

Psychoanalysis, its National Framework and Conceptions of the Different

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Abstract

Despite the recurring assertion of the Universalist character of the psychoanalysis practices and theories, it rather seems to have acclimatized to the social and psychological context of each country. In the psychoanalytical literature, Black Africa has always been the topic of expositions as peremptory from one to the other, that their authors have, in fact, no profound knowledge of it. These ephemeral visions have been inherited from outdated evolutionism. The belief in the existence of primitive populations constitutes, since Freud, a tenuous idea, a form of resistance from a so called psychoanalysis which still believes that only the writings of the first colonial ethnologic-administrators offer the best information on other cultures and for which the idea of difference seems difficult to envisage.

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Introduction

In the introductory remarks of the text where he wants to show that medical practice is entirely ordered by the social framework of the doctor's membership, Jean Pouillon explains to us that "the relationship between patient and doctor [...] is also, and perhaps above all, to be a social relation [...]. To ask who needs to be healed, what is to be healed, who can heal and why, is to question the values, beliefs, structure of society where these questions are asked. [...] The doctor-patient relationship cannot be considered in isolation, as if it closed in on itself and locked up the two individuals present; it refers to the conception that society has of the relationships between men [...]. Now, to say of a relationship that it is social is to say that it is not necessary, that it could be other than it is, and that it is very probably other elsewhere than she is not here. Otherwise, we would say it is «natural» and we would not even think of wondering about it. This is indeed what happens when you do not leave your home and believe yourself to be "natural" because you have avoided seeing yourself as a "stranger" [1].

This concern for social and cultural contextualization of nursing practices is part of a tradition inaugurated by Claude Lévi-Strauss comparing magical technique and psychoanalytic technique, shamanism and psychoanalysis: 1) «The role reserved for the group by the two techniques is more difficult to define, because magic readjusts the group to predefined problems, by means of the patient, while psychoanalysis readjusts the patient to the group, by means of introduced solutions [2]». 2) "The patient with neurosis liquidates an individual myth by opposing a real psychoanalyst; the native childbirth overcomes a real organic disorder by identifying with a mythically transposed shaman [3]».

This reinscription of psychoanalysis in the cultural framework of its exercise may seem artificial and restrictive, it which claims to have posed itself in opposition to the dominant psychiatric thought in the West, to have developed by upsetting the advantageous conception that man had of himself (cf. the idea of narcissistic injury), having freed himself from the prevailing social, moral and religious norms. This is in fact what Masud Khan replies in his discussion of Pouillon's text: «What strikes you first of all when we examine what Freud accomplished by isolating the patient from his social framework and placing him within the framework therapy of the analytical situation [...] is that in the new therapeutic framework there exists, between the patient and his therapist, no tradition of shared belief as to the etiology of the disease, nor of agreement on the» potential therapeutic efficacy of the framework and the psychological processes thus generated [4]. To scaffold the image of a psychoanalysis in a situation of complete extraterritoriality thus seems to proceed from the denial of reality; indeed, at the time when this author was exposing it, it already corresponded more to an ideal representation of psychoanalysis [5] than to his real situation [6] and even to its historical situation [7]. If French psychoanalysts, for example, since Jacques Lacan, are quick to identify and denounce the influence of the American way of life on American psychoanalysis, if they do not hesitate to find in English psychoanalysis so British accents (abandoning the theory of drives or taking advantage of that of the object relation), they remain on the other hand deaf, blind and dumb with the so typically French characteristics of the debates opposing French psychoanalysis.

Freud, continues Khan, turned medicine upside down, introducing three revolutionary ideas: 1) the acceptance of «the patient's identity as being sick in a way that is valid for the patient himself, although incomprehensible to all. other person»; 2) «the hope of finding a way to relate to the disease, because although the disease of each patient is unique for him, by virtue of the experience that it constitutes, it involves, of another point of view, elements specific to all human experience»; 3) the contribution of a new direction «to medical practice, which aimed to rid a patient of a disease considered as a foreign and hostile body, by creating, in the analyst and the patient, this understanding of the disease of the patient which leads to his assimilation into the total functioning of the patient's personality» [8]. These formulas, on the part of a psychoanalyst, are obviously above all exhortation. They speak of abstract psychoanalysis - even fictitious (which can only be found in the writings of philosophers) and of model psychoanalysts (which we only meet in the writings of psychoanalysts). We have heard from Jean Clavreul that the problem with a «dogmatism fixed in a theoretical conception» is that it means that «the analyst can only hear what he already knows», that 'he makes him deaf to anything that disturbs him: «if there is a specific desire to do this job, it is because the analyst must be able to reinvent the theory for each new patient» [9]. These propitiatory formulas apply only to psychoanalysts who perhaps only exist, in reality, in certain luxury boutiques, those to whose access the common man can only dream, condemned to fall back on "paid" psychoanalysts, to use Serge Viderman's expression [10] - the vast majority of them - totally subservient to master thinkers whose words they manipulate as if they were things - behaving on occasion like Freud's schizophrenics [11] - to the point of forgetting the existence and irreducibility of the latter; those that theory prevents from existing.

The child, the animal, the primitive

Real psychoanalysis does not admit the difference. Most often, she does not recognize it, she remains deaf to it, she immediately dissolves it by stripping it of its strangeness in order to bring it back to things that she already knows, to put it away in the drawers that she has always had. Or, when it takes it into account, it is to immediately minimize it and minimize the category to which this difference applies. If we follow what Jean Pouillon writes on the modes of recognition of difference, and if we are very indulgent, we will classify the psychoanalytic treatment of difference among the «digestive» methods: «The other is that which I know I have to understand in a relationship that I also know will be reciprocal, which, of course, does not mean that it will be successful». Otherness does not therefore prevent understanding, quite the contrary. This is where we have to go. This is also where the misunderstandings begin. What, in fact, is it to understand? The «digestive» conception that we often have of it, and from which it is not so easy to get rid of, places its success in what is in reality its failure. To understand would be to assimilate - in the proper sense of this verb: to make similar to oneself - that which first presents itself as different, to transform difference into identity. [...] The un-

mistakable value of this conception was and still is to affirm the possibility of communication between men, and to refuse - at least in principle - any privilege to what opposes them, to fight chauvinism and racism. But the error is to believe that in order to deny the privilege, we must consider as negligible the difference to which we attach it unduly [...]. On the contrary, authentic understanding must maintain it in its specificity. It does not abolish the distance between the subject and the object, it makes it possible to cover it, but does not eliminate it, does not dissolve it in a vague sympathy which, under the pretext of discovering deep humanity, would blur everything that makes men what they are, that is to say beings profoundly different from each other. It is as essentially other that the other is to be seen [12].

Freud does mention the existence of differences which give rise to narcissistic affective protests when they are small (such as those which separate «closely related ethnic groups»: South Germans/North Germans, English/Scots, Spanish/Portuguese) and to an «aversion difficult to overcome» when they are great (like those between the Gauls and the Germans, the Aryans and the Semites, the Whites and the men of color). If he explains well the reactions arising from small differences, he leaves us unsatisfied with regard to the effects of racial differences. «In the aversions and repulsions that appear visibly towards strangers who touch us closely, we can recognize the expression of a self-love, of a narcissism, which aspires to assert itself. same and behaves as if the existence of a gap in relation to the individual formations that he has developed entailed a criticism of the latter and a formal notice to modify them» [13]. This «narcissism of small differences» that can be observed in reciprocal mockery between neighboring and related groups comes from the fact that a human community can only be constituted by distinguishing itself from - and by combating - those who remain external to values. around which it intends to found its unity; but this hostility towards close strangers is of little consequence; on the contrary, does it offer a «convenient and relatively harmless satisfaction of the aggressive instinct, by which the cohesion of the community is made easier for its members?» [14]. On the other hand, as regards the hateful reactions aroused by the greatest differences, only the appeal to the drive for destruction could explain it; it would be a treatment of the primary hostility which pits men against each other by its projection on the most distant groups.

But despite these notations, which it must be said that they are absolutely incidental and marginal in his thought, there is, in Freud, a total impossibility of admitting the reality of cultural difference and its effects on the psychic functioning of subjects, because it would contradict the idea of the universal validity of psychoanalytic theses (sexuality, Oedipus complex, unconscious, guilt, etc.).

Even today, the vast majority of psychoanalysts, when discussing difficulties in race relations, refer to this notion of «small differences narcissism». The detailed analysis of the different cases of racist hatred carried out by Daniel Sibony constitutes, in this sense, an original and isolated approach in psychoanalysis [15]. He begins by explaining that in the report of the leaders of the Inquisition to the Jews, «the idea of a biological distinction is the product of a symbolic impasse, of a very 'cultural' attempt to assume in the body a difference that we would dispense with thinking, naming, questioning» [16]. Racism has, since then, «always been a dead end of the symbolic and therefore of the cultural». He distinguishes two essential forms in racism: «the horror of difference when it comes back to the same» and «the horror of seeing the same become different» [17]. Racism leans preferentially towards blacks because of their visibility, but «it also targets those original problem experts who were the Jews for humanity». «Finally, this hatred is directed towards the originals, those who show originality, who bring the origin into play as a point of passage, as a dynamic source, a movement that goes towards the origin to leave again».

In the same book, Colette Guillemin addresses an often overlooked aspect of the problem: hatred masquerading behind glowing speeches. We have become accustomed to seeing only explicit aggression and hostility as racist. (...) Racism cannot be reduced to pejoration. And he can get glowing speeches. It is certainly more livable to be praised than to be attacked: «Different refers to a point of reference, and different is from the referent, that is to say from a majority group. This difference is therefore the final, unchanging and essential state of those who are in a minority position in any relationship. In these conditions, praise, although easier to endure

than outrage, in no way guarantees the abuse of power, the always possible emergence of arbitrariness, devastating decisions. Perhaps, even, they are the occasion" [18].

After Freud, psychoanalysts have given a certain importance to the differences of languages and cultures, and taken into account the psychic effects of exile. But the difference in true parentage continues to be ignored despite everything. René Kaës for example gives a place to the cultural difference which he calls difference of the third type to distinguish it from the difference between the human and the non-human (first difference) and from that between the sexes and the generations (second difference). But he does not recognize in it a significant autonomy in relation to the first two: "My hypothesis is that the third difference, if it has its own consistency, lends itself to the metaphorization of the other two [...] because it is infiltrated by the fantasies which introduce the first two into psychic reality. [...] An example is given to us by the racist theses: the denunciation of the small differences, the narcissistic over-investment of the origin, the imperative to preserve «the purity of blood» are as many expressions of the anguish to transgress sexual or inter-species prohibitions; it is this anguish that underlies the relationship with the foreigner as a relationship with the disturbing and familiar. In this conjunction, the cultural other can only be a monster, an animai, an infantile being, a savage, who attracts and from which we must protect ourselves" [19]. The question we want to ask, after reading this, is whether we should classify among the "racist theses" the relations that psychoanalysts continue to establish between the child, the animal and the primitive.

This refusal of any serious reflection on difference, especially racial, also comes in part, probably, from the fact that it is no longer allowed to speak in terms of races. Because of the awareness that comparisons are never objective since they always work in favor of the person who makes them, and that a completed work is more like the observer than it is a faithful reflection of the men studied, the differences which motivated them have been eliminated. «The questioning of the impact of the dominant ideologies of the» advanced «world in all research in the human sciences [...] was a certain intellectual gain, as well as the taking into account of the personal implications and the reactions transferentials of the researcher [...]». But [...] by wanting too much to «ideologize» all research, the censorship ends up turning against the researcher who will constantly ask himself if he is «in the right line of thought». There is currently a form of theoretical and above all ideological terrorism which weighs down on any debate of ideas a dangerous «forbidden to think» [...]. The result of these prohibitions is [...] a conformism and a uniformity of thought which certainly erases all difference, all particularity, but also, moreover, all originality and marginality» [20].

This refusal to fully recognize the difference has yet another motive. Even psychoanalysts who admit that a human being can be partly culturally shaped, do not say much more, especially about how they cope when grappling with this otherness. As if, despite everything, the analysis was carried out in the same way as when the analyst and the analysand are culturally identical. This silence undoubtedly stems from the reluctance of analysts to talk about what is going on in them during the analysis, especially negative feelings that could arise from technical difficulties with a patient. The myth indeed wants that, thanks to the magic of didactic analysis, the psychoanalyst is a superman freed from the unconscious, from the social imagination, cured of his narcissism, only animated by "benevolent neutrality", etc. It is this same attitude which explains the feigned surprises of anthropologists at the publication of Malinowski's *Journal* [21]. where he speaks openly of the contempt and repulsion inspired by the black natives, moreover fascinating objects of research transformed into models of any ethnographic work, objects cherished in publications which have earned him the exceptional stature which is his in anthropology.

Beyond the narcissism of small differences

Even authors to whom the exercise of their activity requires from the outset that cultural difference be taken into account only speak of what is happening on the side of the analyst to indicate technical difficulties and invite them to adapt the therapeutic framework to social context. We find for example, on this, under the pen of Ortigues, very fine and very relevant notations:

- “The fact of opening a psychology consultation in Dakar required the psychoanalyst to question many of the assumptions of his status as of his action. Coming from a culture other than that of his consultants, from a culture which has secreted the techniques he uses, he has to question himself on the place he occupies or that he believes he occupies, on what can signify - at the sociological level as well as at the individual level - its service offering. [...] He is led, something new for him, to think of himself at the sociological level, that is to say in solidarity with a certain culture».
- “We are also and above all white people. Our status is of prestige and power, with the procession of echoes of the colonial era. But prestigious and powerful, we are «the foreigner», the one who is other. Can we identify with him? We are tempted to consider this question as one of the most fundamental of the situation».
- “The African thinks of himself socially in relation to the world of whites; this is not a character trait but the consequence of a historical situation».
- «One would be tempted to say that the mechanisms of identification play at the level of the ideal of the ego rather than as an organizer of the drives, that is to say is more of the imaginary than the symbolic” [22].

Le Guérinel also explains the importance that there is, in such a situation, of taking into account the image that the black has of the white - in the description he gives of it, it is more exactly a question of the image that the white has of the image that the black would have of the white - because the image of the colonizing white is automatically a constituent element of the transference. With this image of the white, would be associated the ancestors and the dead (since the corpses of the blacks turn white while decomposing); on the other hand the White, in the black imagination, would maintain relations with witchcraft. «The incidence [of these stereotypes] makes it difficult to express aggression towards the therapist but also to liquidate the transference” [23].

But no more than the Ortigues - who take care to cite the populations of the Dakar metropolitan area, excluding whites - neither does he say anything about the way in which whites - in particular the white man he is - react. like this: how do they experience being taken for divinities? [24]. Nor of the place occupied by whites, not only in fantasies, but in reality, in everyday life in Africa. To sum up the image of the colonizer in terms of power and prestige only is a no-brainer, when one has in mind the overwhelming supremacy, the subjugation and reduction of human beings to objects, the imposition of arbitrary laws, the imposed labour [25], enlistment of armed forces in the army [26] to fight - and often die - in countries they didn't even know existed [27], «enemies» who, unlike their masters, had done nothing to them, for reasons which were completely foreign to them and which they did not understand, etc. Any white in Africa occupied (and still occupies today), in reality, an immeasurable social rank with that of the immense majority of blacks, whites were then practically the only ones to belong to the possessing class, they almost all had (and still have today) a troop of black employees (cooks, drivers, boys, nannies, guards, etc.), they lived (and live) in the most opulent villas of the rare luxury districts, etc. If we add that the white communities living in Africa, even today [28], are mostly made up of «little whites» [29], one can easily imagine what it could have been forty years ago. Does this reality really have no impact on the relationship between blacks and whites, on transfer and identification?

Moreover, since these authors hold the fantasy - and clearly it alone - to be primordial, we will be surprised that they say nothing about the image that the white has of the black, which is no less stereotypical and imbued with prejudices, which is independent of the contingencies of the history of the French Empire, and seems unrelated to time, space, social relations... (But we know the history of the beam and the straw). A white man, who knows Africa well, gives a sufficiently instructive overview: “From the first descriptions of Negritude to the projections today directed towards Africa, the black man, in the Western imagination, remains responsible for embodying the nature, for better or for worse, in its original innocence or barbarity. This phantasmal representation, inscribed at the heart of scholarly discourse like ordinary prejudices, orders the field of analyzes and ideologies. [...] In the name of a negro-African authenticity, defended at the same time by the racist and the anti-racist, it continues to deprive the black continent of its historicity to constitute it in natural reserve of the imagination and the fantasies white» [30].

Cultural differences and social relations

Corinne Hofmann relates, in an autobiographical novel, her experience of difficult married life with a Maasai warrior in Kenya [31]. This relatively short experience (less than 4 years), obviously marked it durably, since it narrates it 10 years after it ended. But it seems that this delay was not enough to make him understand why things have turned so badly. It is enough to go through a few pages of this book to understand how the phantasmic image that the black has of the white in Africa is forged and fed by the behavior of certain whites who go there to live adventures similar to those of Daktari, Indiana Jones, Mother Theresa, even Rambo, forgetting that they are movie characters and a woman working for the love of Christ and in the name of God. (I have known several, who, once arrived in Africa, fall back into childhood, and convince themselves that they have a mission of divine essence to accomplish). The title of the story, *The White Maasai*, could mislead the reader, since it is the story of a very Western white woman, having no inclination for ethnology, who relates her adventure with a Maasai who 'she considers and treats first as a sometimes a little capricious magic toy, then as a poor mentally retarded man, and finally as a great, mean and ungrateful moron. Not once did she speak of him as a human being of equal dignity. Even after having left him, she writes to him like a little child, not really bad at heart, and that one can tame if one does it gently: «During all these years, you have never had me. understood, maybe also because I'm a [White]. My world is very different from yours, but I thought that one day we would find ourselves in the same one, [...] At first you will not understand me but, after a while you will see that you can again be happy with someone else. It will be easy for you to find a woman who lives in the same world as you. Now find yourself a samburu woman and not a white; we are too different. One day you will have a lot of children [...]».

It all started when he arrived, for the first time in his life, on African soil: "When we arrived at Mombasa airport, we were greeted by the tropical air and, already, I sensed it: here, I will feel good. This is the first sentence of the novel. A few more sentences, and, on the first page always, we find this one: «A walk on the beach confirms my first impression: it is the most beautiful of all the countries that I have ever visited, I would like stay there». Two days later, and on the second page of the novel, an adventure happens: «I turn [...]. I am struck as if I had received lightning. A very tall and handsome man with dark skin is seated [...]. My God, he's beautiful, I've never seen anyone like him». She decides she wants to live with him. He is a warrior, has never been to school, probably ignores the existence of a country called Switzerland, they can barely communicate: he speaks vaguely English, she doesn't. No more principle of reality, we are in the imaginary omnipotence: living our dreams, as in the cinema therefore. Little girl's whim. Or of an actress who would cry out: «My God! what a beautiful home! I need it at all costs!» And who, then, finds the beautiful decoration, the magnificent work of art that would go well with it, and which it needs at all costs.

She returns to Switzerland without her handsome warrior not suspecting the feelings she has for him, with the firm intention of returning to take him. Nothing resists her, in front of her all the obstacles end up being overcome, the most powerful wills end up bending: she knows what she wants, decides to get it and always gets it. The administrative obstacles disappear (she blithely ridicules the local representatives of the administration), the natural difficulties (food shortage, disease) soften... She transgresses in the same way all the symbolic barriers: difference of sexes, difference of generations, difference of parentage, are irrelevant.

At no time does she wonder about the psychological, subjective, social, or «political» implications of her actions. Not even when her handsome warrior and her friends blame her for the very serious fit of madness that he develops, when, after selling her shop in Switzerland and returning to Kenya, she heroically crossed a good part of the country to find him in his village and bring him back with her to Mombasa where she chose the life they would lead. He takes refuge in his village, life in the city not being successful for him. She joins him there and he welcomes her with these words that she does not hear: You stay with me like a Samburu wife! She does not ask herself any questions either when, a little reluctant to the idea that she remains to live in the village, one explains to her that her mere presence could bring in the police who had never set foot there. Nor even when, having informed her mother-in-law of her decision to buy a big car, she invites her to give up this project: "The idea seems absurd to her». When you have a car, you are someone from another planet,

someone with a lot, a lot of money. She has never been in a car in her life. And people, what are people going to say? But Mrs. Hofmann never cared what people thought.

She will then complain of being treated like someone from another planet and used as if she has endless financial resources. After the car, the first shop in the village («so that no one has to go hungry anymore»), the first disco in the village, etc. She can chase the district chief away to make way for her husband without wondering what meaning such daring can take in a village lost in the bush. It carries more weight, real and symbolic, than the parish priests, teachers, village leaders, representatives of authority. She makes a child to whom she gives her name without caring about the meaning that can have in a very traditional patrilineal society. She creates for herself an absolutely new place in this group, which exceeds and flouts all the existing places, then leaves when the situation becomes untenable, with no particular qualms for those whom she lets down after having turned their lives upside down and to have made them sparkle an absolutely fantastic world.

This omnipotence is difficult to combine with any position whatsoever in a kinship relationship: if she had been a nun, acting in the name of God, if she intervened within the framework of an organism, of a State, he might have had some be been otherwise. In the context of the couple relationship, she is everything, he is nothing, he owes her everything, it is thanks to her that everything has become possible for him, etc. Everything she does is for Good, anything that he does of himself, and that does not correspond to his requirements, is Evil. We understand what such a situation can have unbearable, humiliating, devastating, and we are surprised that her husband did not leave more «psychic» feathers in the adventure. (But it's unclear what happened to him after she left him and then turned their story into a bestseller). One can wonder, with the husband, about the real motives of these actions and doubt that love alone is sufficient to justify such a desire for creation: Beauty and the Beast, it is all the same only a tale!

A true "African experience" strongly marks the Westerner. In most cases, he will find there the «natural reserve of imagination and white fantasies», a place where he can realize his aspiration of a «purely hedonic self» as he was able to form one in his childhood [32]. This same expression of "natural reserve" is used by Freud to speak of the place of creation of fantasies and of the reign of the pleasure principle. The movement which leads from the pleasure principle to the reality principle does not concern the whole of the psyche: a «form of thought activity» will be «separated by cleavage» and it is in this shelter that fantasies are created, just as in modern states, certain areas such as natural parks are left in their «original state», preserved «from the transformations of civilization» [33]. The Westerner will behave there like a child playing. The latter, says Freud, «behaves like a poet, insofar as he creates his own world, or to speak more exactly, he arranges the things of his world according to a new order, at his convenience". According to him, "the literary creator does the same thing as the playing child; he creates a fantasy world that he takes very seriously": "It would be wrong to think [that the child] does not take [the world he creates through play] seriously; on the contrary, he takes his game very seriously; he engages in it large amounts of affect. The opposite of the game is not seriousness but [...] reality» [34].

In other cases, he will experience there the confrontation with the irreconcilable within himself, the psychic irreconcilable, resuscitated by the encounter with a very different other. I use the term irreconcilable here, bearing in mind the importance that Freud, in his first clinical writings, recognizes in the onset of mental illness and in the constitution of symptoms. «The patients whom I analyzed», he explained at the time, «[...] were in a state of good mental health, until the moment when a case of irreconcilability occurred in their representative life, that is to say. -to say until the moment when an event, a representation, a sensation presented itself to their ego, arousing an affect so painful that the person decided to forget the thing, not feeling the strength to resolve the contradiction by the work of thought between this irreconcilable representation and his ego» [35]. The symptoms of all the psychoneuroses of defense, he adds, arise «by the attempt to suppress an irreconcilable representation which had entered into a painful opposition with the ego of the patient» [36]. This irreconcilable, this antithesis is not unrelated to the idea of the devil: «In normal life, counter-wills or inhibited intentions are no less demonic: stored up, they lead a hidden existence in a sort of kingdom of shadows, until they emerge as evil spirits and take control of the body» [37].

It is probably for this reason that Mannoni wrote *Psychology of colonization* [38]: it would be, in short, an attempt to ward off the unease caused by his African experience. This is more or less how he himself explains it: "I had an official post in Madagascar which left me some leisure time. I was interested in ethnographic research as an amateur and I ended up being involved in it so disturbingly that I undertook, during my holidays in Paris, a psychoanalysis" [39]. He later gives a clear explanation of this encounter with the irreconcilable that constitutes the White/Black relationship: "We can concede to the universalists that racial differences have absolutely no meaning in the order of nature. But it's the same way that the various phonemes that make up a baby's tweet don't have a natural meaning on their own. They will get one later. Any discussion, scientific or not, about the nature of racial differences per se cannot advance a question that arises elsewhere. These differences will become the signifiers which will make it possible, clearly or confusedly, to finally pose the statement of the deepest problems which concern the relations between men, as if the meeting of the white and the black, far from being the meeting of two men without -difference, was the meeting of difference in a pure state, difference without natural meaning, which becomes the symbol both obvious and absurd of what goes wrong in human relations [...]» [40].

Excerpts from a letter sent to me by a worker I met in Burkina Faso more than a year after his return to France, who had refused to adopt this position of «little White»: «I measure the time that has already passed since the publication of your book and do not explain my silence to me...» No doubt this is still linked to the very real difficulty I have in taking stock of the experience. African. I believe that your letter of the [...] about the «neo-colonial scum of the cooperation services» helps me a little there as well as our last simple and friendly telephone exchange. This period is still alive in my dreams and manifests itself more as an injury (useful to better understand the "principle of humanity") than as a constructed experience. From this point of view, reading your rich and abundant book, sometimes difficult, was a test. Test especially by the fact that your work put me in contact with the ignorance in which I was of what your writing illuminates. Thank you for allowing me to come a long way. There is also your quote from Seminar 20 of Lacan: «The habit loves the monk because it is through this that they become one, etc". «[...] I hope now that we will be able to meet. I would like to take it all in person with you...»

Resistances

The idea that Western cultures constitute the supreme stage of civilization and that the adult white man is the most successful product of the development of the human species is firmly anchored in psychoanalysis, perhaps more than in other disciplines elsewhere. Any deviation from this model is considered a form of aberration and land degeneration. These habits of thought are nevertheless accompanied by the illusion of great tolerance and a deep humanism towards other cultures. So that this text will obviously encounter a new form of «resistance» and will inflict a narcissistic wound on those who still believe themselves to be invested with a mission: «the heavy burden of the white man» - to use Jules' expression. ferry - doomed to bring the benefits of civilization to the scraps of humanity sprawled out, no doubt, in his mind, in decay and corruption. (Mr. Ferry forgetting then quite conveniently that if decay and corruption there was, the white man had done no little to precipitate the rest of humanity [41]).

Jean-Bertrand Pontalis explains: "The analysis of children, however precocious it may be, in no way makes us contemporary with the "conception "and" birth "of the unconscious (would this be the fantasy of the primitive scene? specific to analysts?); it does not make us discover a simpler being but of another complexity; it shows us less at work the drives in a raw state or the affects in a rudimentary form than a logic as sophisticated as ours but from which the operations and, in part, the objects differ. Psychoanalysis can therefore only carry out the same revision, heartbreaking or not, that ethnology underwent some time ago: savage thought is not primitive thought; or again: if there is undoubtedly a progressive elaboration of the secondary processes, it does not for all that develop from the primary processes; the laws which govern the primary functioning of thought and those which govern its secondary functioning never cease to coexist and oppose each other. Paradoxically, it is the psychoanalysis of children which should deliver us, more radically than the psychoanalysis of adults, from the «archaic illusion» [42].

I will be opposed to the argument that there are psychologists, psychiatrists and psychoanalysts who are currently interested in cultural diversity. Indeed, today that they are dealing with patients from other cultures, some of them note that types of mental disorders are more frequent in one cultural group than in another; that the triggering causes of these disorders differ from culture to culture; that the modes of expression of suffering are not the same according to the cultures; that methods of treating mental illness must take into account the culture of origin of patients; that people from cultures that are too far removed from Western models exhibit greater psychic fragility; that the loss of cultural references, the loosening of ties to the group to which they belong, and therefore social and cultural isolation, constitute a favorable ground for the outbreak of psychiatric pathologies; that in the context of immigration, the difference between the culture of parents and that of children born in exile causes conflict and suffering, etc. (On this last point, Jacques Hassoun actually explains that transmission is «what accounts for the past and the present. In these conditions, it allows the child to approach the existence that will be his own. All the less painfully as he hears his parents talk about their history and their daily lives, but a father continues to live according to a patriarchal model while the child finds that in everyday life he is an object of humiliation... but that a mother, «brothers and cousins» try to impose in a context of social permissiveness old models of good manners to which girls are supposed to submit... and it is then that the transmission will be nothing more than a false fable capable of creating a radical savage, marginality or devastating despair accompanied by a temptation to reconstitute in another time, in another space, a backward-looking model of which fundamentalism represents the most tragic!” [43]).

Similar arguments were made against Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks* [44]: «This text revealing the difficulty of the caregiver in the metropolis to hear, beyond the possible language barrier, this reduction of the other to an object, and his inability to open up to a real welcome that goes beyond irritation, contempt and aggressiveness, is scandalous for the time but also precursor. It is still a strange actuality” [45] «Inaudible, disturbing for the thought patterns which predominated in these years [...], *Black skin, white masks*, after its reissue in 1965 and the publication of the pocket book in 1971, became an initiatory classic. The tone changes. Decolonization has taken place and racism remains, even exaggerated. The work of young Fanon is then presented as a prophetic essay on racism” [46].

Conclusion

To punctuate this discussion, it seems to me important to note, with Yves Vargas, that it is currently urgent to pose the stakes of a true debate between the West and the other cultures: 1) «The history of the peoples having swept aside naturalistic racisms and educational racisms, a final figure has appeared: we no longer oppose head and bodies, we no longer oppose culture to ignorance, we oppose culture to culture. The new slave, African or Asian, is no longer declared «inferior», he is only different. Ethnology and anthropology draw this difference through detailed analyzes which mark both the complex quality of these cultures, but also their remoteness. This estrangement is all the more evident since these methods are not applied to Western culture, which prevents them from grasping their analogies and sends these cultures back to an area of almost zoological curiosity». 2) «It goes without saying that the recognition of cultural diversities must go in [the direction] of a real dialogue. Such a dialogue must stop considering the Arab, African and Asian peoples as objects of which the West is the knowing subject. It is good that the West trains orientalists, but a real dialogue outside all cultural racism should accept the existence in the East of «Westernists» who would give Europe an image in the mirror of Africa, of Europe. Asia and immigration” [47].

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3. Claude Lévi-Strauss. “Symbolic efficiency”. (1949), in *Anthropologie structurale*, op. city (1949):213-234.
4. Masud M Khan. “The therapeutic framework of Freud”. *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse*, 1970, number 1 (1970): 99-104.

5. Ideal psychoanalysis thus described by Pontalis: "Let us assume that the history of psychoanalysis has been less to define the limits of its action in order to specify them always more precisely, like a State which would proceed to incessant rectifications of borders, than to stay near of these limits, like a nomadic people who would never settle in a province, were it distant and apart from the reigning civilizations, but would find its space only in the confines, its reason for existing only in this neighborhood nameless with a line that he himself is, outside of any map, drawing. But, he says, "that is, of course, an ideal view". It would be too easy to show that psychoanalysis has, in its reality, especially institutional, functioned rather on the model of the State" (Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, "Bornes ou confins?" (1974), in *Between dream and pain*, Paris, Gallimard (1977): 201-215.
6. "Psychoanalysis is everywhere in the century, we are bathed in it. It is there, in the public of which it largely informs certain reactions [...]". (Jean Laplanche, *Problematics 1*. Anguish (1980), Paris, PUF, coll. "Quadrige". 1998, p. 9). "[...] Psychoanalytic man is not only a man according to psychoanalysis, studied by psychoanalysis, but a man who is now culturally marked by psychoanalysis" (Jean Laplanche, *New foundations for psychoanalysis* (1987), Paris, PUF, coll. "Quadrige" (1994): 16.
7. "Born at the dawn of the twentieth century, psychoanalysis is included in all the representations, myths, feelings and actions of which the child has been the object since the beginning of the industrial era. [...] Education has become a priority for the modern State [...] First on an ad hoc basis, as a theoretical-ideological referent, many analysts, since the fifties in France, are became practitioners not only of therapy, but also of education and prevention. Culture asks them to say and do something about the child, its reality and its development. [...] Moreover, the culture was impregnated with an analytical discourse widely disseminated by the media. We consume Freud, Spitz and Spock; parents are duly advised and informed, and any well-behaved little boy knows he is in love with his mother". (Jean Coumut, "The educational temptation in analysis and analysis", in M. Fain, M. Cifali, E. Enriquez, J. Coumut, *Les trois métiers impossibles*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres (1987): 41-72.
8. Masud M. Khan, op. city 102.
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10. Serge Vidennan. *De l'argent en psychanalyse et au-delà*, Paris, PUF (1992): 153.
11. "In schizophrenics, we observe [...] a number of language alterations [...]. The way of expressing oneself is often the object of particular care, it is "sought after". "mannered". The construction of sentences undergoes a particular disorganization which makes them incomprehensible [...]. "We can try to characterize the way of thinking of schizophrenics by saying that they treat concrete things as if they were abstract". (Sigmund Freud, "The unconscious". in *Métapsychologie* (1915), Paris, Gallimard, (1968): 65-121.
12. Jean Pouillon. "The work of Claude Lévi-Strauss" (1956), in Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Race and history*, Paris, Denoël (1987): 87-127.
13. Sigmund Freud. "Psychology of crowds and analysis of the self" (1921), in *Essais de psychanalyse*, Paris, Payot (1981): 117-217.
14. Sigmund Freud. *Malaise dans la civilisation* (1929), Paris, PUF (1971): 68.
15. Daniel Sibony, "Institution and racism". in M. Wieviorka (ed.), *Racisme et modernité*, Paris, La Découverte (1993): 141-145.
16. Daniel Sibony. "Institution and racism" 141.
17. Racist hatred is not "when a Zulu, for example, is nearby, living and enjoying in Zulu, it doesn't bother anyone. Racist hatred is something else, it is the horror of difference when it comes back to the same thing (when the Zulus start dating your daughters, living like you, integrating themselves equally into your work while remaining Zulus. Conversely, it is the horror to see the same becoming different. What could be "more same" for parents than their children? But when these children, these adolescents, make strange, indecipherable choices for parents [...], parents are seized with a kind of anguish, fury, destruction and self-destruction which is akin to the fury that we find in those we call racists" 141-142.
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23. IN Le Guerinel. "Psychoanalysis in an African environment? The weight of cultural reality". Revue française de psychanalyse, LI, 3 (1987).
24. In the Guinean imagination, far from being deified, General Faïdherbe is on the contrary a figure of Satan.
25. See Amadou Hampâté Ba, Amkoulél. L'enfant peul (1991), Arles, Actes Sud (1992).
26. "Recruitment for the army depopulates our colonies. We no longer count the deserted villages. Our workforce is fleeing to the English. »(Albert Londres, Terre d'ébène (1929), Paris, Le serpent à plume, (1994): 155-156.
27. Cf. Amadou Hampâté Ba, Yes, my Commander! Dissertation (II), Arles, Actes Sud (1994).
28. Nigel Barley gives a valuable description of the small world of whites living in Cameroon. These tables can be extended without much modification to many African countries. "The saddest case is that of diplomats, who seem to have as a rule of conduct to avoid as much as possible contact with the population of the country, pass by razing the walls of their office at their residence where they barricaded themselves, via the trendy coffee. [...] Unlike diplomats who cloistered themselves, [young French] [...] maintained exchanges with Africans, and not only with those who served them as servants. [...] Europeans residing in Africa tend to become strange characters. Their extreme mediocrity perhaps explains the pitiful state of the diplomatic corps; quite a few crazy people - I have met a few - who go very far despite the damage they leave behind. »(Un anthropologue en rout, op. Cited 30-31.
29. "In Psychologie de la colonization [by Octave Mannoni], along the way, there appears a rather detailed analysis of the springs of racism and in particular that of the colonial "little White": the latter, convinced of his superiority, considers himself, in an imperious manner. and violent, as biologically belonging to a superior race, both denying the other and making him the scapegoat, a place of projection of forbidden fantasies, generally with a violent sexual connotation. »(Alice Cherki, Frantz Fanon, Portrait, Paris, Le Seuil (2000): 51.
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41. "This great Western civilization, creator of the wonders we enjoy, it has certainly not succeeded in producing them without consideration. Like his most famous work, a pile where architectures of unknown complexity are being developed, the order and harmony of the West demand the elimination of a prodigious mass of evil by-products of which the earth is today. 'hui infected. What you show us first, travels, is our junk thrown in the face of humanity. »(Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes tropiques*, Paris, Plon (1955): 36.
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