



The mother-daughter relationship and its devastation effects.

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aiming to the subject's own reading related to sex.

Introduction

According to Freud ⁽¹⁹²³⁾, women's psychic representation into the unconscious which matches the genital maturity proper of adulthood does not exist, a fact that makes this concept so complex. Regarding Oedipus, sexuality shall order itself, determining what position the subject will occupy into the sex gap. In other words, Freud points out that a subject's sexual identity is determined by its relation with the castration complex, and not by its real anatomical sex, to say, by having a penis or a vagina. The real sexuality is marked by the unveiled language into the significant carried by the subject,

Approaching the femininity issue, Freud (1932), tries to establish some fundamental points about the girls passage through Oedipus. Among them we can remark the acknowledgment that, both for girls and for boys, the first love object is the mother, discovery that motivated the need to know how and why the girl, originally linked to her mother, switched to her father afterwards, evolving from the virile to the female phase to which is biologically designed. Nevertheless, Freud points out that women cannot distance themselves completely from that which was their first object of libidinal investment, ie, mother, by maintaining an ambivalent relationship with her that can last a lifetime.

Freud states that the result of the relationship between mother and daughter is catastrophic, which Lacan later called devastation. Our proposal, therefore, is to define in some texts of Freud and Lacan, the specificity of mother/daughter relationship, for a better understanding about this subjective phenomenon and its consequences for the woman constitution. An inquiry that concerns us about the mother/daughter relationship is the impossibility of transmitting what being a woman means.

1 – Mother/daughter relationship and the paradigm of devastation

Freud⁽¹⁹³³⁾, resuming the female sexuality topic in "Femininity" Conference, aims to the existence of a gray area into the mother/daughter relationship, however attempts to remedy the difficulty of thinking feminine from Oedipus and castration. At the mentioned text, Freud will remark three differences related to the boy and girl passage thorough Oedipus. Firstly, emphasizes the fact that the girl, unlike the boy, must change simultaneously of sex and object. Whereas the boy has only one predominant genital area, to say, one genital organ, unlike the girl who has two: vagina and clitoris, as analogous to male's virile member. Freud pointed out another difference which is no change for men related to the love-object's gender; it will remain the same as the original object. Regarding women's erogenous zone change, it will be followed by the object's gender change. Finally, the third difference relates how, from the Oedipus complex, the subject places itself to the castration complex. The castration complex becomes the organizing principle of genders gap.

Nevertheless, this text emphasizes that boys and girls have the same libidinal relationship with the mother, who becomes the privileged object of genital impulses for both. Considers that, although the castration complex ends the boy's Oedipus complex, with the renunciation of the parental objects as outcome, its effect over the girl leads her to refuge herself in the love of the father, to whom she never will abandon completely. On the other hand, states that evolution into femininity can be aborted, insofar as unconsciously, the girl's turmoil because the lack of a penis, to say, by discovers the castration can lead into two different outcomes: can be assumed an attitude of rejection, the renunciation to phallic activity, or reneging castration, enabling the masculinity complex, a stance that can lead her to homosexuality.

Even approaching the femininity through the phallus, Freud⁽¹⁹³³⁾ does acknowledge the girl's primitive relationship with the mother as a fundamental being. Freud considers a pre-Oedipal phase existence which determines mother/daughter relationship, whose characteristic is the presence of ambivalent feelings -a combination between love and hate from the girl to her mother, which mostly culminates in hatred. The girl's indictments and complaints addressed to the mother are intended to mask the hostile feelings nourished by the fact that she blames her mother about the lack of penis, because she cannot forgive her this disadvantage. The phallic vindication occurs to be included into the three possible outcomes in which the girl is placed facing the discovery of castration, which explains the obstinacy of women to have a phallus. Freud proves that the phallic logic is tuned with the psychic apparatus function, and the feminine remains unable of significance. Due to Freud, penis envy is what does run the oedipal evolution.

Freud^(1933 pg. 30) emphasizes that the castration which the girl avoid to deal with, is the mother's castration, because her love was addressed to a phallic instead a castrated one. That inquiry propounds to the girl a particular problem when it is about her relationship with her own femininity because the female identity is unconsciously equated with a deprivation. By discovering that the mother is castrated enables the girl to abandon her as love object; however, by realizing becomes the reason why the hostility prevails indefinitely. The intensity of hatred

that the girl's grows to the mother is equivalent to the intensity of love. This love, however, is doomed to succumb, as it the girl pivots to her father, hoping acquire his so envied penis. To that mother who seduces, who arouses the desire so she can ban it, only remains hostility.

A strong masculinity complex development would be, according to Freud, a girl's second possible outcome from the Oedipus complex, derived from the castration realization. In this case, there is a rejection attitude to accept castration which combines rebellion attitude and exacerbation of masculinity. The reason why masculinity complex sets, according to Freud, relies on two facts: first, the girl did not resign clitoral activity, and second, by pursuing refuge into the identification neither with the phallic mother or the father. Female homosexuality would be a direct consequence from the masculinity complex (Freud, 1933 p. 33-34).

Summing up, Freud discloses us that by discovering the castration reality nearly irreparable catastrophes into the female psyche happen. Difficulties regarding the elaboration of a maternal positive identity capable of sustain a desiring subject's identity tearing down the castration anxiety, makes the woman a puzzle to psychoanalysis.

Lacan resumes Oedipus Freudian question in his seminar about "The formations of the unconscious." Along its course, Lacan tries to undo the post-Freudian analyst's mistakes by attributing excessive importance to the mother, featuring the mother/child relationship as a dual being.

An essential event from this seminar is Lacan's fact of situate the mother whereas that a primordial Other, word possessor, to the subject. It is about a relationship where the mother's desire performs to situate the subject on the Other's field. Lacan considers the mother as the word carrier, but not of language, whereas that a logical organization capable of regulating the subject's relationships with the instinctual field through symbolic castration.

In this sense, lacanian Oedipus proposes the symbolic father as the one who operates a cut in the mother/child relationship, enabling the possibility of constitute something beyond the imaginary capture. The phallic significance, introduced by the significant Name-of-the-Father, supposedly encompasses the mother's desire; nevertheless something always leaks regarding the feminine jouissance.

Proposed the quantum formulae of sexuation in 1972's Seminar 20 "Encore", Lacan reduces the oedipal myth to the castration's unique logical. These formulas, however, emphasizes the barrier function against the body jouissance which is installed by the symbolic father.

Lacan (1973), in the text "The etourdit", uses the term devastation to designate the woman's relationship with her mother. Following up Freudian text indication about femininity, states that the mother can be her daughter's devastation.

In this sense, pretends to approach the feminine from the border between the symbolic and the real, to indicate that a daughter's devastation from her mother may be a clue from privileged relationship between the woman and the real. According to Lacan, the devastation affecting the girl is related with the enigma formulated by the mother's feminine jouissance, i.e., her absented of limits behavior. It is a statement that this jouissance is outside from symbolic, and then no significant exists which defines what a woman is (Lacan, 1972. pg. 79-80). The devastation, as a subjective phenomenon which emerges from the mother/daughter relationship, will leave its marks over the woman's relationship with her body, her romantic relationships and her relationship with the losses.

Summing up, the devastation can be apprehended in the full love demands approached by the daughter; demand which pursues filling a void, such as Cristina Drummond states "love is why a woman intends to amend her lack of substance then she imputes to the Other". The demand can lead the girl into devastation, insofar as its legitimization by the mother becomes impossible. The mirroring relationship is at stake, where the girl looks into the maternal Other's glance, the approval to her own body. It is the Other's glance which allows the body's imagery covering, a body inherited with the mark of a desexualized truth.

2 - The devastation in a Freudian clinical case.

It narrates about an eighteen years old beautiful and intelligent damsel, belonging to a wealthy family who prompted her parents distress and concern because her admiration and stalking towards certain "society lady" around ten years older. The parents said that this lady had a very intimate relationship with a female friend and roommate, having promiscuous relations with some men simultaneously, a fact which did not interfered at all the damsel's feelings. Neither forbiddance nor surveillance inhibited the damsel from seize any rare opportunities of meeting with her beloved, either by waiting her for hours staring at her front door, or sending her gifts, but the lady will not dispense her the desired attention.

The parents never had seen in the daughter any interest about striplings, nor pleasure over their compliments; while, on the other hand, they supposed this bond was just a sequence, in an accentuated degree, of her feelings demonstrated towards other women along the last years.

Eventually the unavoidable happened, the father run into his daughter accompanied by the lady, he surpassed and stared at them angrily. Suddenly, the damsel ran away, jumping on a railway track. Although the damages were few, she paid this indisputably serious suicide attempt spending considerable time lying on her back in bed. After her recovery, she realized how easier than before to get what she wanted. Parents did not dare to contradict such determination and the lady who, until then, coldly noticed her advances, was moved with this evident proof of serious passion and began to treat her more friendly. Approximately six months

after that episode, the parents applied for professional counseling and affirmed the aim of bring her daughter back into a "normal state".

Regarding the topic, parent's attitudes were considered separately. The father was observed as a serious man, severe with his children, but basically, tender-hearted. The behavior towards his only daughter was influenced by the thoughtfulness of woman he had. Once aware about the daughter's homosexual tendencies, he become enraged and tried to suppress them with menaces. He deemed his daughter as a deviant or mentally disturbed. By all means at his reach, he was determined to battle the daughter's homosexuality. Even, if necessary, with an arranged marriage.

The mother, according to Freud, was a young and vain woman who had a differential treatment towards her children, addressing roughness to the daughter, whereas with the sons demonstrated to be quite tolerant. She did not consider as seriously as the father the daughter's amorousness with the lady, except for the fact of it becoming public. Due to Freud, the mother led the girl to desist her place as a woman in her sake, because in her urge to impress men she saw a contender in her daughter.

Freud emphasized another important fact which is the damsel's behavior towards her love object; she had assumed the male role in the relationship with the lady, ergo, by assuming herself as one in which humility is displayed alongside the sublime overvaluation of the sexual object and the renunciation of all narcissistic satisfaction, so characteristic from the masculine way of loving. Regarding these Freud thoughts which suits her *"... had not only chosen a feminine love-object, but she had also developed a masculine attitude towards that object"*. (Freud, 2006 [1920] p. 166)

Regarding her sexual history, Freud says that in her childhood, the girl passed thorough Oedipus complex with its characteristic attitude. Subsequently she began to replace the father by her older brother. She had no recollection of any sexual trauma on early age; either they were discovered by analysis. The comparison between her and her brother's genitalia, borderline on latency stage, approximately in hers five years old, which left her largely impressed and will carry major consequences aftereffects. Along pre-pubertal years, in school gradually became familiar with the facts about sex and noticed this knowledge with mixed feelings between lust and scared aversion.

At thirteen/fourteen years old she began to show great affection to a boy around the age of three years old, whom she used regularly meet in a playground. She attached strongly with the child, consequently, she and his parents became acquaintances. Back then, she had a strong desire to become a mother and have a child. However, to the brevity, became indifferent towards the child and began to get interested in mature yet young-looking women. Manifestations of this interest soon earned her a severe punishment by her father.

This change occurred simultaneously with certain family event, which Freud will consider of utmost importance. The mother's new pregnancy and the third brother's birth; at the age of sixteen.

Freud considers the beloved as a mother's substitution. Emphasizes that after the birth of the younger brother she addressed mothers as the first objects of affection, women in their mid-thirties, to whom she had seen with their children occasionally. However, due to the difficulty of finding mothers with homosexual tendencies, she abandoned motherhood as fundamental condition of amatory choice.

The mother's pregnancy impact was caused by the fact that it happened simultaneously when the damsel was experiencing her childhood Oedipus complex revival in the puberty. The damsel had the desire of having her father's child; she felt disappointed and betrayed, because her rival unconsciously, her mother, is who became impregnated. After this disappointment, she completely averted from the father and men's love, wholly repudiates her maternity desire and relinquishes her femininity, procuring another object for her libido. Freud explains that the disappointment experienced by the damsel caused her a *negative oedipal complex, taking her mother rather than her father as a love object and using her father instead of her mother as an object of identification*. (Freud, 2006 [1920] p. 170)

The damsel, Freud explains, by not knowing what to do with the presence of an overly real mother, plunges into homosexuality so she is able to have a surrogate mother to whom she could passionately connect with.

In this sense, the homosexual choice offered a secondary gain, aiming to decrease the hostility from her mother, because, by relinquish men, leaving them to the mother, and thus, no further competition.

Freud emphasizes the fact that the women of choice she targeted had no reputation for homosexuality and therefore could not have offered her some prospect of sexual satisfaction. On the other hand, unhesitatingly, she rejected the innuendos from a lesbian friend with her own age.

Freud states two reasons due the suicide attempt: first by executing a self-punishment (guiltiness regarding the ambivalent feelings towards her parents) and second, accomplish by wish-fulfillment. in the text, the self-punishment is also interpreted as wish-fulfillment, since the act of self-killing would be related to kill the object to which she identified and had hostile feelings with, in this case, her parents, such as he states: "*in the identification with the mother, who should die during the childbirth of that child denied to the girl, the punishment itself is once more a wish-fulfillment*". (Freud, 2006 [1920] p. 174)

Freud identifies men rejection as something that came up from the transference, in which the patient assumed an indifferent attitude to the analyst's placement. In this sense, he counseled the damsel's parents to keep continuing the treatment with a female professional.

The analysis proved that the damsel carried from childhood a strong "masculinity complex". After an encounter with his brother's genitalia, she developed a severe penis envy. She was a feminist and bothered about the modalities on women's

treatment compared to men, who had more freedom and rights. The Dame's requirement of choice was the bisexuality, since, additionally of satisfying homosexuals desires (male ideal), also satisfying heterosexual ones (female ideal).

Freud concludes by saying that is not psychoanalysis incumbency to solve the homosexuality topic. Should be, at most, be satisfied by revealing the psychological mechanisms which culminates determining the object of choice, and reassembling the paths which lead them to the instinctual dispositions. Freud's so accurate case narration; serve us as an example about how a mother's relationship with her daughter can provoke devastating effects. Leaned from Lacan, the child needs to find a place into the mother's desire so be able to self-constitute as desiring.

The love's demand that the child address to the Other is also a demand on its own being. What am I to the Other? What does the Other want from me? Those questions underline the fundamental alienation necessary due the subject's constitution starting from the signifiers coming from the Other. However, this Other signifiers place is also marked by a void. Insofar the child affronts the Other's void that can attain a separation, self-constituting as a desiring subject. However, when the child scopes into the mother's gaze its own place and not see it, is the child's existence itself which is much endangered.

Finally, considering the homosexual damsel's case, the registry absence into her mother's desire brought her devastating effects. Dealing with an indifferent mother, who, according to Freud, displayed so real that became unbearable to her. However she cannot, apparently, let aside the phallic mother, starting to seek her in other women.

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