

## The Psychoanalytic Paris Square: On Decolonization and Psychoanalysis

**Thais Klein\***

*Department of Psychology, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*

**\*Corresponding Author:** Thais Klein, Department of Psychology, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

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### Abstract

The article is based on questions posed by Lucia Murat's movie called "Paris Square" (2018) [1] and aims to situate psychoanalysis in the discussion around the issue of epistemic decolonization. The film, which is set at the State University of Rio de Janeiro, portrays the troubles of a Portuguese psychoanalyst in dealing with the clinical psychological care of a resident of the Providência favela. From that perspective and supported by the contribution of other fields' mainly anthropology's decolonial literature, we will question the apparent colonizing perspective of psychoanalysis. Thus, a possible path is sought through a certain notion of experience in psychoanalysis and a dialogue with the Amerindian's perspectivism.

**Keywords:** *Psychoanalysis; Decolonization; Anthropology; Cinema*

"I'm a Tupi strumming a lute!" [2].

"Oh my body, make me a man that questions" ([3], p. 190).

I begin this article in a not very usual way regarding both my academic trajectory and what concerns the field in which I am included: psychoanalysis. Despite the mutual feeling of unfamiliarity mine and the reader's, it would not be possible to start it otherwise. That is because I, as a Ph.D. student in the Postgraduate Program in Psychoanalytical Theory at UFRJ, was granted a CAPES scholarship and find myself at this moment in a doctoral internship at Université Paris 5<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, I write in the position of a foreigner in European soil, where I have come to improve myself as a psychoanalyst and return to Brazil with a rather finer knowledge. Irony aside, it was this time and space situation that, together with the encounter with the suitably called Lucia Murat's movie "Paris Square" [1], incited this writing. The title "Paris Square" refers to a square located in the Rio de Janeiro's neighborhood of Glória, built in 1926 and designed by French urbanist Alfred Agache. However, in accordance with what I will later describe more precisely, very few scenes of the picture are actually

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<sup>1</sup>Sponsored by the Institutional Programme for Scholarships for Sandwich Doctorates Abroad (PSDE) of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), which subsidize doctoral internships abroad for Brazilian students. The country can be chosen by the student; in my case, France was not an actual deliberate choice as Franco-Brazilian interchange is significantly consolidated in the field of psychoanalysis and also because of the fact that psychoanalysis is exceptionally present in French public universities.

shot at the said square and, as viewers, we wonder, after all, what is the reason for that title. In an interview, the director Lucia Murat explains that the name is supposed to allude to the inadequacy of the French project to Brazilian territory. In her words: “[...] it is crazy, because Paris Square has a Jardin du Luxembourg gardening, with these cute and well-trimmed trees, but in a tropical city; that is, the only thing lacking is shade”<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, it is a European project relocated to the Brazilian context, a recurrent issue on the main storyline, as it narrates the trajectory of a Portuguese psychoanalyst who provides clinical service in the Rio de Janeiro State University (UERJ) and is in charge of the psychoanalytic treatment of a woman residing in the Providência favela. Another noteworthy question regards the psychoanalyst’s nationality Portuguese, which is a direct reference to our colonizing country. It is evident that the movie does not intend to approach concepts or psychoanalytic clinic more deeply (it is even disappointing regarding some aspects on those matters, by the way). However, the plot evokes, as I will indicate later, a discussion on psychoanalysis in Brazilian context and glances at a nowadays very trending debate about the so-called epistemic decolonization<sup>3</sup>.

The aim of this paper is, departing from the issues presented by the movie “Paris Square”, to raise some questions for psychoanalysis articulated to decolonial literature from other fields, mainly that of anthropology, investigating a possible path through a certain notion of experience in psychoanalysis. In the wake of other articles I wrote inspired in discussions motivated by the seventh art [4-6], I restate it is not my goal to psychoanalyze the movie nor to apply psychoanalytic concepts in the work by any means. That position would stifle every latent possibility of artwork to incite thoughts that an intricate web of psychoanalytic concepts would only attain after a much longer path. That being said, I decided to shortly summarize the movie’s plot first, so the reader may better situate it, and then enter the issue regarding psychoanalysis itself.

### The movie “Paris Square”

In a European landscape, a woman walks on a cliff towards the sea to the sound of a fado song. This initial scene is gradually substituted by a dive in the beach in Rio de Janeiro. Both poles of the narrative are set: Portugal and Brazil, colonizer and colonized, Camila and Glória, analyst and analysand the two main characters. Gloria, brilliantly played by actress Grace Passô, is an elevator operator at the Rio de Janeiro State University (UERJ) and resident in the Providência favela<sup>4</sup> in the central area of Rio de Janeiro. Camila (Joana de Verona) is a Portuguese psychoanalyst who’s doing an internship at the Rio de Janeiro State University’s Service of Applied Psychology.

The second scene takes us directly to the main stage of the plot: a consulting room at the UERJ’s Service of Applied Psychology. In this first part of the movie, the characters are exactly where they should belong: at one side of the table Camila is taking notes (just like most part of grotesque representations of psychoanalysts in cinema) and at the other one Gloria is being invited to talk about what has brought her to analysis. Grace Passô has not completely stolen the show yet, she’s progressively rising in a rhythm equivalent to Glória’s appropria-

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<sup>2</sup>The interview is available through the following link: <https://medium.com/revista-bravo/thriller-social-7fc9ecf6ba34>. Access in: 08/20/2018.

<sup>3</sup>A broader outline of that matter will be presented further in the text.

<sup>4</sup>We are not able to know if that fact influenced Lucia Murat’s choice of location. It is, however, interesting to note that Providência favela was the first favela in Rio de Janeiro – participating in the coinage of the term favela. It comes from the name of a plant typical from Bahia’s countryside’s vegetation, stage of the War of Canudos (1896 - 1897). The occupation of the hill where nowadays Providência favela is located was done mainly by soldiers that came back from the war without ever having received the land the government had promised as payment.

tion of her own story. That is because Gloria starts talking in the first session without showing much affection for matters which will later turn out to be central: “My father gave me a lot of work in life... He drank a lot. He wasn’t mean though [...]”.

Then, another important character is presented to us: Glória’s brother. The scene shows Glória bringing a typically Brazilian dish for her brother in jail, which will serve as a sort of Chekhov’s gun<sup>5</sup>: chicken with okra his favorite, as well as their father’s. The brother’s role in the plot becomes clearer in the second session, in which Glória narrates more precisely the times she was a victim of abuse from her father. Glória can talk about her suffering only through sorrow over the beatings her brother took when trying to defend her. Patent helplessness in this scene gives place to a look at Glória praying in an ordinary evangelical church in Rio. With eyes closed, she joins in the singing: “God will protect you”.

At last, for the first time, the distance between Glória and Camila shortens. We see Camila at her house thinking about the stories of violence experienced by Glória in her daily life only then, through Camila, do we have news about some of Glória’s stories. A superb image of this turning point: the reflection of Camila smoking a cigarette on a balcony at UERJ with Mangueira favela in the background.

There’s only one scene where we can actually glance at Paris Square while Camila and her boyfriend are visiting it. Symmetrical and shadeless, the square becomes the scene of one of her life memories. The psychoanalyst remembers her grandmother, with whom she identifies herself, and who would have committed suicide “because of Brazil”. Portraying happiness, the Portuguese woman retakes certain photographs her grandmother took in the exact same places what seems to anticipate Camila’s fate.

Meanwhile, in the Providência favela’s resident’s life, there’s no room for remembrance the traumatic scene repeats itself every day. Glória is taken by the police because of gunfire supposedly commanded from jail by her brother, and leaves the police station severely injured due to the threatening and violent interrogatory once more, she finds emotional support at the evangelical pastor’s. Camila, listening to the story of the violence her analysand underwent, bets on institutional power and supposes the university could help her. Gloria, in turn, used to the institutional negligence from which Rio’s favelas distinctively suffers, laughs and then says she dreamt they switched roles. At this moment, the boundaries between them become even blurrier, although there is still enough differentiation from one another. In the dream, Glória says, she managed to play the psychoanalyst’s role and to see herself through Camila’s lenses: as an animal in a zoo. And shortly thereafter, the existence of a parallel law, distant from the code shared by the European woman, enters the scene for the first time: the “beating” Gloria took does not go unpunished the local Pacifying Police Unit (in Portuguese, UPP) finishes being attacked in retaliation, what resulted in the death of at least one policeman.

Afterward, Gloria misses a session, and Camilla sits at her place. The absence is concomitant to a visit to the brother in jail. In the dialogue at the jail, the brother claims responsibility for the act of violence against the UPP and says only he can protect Glória no one could care for her as he does. Glória’s return to the sessions is marked by another story of violence: her brother was arrested the first time after seriously attacking their father (we cannot tell if he killed him) in one of those episodes of abuse. Once more, it is hard for Glória to talk about the suffering those memories carry. She only regrets having screamed too loud, which led her brother to feel the need to intervene.

Simultaneously, Camila is portrayed as more anxious, we realize the sessions with Glória gradually prevail in her life. Random whispering voices warn her: “the analyst is not a neutral figure”. Glória asks permission to lie on the little sofa in the UERJ’s consulting room and

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<sup>5</sup>Named after Russian dramaturge Anton Pavlovich Chekhov. In Chekhov’s playwriting theory, the author states that something that appears at the beginning of a script must appear again at another point of it under a narrative logic.

tells one more story of violence (whose author is also her brother-protector): the murder of a woman who defamed her in the neighborhood. Camila becomes increasingly anxious, and some scenes are marked by a certain level of paranoia including a dream in which Camila is transported to the stories of violence described by Glória. At that moment, the placement of the analyst and the analysand crumbles; Camila searches through the cell phone Glória forgot in the office. When she tells Glória what happened, the Portuguese analyst mentions a video she watched on the device and declares she must interrupt the treatment. The psychoanalyst questions Glória if she it pleases her to look at those scenes of violence and makes value judgment based upon her own moral precepts. It becomes impossible for Camila to sustain the place of analyst faced with such an adverse, violent reality one moment she imagines nonexistent institutional support and the next, through moral judgments, questions Glória's pleasure dynamics in the given context. The pregnant violence shocks Camila, who devotes all her efforts in recovering her values something hinders all analytic (or therapeutical) work between Camila and Glória.

The latter, however, is reluctant to end the sessions and goes to the psychoanalyst's house to keep talking about her brother, then to the consulting room at the university to reveal it was actually her who killed her father. After a scene in the college's elevator, in which Glória says her brother was upset that Camila abandoned her, the Portuguese psychoanalyst becomes even more paranoid, feeling constantly threatened. It is interesting to note that what Camilla's character feels threatened by is actually and above all, people who remind her of Glória's social context: black people and favelados the racial issue is definitely relevant.

Meanwhile, Glória feels abandoned by Camila as well as by her boyfriend, Samuel who apparently was threatened by her brother. Glória states: "he [the brother] takes everything away from me, everything". The protective image becomes ambivalent. It is at that moment when the Tchekhov's gun, the typical Brazilian dish that bonds brother and father chicken with okra accomplishes its function in the narrative. This time the carefully prepared meal takes a different, special seasoning: Glória's hatred before the protective figure's ambivalence (the brother, the father, the psychoanalyst, the Church or the State?). In her visit to the prison, another act of violence takes place the brother's murder through the poisoned chicken with okra the dish which bonds brother and father. After the act, Glória sends a message to her former analyst confessing the murder and comforting her regarding the fear she had of Glória's brother- "but I don't think you'll understand it" says Glória. Camila's paranoia increases even more and reaches its peak when Glória's boyfriend comes to the university the psychoanalyst, when she sees the black man calling her name, starts running incessantly through UERJ's hallways. Samuel, desperately wanting to talk to her, follows her. Brazilian society's structural racism immediately prompted a reaction from the security guards on duty: a black man running after a white woman the scene is set. A plain-clothes police officer pursues Samuel and fires a shot when he is apparently reaching his pocket to get his wallet; Camila mounts to the last floor of the university's building (where a lot of real suicides take place); once again we listen to the fado song and the building's abyss in front of her transforms itself into the distinctive Portuguese cliffs shown in the first scene.

### The decolonization matter

After having briefly summarized the movie, it is important to highlight that countless critiques upon how the Brazilian society's (and, more specifically, Rio de Janeiro's) typical social problems are portrayed were attempted. That is because Brazilian cinema traditionally deals with the social inequality issue and class relations which is not surprising, given the vastness of the issue in the country. However, representations are often grotesque and finish conceiving a very rigid idea of the lower layers' social reality. Those clichés undermine every attempt to formulate different perspectives. Lúcia Murat's film may be criticized in that direction. The scenes set in the favelas are somewhat caricatured, and the black population appears mostly either as a victim or author of violence, without much opportunity for the plurality of positions one could imagine being available in that context. My aim in this article is nevertheless, as previously evoked, based upon the issues the movie presents, rather than to write either a movie or a social critique, to raise some questions to psychoanalysis.

The above-mentioned possible critiques are in close relation with the issue I would like to highlight. That is because lower layers of society and, above all, the black population very often is depicted through the lenses of the colonizer. Even though Grace Passô and her

outstanding acting completely steal the scene as the most eminent protagonist, the storyline is built especially from Camila's perspective. Not surprisingly, it begins and ends with a fado song. From Portugal to Brazil, the main narrative arc, despite the fact it seems to be Glória's story, is presented through Camila. It is clear that the movie is not a complete caricature, as the characters are developed with a certain level of complexity and sensibility. However, throughout the movie, it seems that we actually do that of which Glória accused Camila: seeing her like an animal in a zoo.

My hypothesis is that this perspective is in the wake of a tradition observed in colonized countries but which has lately been denounced by the idea of epistemic colonization a matter introduced mainly by Franz Fanon's work [3] and by Latin American postcolonial literature, particularly through Dussel's [7] and Quijano's [8] works and recently, in Brazil, through Viveiros de Castro's considerations [9,10] in the anthropology field<sup>6</sup>. The term "epistemic colonization", as indicated by Quijano [8], highlights the cognitive dimension of colonization. It is evident that the history of colonized countries is not marked only by geographic, territorial colonization (as it might be impossible to talk about the notion of territory<sup>7</sup> unrelatedly to subjectivity). However, a not very explored dimension of colonization regards precisely the field of production of knowledge. Quijano [8] highlights that, in addition to a notion of racial superiority and ways of being, the colonization (the author proposes the usage of the term "coloniality" in order to call attention to an continual aspect of the process) entails the belief in that European episteme is superior and truer than other kinds of episteme it even comes to the point of denying the existence of other possibilities of knowledge construction. It should be noted that this valorization, most of the time, occurs in a rather subtle way, that is, in the very conception of knowledge.

A particularly interesting example is anthropology, which arises as language and instrument of production of a par excellence colonial knowledge. Even though it is not this article's intent to enter more deeply in those questions, it is interesting to note that social anthropology may be traced back to travelers' and chroniclers' narratives from the Age of Discovery. Furthermore, the colonization issue is found in the very core of knowledge construction, as the premise of "knowing another culture" suppress the idea that those that are being known also have a culture based upon their own theoretical production. In that context, "structural-functionalist doctrines" as named by Viveiros de Castro [12] take place. Those doctrines are interested in the description of the impacts of "modernity" European societies, colonial formations, and national State upon non-modern collectives Amerindian people, for example. This mode of knowledge conceives target-collectives as objects or patients, even though it takes into account the possibility of them being part of the process (in an unforeseen and unconscious manner). That is, despite the possibility of transformations in the object of study (not envisaging them as completely passive as it was done at the birth of anthropology), those transformations are thought in terms of interactions in which the "objects", or the "patients", are either victims or unforeseen agents. Therefore, we understand there are two moments (with no necessary precedence

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<sup>6</sup>According to Sapiro, Steinmetz, and Ducournau [11], in addition to those mentioned authors, in that agenda, we could also include post-Foucauldian studies on the relation between colonialism and "eurocentric imagination" (e.g. Edward Said's work), Derridians analysis of colonial and post-colonial texts (Gayatri Spivak), Heideggerian critiques on western modernity (e.g. Timothy Mitchell's and Dipesh Chakrabarty's works). Besides those, Gramsci-influenced anticolonial historiography (represented especially by the group of "subordinated" Indian historians, such as Ranajit Guha and Partha Chatterjee) and some attempts to creatively combine Gramscian marxism and French post-structuralism (as in the British cultural studies tradition) can also be added to that agenda.

<sup>7</sup>Even though a deeper contemplation on this matter would exceed the scope of this article, what I mean by territory is based upon Deleuze's and Guattari's notions of territory and deterritorialization (1976/2013) [13]. Moreover, as I'll later indicate, both were pioneers of the discussion around colonialist issues and psychoanalysis.

relation) in the contact between the anthropological knowing and the studied peoples. On the first moment, anthropology conceives itself as active, directs its efforts to the description of the reality observed in other contexts, which in turn are supposedly static and passive. On a second moment, it glimpses the possibility of thinking a kind of interaction between two actors; but only regarding the effects produced upon them nonetheless. Thus, never does it suppose there is thinking activity among those peoples. Knowledge, therefore, because of those two premises, would always be from the point of view of the anthropologist in the same exact way the movie develops a narrative from Camila's point of view.

In a similar way, Viveiros de Castro [10] finds "permanent decolonization of thought" (p. 20) necessary. The author's proposition aims the production of a sort ontological turn in search of a sort of symmetrization: a descriptive operation consisting of making the differences between anthropologist's "culture" (or "theory") and the native's "culture" (or "life") continuous. Viveiros de Castro [12] expresses then the necessity of tracing anthropological considerations from indigenous metaphysics, given that, through them, we're exposed to different modes of existence and production of knowledge, which, summarizing, mobilize "a whole different image of thought" (p. 5). The author demonstrates quite clearly how a European episteme promotes rigidity in knowledge and fosters a way for the decolonization of thought<sup>8</sup>. It is interesting to note that one of Viveiros de Castro's work's main pillars is Deleuze and Guattari's thought [13]. Anthropology, above all fields of knowledge, availed those two to discuss a possibility of knowledge construction that overturns the oedipal structure<sup>9</sup>, upon which is founded the theory of neuroses.

Yet, the movie "Paris Square" invites us to reflect precisely upon the matter of a colonizing knowledge in an adverse context not surprisingly, the reference to the project's inadequacy of a European square transposed to Rio figures rightly in the title. On the other hand, it would be also fair to say that we are only dealing with the portrayal of a poorly conducted analysis, in which the psychoanalyst's values override the psychoanalytical listening of the unconscious. One could, then, individualize the issue and declare that Camila, in allowing her own values and history prevail, proves to be a bad analyst if only she was better supervised and underwent a better analysis herself, things would be different. However, those possible paths, albeit seemingly plausible, tend to individualize the issue and put psychoanalysis in a comfortable position knowledge would work if the conditions were different. Would it be right to infer that psychoanalysis should remain untouched by the discussions around colonization and decolonization? One could certainly take that side. A consistent argument for that perspective consists in the hypothesis that colonization discussions and the question of identity formation converge. Patently, psychoanalysis carries a whole set of questions upon identitary discussions, given that, as Freud [14] states in *Group psychology and analysis of the ego*, collective identifications are intimately related to the substitution of the group's ideal embodied in the figure of the leader for the ego ideal. The notion of identity would follow the same path: better understood in terms of the formation of the superego than as an actual analytical issue<sup>10</sup>. However, what I would rather approach herein is not the possibility of the constitution of genuinely Brazilian psychoanalysis but the need to discuss ways of thinking and doing psychoanalysis in accordance to what is posed by clinical situations.

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<sup>8</sup>Another short example, in case one is not enough, is to be found in the field of historiography. Aymara activist and intellectual, Fausto Reinaga attempted to think of indigenous people in Bolivian National Revolution as central, political subjects, promoting not only a new version of history but also establishing a true Aymara philosophy through what Mignolo (2008) later called "epistemic disobedience".

<sup>9</sup>Chapter 3 of "Anti-Oedipus" [11] is where the anthropological matter is emphasized.

<sup>10</sup>It is important to note, however, that it is possible to think the identity matter in psychoanalysis from the standpoint of identity processes an expression widely used by Moro [15] in the studies of transcultural psychoanalysis which diverges from that superego logic.

### Psychoanalysis in Brazil and decolonization

Actually, the first draft of this article envisaged an outline of the history of psychoanalysis in Brazil in order to discuss psychoanalysis' particularities in the Brazilian context. However, the itinerary had to be rearranged precisely due to second thoughts on the very conception of Brazilian psychoanalysis<sup>11</sup>. That is because it appears to be necessary to discuss certain propositions about how to think the clinical situation, more than to theoretically and historically characterize it. In my view similar to Castro's that he values ethnography in anthropology [12], in order to discuss the colonization/decolonization matter in psychoanalysis, it is necessary to start from clinical questions rather than theoretical ones. How would it be possible not to allow psychoanalytical knowledge, which is by and large European, prevail over clinical situations of certain Brazilian contexts? How not to turn psychoanalysis into a sort of Paris Square? However, it is evident that, as the Brazilian population is extremely plural (in multiple ways), it is not possible to talk about the psychoanalytic clinic in Brazil in a homogeneous way. According to Costa [16], psychoanalysis, as done in private practice (which normally reaches only a smaller fraction of the population), is constantly discussed, but we lack "intellectual openness to experimentation, to the advent of alterity, especially when working in public health services with people that would not be reached through private practice" ([18], p. 2). It is important to clarify that Costa's remark was written in 1989 and, since then, countless discussions about psychoanalysis in the public health system were carried out. What I want to stress, however, is not the specificity of psychoanalysis in the public health system but the need to do psychoanalysis without hindering every possibility of a true openness to adverse situations as the violence and the helplessness experienced by Glória from various contexts.

Kehl [19] makes a similar excursion in her last book, entitled *Bovarismo*<sup>12</sup> brasileiro (Brazilian bovarism), which is a collection of articles the author wrote throughout her life. The title and the first articles refer to Madame Bovary (Emma), Flaubert's character who aspires to leave the dull country life of a married woman behind and forges a way out, characterizing what the author calls bovarism in the Brazilian context. According to Kehl [19] societies on the edge of capitalism sought modernization through representations of the industrial and bourgeois revolutions without having actually achieved any of those. The ideal of those societies, among which the Brazilian society is included, is marked by the fantasy of "becoming another". However, that "other" is always unreachable, given that it is frozen in an (ideal) historical moment when the colony could become an integral part of the empire. Kehl [19] indicates, however, that periphery countries' bovarism availed them nothing; on the contrary, it finished inhibiting every pursuit of an emancipating path of their own that could serve as guidance amid contradictions from their position in the international scenario such as dependence upon rich countries.

In the Brazilian context, illustrated by Machado de Assis' character Rubião from the novel *Quincas Borbas*, the main question consists in our attempt to turn non-Brazilians: idealizing Portuguese society in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, English or French people in the 19<sup>th</sup>, Americans in

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<sup>11</sup>The fact that psychoanalysis occupied a somewhat important place in the modernists' discussions aspiring to the creation of Brazilian identity and intellectual production, is noteworthy. One may argue that, in a way, the modernist movement was a precursor of the discussion around colonization and decolonization in Brazil – unsurprisingly, Castro [10,12] is in constant dialogue with Mario de Andrade. The following extract suitably stresses the relation between colonialism/decolonialism and modernism: "[...] We are killing literature. We are putting an end to the French spiritual dominion over us. We are ending Portugal's grammatical dominion. We are forgetting the beloved fatherland for the sake of this real, true land, which will enrich humanity's multifaced image with its characteristic contingent" ([16], p. 33). Freud's thought sparked Oswald de Andrade's interest in 1910 when the latter traveled to Europe [17]. Since then, psychoanalysis permeated his writings, leaving its impressions in the artist's Futurist and Dadaist encounters, his poems and novels, and, especially, his manifestos.

<sup>12</sup>The term bovarism was incorporated into common sense since Jules de Gaultier, French psychoanalyst, created the expression in 1892.

the 20<sup>th</sup> [19]. Her book follows an analytical path towards the deconstruction of that very ideal, as it goes through a certain set of themes samba's history, different meanings of malandro, Globo's television monopoly and Lula's political trajectory emphasizing an "antibovarist" perspective until the account of a psychoanalytical experience in a Landless Workers' Movement's (MST) school (Escola Nacional Florestan Fernandes)<sup>13</sup>. Even though the author conceives psychoanalysis through Lacanian lenses, her work overcomes theory and seems to approach precisely what we have been discussing thus far: it is an analysis that obligatorily takes into account certain issues posed by clinical situations in that specific context. That report diverges drastically from the situation between Camila e Glória in "Paris Square" because Kehl [19] is constantly dealing with the need of rethinking her values and her own clinical practice in the MST's context. Dunker [20] claims that clinical case is paradigmatic and "real proof of how psychoanalysis can and should be employed as a concrete social practice to mitigate the suffering of the most vulnerable layers of the Brazilian population, as well as of how it can be used to deactivate the bovarist device" [20]. Despite partially agreeing with Dunker, the perspective addressed here takes a different turn if articulated to the discussions on epistemic decolonialism. That is because the decolonial matter aims to question the use of certain knowledge in a given social practice; it is the suspension of one's knowledge applied in a given context. In that sense, the question would go beyond the "employment" of psychoanalysis in certain situations and indicate a possibility to rethink it in a way psychoanalysis itself remains in constant reformulation in the most diverse contexts. By "context" I mean not only the social sphere but also the very situations capable of happening in an analytic setting.

That being said, it is important to promote discussion on psychoanalysis as a possibility for recasting in different contexts. Therefore, I bet on a dialogue with anthropology in order to develop a notion of experience that does not abandon the unconscious as a central topic but allows a suspension of the rigid hierarchy established between analyst and patient and of the blind submission to certain theories, which would entail a rigid colonialist position.

### **Anthropology and psychoanalysis: the experience issue<sup>14</sup>**

According to what Roussillon [21] says, the psychoanalytical field suffers from excessive respect for the theory. That may be considered in a decolonial perspective since such an excess would lead to theoretical rigidity vis-à-vis adverse contexts and prevailing of a certain way of thinking over others. Yet, even though we do not see evident traits of excessive respect to the theory in the movie "Paris Square", there is a clear invitation to discuss the impossibility of suspension of both fixed attitudes and fixed values in the analytic setting. In a similar way, it is important to take into account what other fields of knowledge have to say about the matter in order to better ponder psychoanalysis' particularities. From that point of view, one might wonder if Castro's [10,12] critique regarding the hierarchic difference between the native's and the anthropologist's discourses could not also be addressed to the relation between the analyst's and the analysand's discourses. Could we not, just as Camila did, become the bearers of the key to unveil the hidden meaning the patient holds but ignores? By so doing, would we not maintain a rigid position, close to what the authors denounce as colonialist, that is, with the previously constructed knowledge prevailing upon situations that are beyond its scope of understanding?

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<sup>13</sup>According to Dunker [20], in that sense, Kehl's pioneering spirit is undeniable. She was the idealizer of still operational initiatives, such as the outdoor consulting room, led, nowadays, by Tales Ab'saber and his group, Margens Clínicas (Peripheral Clinics), Sedes Sapientiae (Wisdom's Throne), located in São Paulo, Catavento (Weather Vane) in Porto Alegre, which promotes psychological care to survivors of State violence and to people who underwent experiences similar to what Dunker's group saw while working with Belo Monte Dam's construction's refugees.

<sup>14</sup>That issue was better elaborated in another article: Authors (no prelo).

Even though the best way to effectuate that perspective is through clinical case discussions and subsequent theory elaboration, I advance a theoretical/methodological path that may help us in that task which consists in seeking guidance from a certain notion of experience<sup>15</sup> in psychoanalysis. That is because, as I will briefly stress, that notion of experience allows a suspension of rigid positions and explanations that clearly establish a hierarchy between what belongs to the patient and what is the analyst's responsibility. Random whispering voices warned us in "Paris Square" that "the analyst is not neutral". However, the rigidity of certain positions did not allow non-neutrality to be approached as an analytical issue. In that case, it is possible to say that the conflict between Camila and Glória was not catastrophic only because of their inevitable involvement and subsequent breach of neutrality. On the contrary, maybe the issue lies precisely in not being able to experience that breach of limits without constantly foisting new limits thereupon (through moral judgments or social strangeness).

Similar to what Castro [10,12] denounces in anthropology, in psychoanalysis, we traditionally conceive patient and analyst as separated elements and ascribe neutrality to the latter. An interesting theoretical example of that clear division between analyst and analysand and the consequential individualization of issues that vastly exceed any form of solipsism lies in certain discussions about violence and psychoanalysis. The hypothesis that violence would be an epiphenomenon of the human condition associated mainly with instinctual violence, stands out. Costa [22] calls attention to the inconsistency in that argument, pointing at an "academical violence" distant from real life's violence: "attributing violence to an original human aggressiveness is almost like attributing the responsibility for the bombing of Hiroshima to nuclear effectiveness" (p. 32). Yet, discussing the notion of experience in psychoanalysis aims especially to promote a suspension of that solipsist, individualizing logic.

That is because, in the aims of psychoanalytical treatment, Winnicott [23,24] defends the analytical process predominantly as a possibility to experience. The experience to which he refers does not concern an individual or solipsist experience. As indicated by Naffah Neto [25] "every experience takes place in the potential space" (p. 231). Although it is possible to discuss over a pre-reflective experience that does without potential space, that statement emphasizes that experience must not be seen as exclusive to an individual<sup>16</sup>. Experience, when in relation to potential space, is located neither in the individual psychic reality nor in the external relations [25]. That is because potential space, as defined by Winnicott [23,24], is the intermediary region in which there is no need to distinguish what is inside from what is outside. Potential space is built under a temporal logic rather than under a spatial one, that is, it is not about a place but a possibility of experiencing a time that assembles past, present, and future, and creatively actualizes new times and why not? new world possibilities.

Assuming that psychoanalysis consists in an experience conjoined to potential space allows one to infer that analytic practice concerns neither the analyst alone nor the analysand. That is precisely what Roussillon's [26] conception of interplay and Ogden's [27] notion of analytic third indicate. The latter, in a dialogue with the former's thought, states that the analyst and the analysand engender an analytic third<sup>17</sup>. In his words: "a third subject with its own life, generated by analytic pair and sustained in dialectical tension with the analyst's and the analysand's existence as separated individuals" ([27], p. 11-12). Thus, the third is a heterogeneous unity. We are not dealing, however,

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<sup>15</sup>A deeper understanding of that notion is being developed in my Doctoral research.

<sup>16</sup>Curiously, Castro [10], in his speech "Who's afraid of the ontological wolf: some comments on an ongoing anthropological debate", the author mentions Winnicott. Inspired by the psychoanalyst's considerations, Castro suggests that the ethnographer should be grounded in a good enough description. Instead of explaining paradoxes, he should withhold himself from asking what am I and what is the other and experience a gray, third area of blurry boundaries and creativity (analogous to Winnicottian potential space).

<sup>17</sup>It is necessary to indicate it does not concern a triangulation similar to the oedipal triangulation.

with the creation of a third by two preexistent individuals<sup>18</sup>; it is rather the creation of the third that exposes the tensions between those two. In Ogden's words (1994): "there is no analyst, no analysand, no analysis in the absence of the third" (p. 93). It is not, therefore, a matter of isolating the constitutional elements of analytic relationship in order to determine each individual part's proper qualities; instead, analytic practice, from that perspective, involves "an attempt to describe as fully as possible the specific nature of the experience of the interplay of individual subjectivity and intersubjectivity" ([27], p. 64).

Within that framework, analytic practice's intention is not to interpret nor to construct, but rather, above all, to guide certain events through the experience region thus, that of original creativity [25]. The analyst, in that case, is no longer seen as someone possessing the interpretative key to the meaning the analysand holds but ignores. His theoretical assumptions and his clinical device and method must be actualized (or not) in that interplay that arises from the analyst-analysand relationship. In Roussillon's [21] words, "if we do not take into account what happens between two subjects, all models are either incorrect or approximative" (p. 57). Still according to him, within that framework, clinical research is only possible by distrusting certain supposedly incontestable devices we fetishize.

Conceiving the clinic as experience permits, one is capable of questioning theoretical assumptions, exploring (and not necessarily researching) blind spots of our own postulates. In that direction, paraphrasing Viveiros de Castro [9] the "art of psychoanalysis" becomes, instead of research of solutions for theoretical problems, the art of determining the issues posed by each analytic relationship.

### Final Considerations

Before the questions potentially raised by the movie "Paris Square", one would certainly not lack options of roads to take. Among those options, for example, one would be to situate psychoanalysis in the context of violence situations in Brazil, that is, to actually analyze the movie based on the previously mentioned theoretical considerations. I will remind the reader of what I mentioned at the beginning of this article, namely my temporary condition as a foreigner in a colonizing country (not Brazil's specifically but certainly of its intellectual and psychoanalytical fields). Moreover, there would not be enough clinical data to accomplish such a project; the foundation for future research, however, is laid that project will become viable in Tupiniquim soil.

Nevertheless, based on the decolonial thought, another possible way would be to provide the discussion with certain perspectives upon how to reconsider analytic practice in order to kick-start an attitude that takes us deeper in a thought that is less strictly compromised to its colonialist origins. In the violence situations context, for example, psychoanalytic literature often relies on arguments that see violence as instinctual demand and the analyst as a witness. Yet, as seen in "Paris Square", the issue exceeds witnessing: an experience that requires a certain weakening of boundaries is summoned between Glória and Camila. The main issue, in my view, rather than Camila having confused herself with Glória, is simply that she was not able to, within that confusion, promote an experience that would create a new possible world between Camila and Glória. Perhaps, if we start discussing about different perspectives of analytic practice and, in that situation, I would bet on a closer bond with anthropology, we will slowly come to suspend our distant, passive, witnessing attitude, avoiding becoming ourselves a Paris Square.

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<sup>18</sup>Needless to say, the analytic third should not be understood as a third subject but as a temporalized space, similar to potential space.

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