

If Marcel Proust shows us in “Un amour de Swan” that the malaise in culture is based on what Pascal called “amour propre”, what role can psychoanalysis still play in the city?

Marcel Proust deploys the triptych “Love, Hatred and Ignorance”, which circulates among the characters in this novel, and from which the hero suffers to the point of feeling suffocated, unbreathable. Swan may be hated by his peers, but he'll give up simple happiness in his relationship with a seamstress for a chimera in which he imagines he'll find the grail in a cocotte. In spite of himself, the man creates his own hell, a kind of timeless ad nauseum “Negro Island” (in reference to Agatha Christie's book “The Ten”). The pursuit of the phallus condemns both men and women to ignorance and hatred. Psychoanalysis would be a possible path for everyone to take, to free ourselves from an imaginary that hinders “loving and working”, and to breathe existentially. How, then, are we to understand the current hatred of psychoanalysis?

Throughout his work, Freud evokes regressions and fixations as ways of avoiding this issue. If man, as Pascal puts it, “is nothing but disguise, lies and hypocrisy, both in himself and towards others. He doesn't want to be told the truth. He avoids telling it to others. And all these dispositions, so far removed from justice and reason, have a natural root in his heart.” Pascal, *Pensées*, no. 978 Lafuma, no. 100 Brunschvicg. psychoanalysis is to be understood as a Pascalian wager, in which we are allowed to hope from a lack of knowledge, to desire a path, to set off on an adventure, whereas consumer society, in the work of Sysiphe, would reduce the human being to the condition of a quick-fix consumer. It's also, if we take the philosopher's word for it, entering a game where you're bound to win, and where the player has “nothing to lose”. In the course of an analysis, for example, it's not uncommon to notice an analysand abandoning an addiction to a pharmakon he'd never mentioned before. However, while in neurosis it's a question of letting go, in psychosis, on the contrary, an object can appear, a sign of dependence, which introduces an elsewhere to the incestual magma in which a subject is caught (a psychotic analysand thus develops a passion for an energy drink).

“We must endure to desire”, as Lacan put it, and this is the path of all analytic work, which invites us to let go of the infantile and take a step aside with regard to the symptom. This presupposes an unknown, as Pascal suggests.

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