one but which can never be missing: the parental figures' experience of impotence and failure in front of the clear reality of their son who dies, can not justify the waiver to do something to resist the death's risk disposed by anorexia enduring its "nullification's process". If they are becoming blinding in front of the problem's evidence, then the subject can only present a more impressive challenge again to be visible in the isolation where he lives his own drama and he can't believe that his parents could have abandoned really and so soon, the attempt to solve it: «The first object that he proposes to the parental desire whose object is unknown, is his loss. Does he wants to lose me? The ghost of his death, of his disappearance, is the first object that the subject must stake in this dialectic, and the point is that he stakes it- we know that from the thousand and one facts, if it hadn't been from anorexia» (Lacan, 1964).

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