

## WINNICOTT AND RICOEUR: DIALOGUES BETWEEN CONCERN FOR THE OTHER AND ETHICAL INTENTIONALITY

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**ABSTRACT:** In this work, we intend to make an articulation between the notion of “concern for the other” and “ethical intent” in P. Ricoeur with those of the development of subjectivity in Winnicott and its relationship with the environment. Through this crossing it can be established that both the maturation processes and the analyst’s place find their foundation in P. Ricoeur’s theory, not only metapsychological, but also ethical.

**Keywords:** Winnicott; Ricoeur; metapsychology; ethics.

**Resumo:** Winnicott e Ricoeur: diálogos entre a preocupação pelo outro e a intencionalidade ética. Este artigo pretende realizar uma articulação entre a noção de “preocupação pelo outro” e “intencionalidade ética” em P. Ricoeur e a de desenvolvimento da subjetividade em Winnicott e sua relação com o meio ambiente. Através desta interseção, é possível estabelecer que tanto os processos de amadurecimento assim como o lugar do analista encontram sua fundamentação na teoria de P. Ricoeur, não apenas metapsicológico, mas também ético.

**Palavras-chave:** Winnicott; Ricoeur; metapsicologia; ética

**Resumen:** Winnicott y Ricoeur: diálogos entre la preocupación por el otro y la intencionalidad ética. En este trabajo se pretende realizar una articulación entre la noción de “preocupación por el otro” e “intencionalidad ética” en P. Ricoeur con las del desarrollo de la subjetividad en Winnicott y su relación con el medioambiente. Mediante este cruce se puede establecer que tanto los procesos de maduración como el lugar del analista encuentran su fundamentación en la teoría de P. Ricoeur, ya no sólo metapsicológico, sino ético.

**Palabras clave:** Winnicott; Ricoeur; metapsicología; ética

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The present work is framed within interdisciplinary research at the intersection of two diverse disciplines, but with common thematic fields: psychoanalysis and hermeneutical phenomenology. Throughout the 20th century there were numerous approaches to the intersection between both theoretical fields. In the field of French thought, for example, beginning with the existential psychoanalysis of Sartre (1943/2008), continuing with the phenomenology of the body of M. Merleau-Ponty (1946/1976), passing through the epistemological-hermeneutical approach of P. Ricoeur, the incorporation of the problems of psychoanalysis in M. Foucault's archeology of knowledge, and reaching up to M. Heidegger's material phenomenology, there is a long tradition of interdisciplinary reflection. Likewise, in the particular case of Winnicottian psychoanalysis, the constant references of G. Agamben (1977/2006) and A. Honneth (1992/1997) should be mentioned, who explicitly incorporate Winnicott in his theory of the struggle for recognition. In this brief but not exhaustive list, the important synthesis that L. Biswanger (1975/2003) made between psychoanalysis and Heideggerian philosophy should not be forgotten. This article is part of this interdisciplinary tradition and attempts to make a contribution in the field of the relations between psychoanalysis and hermeneutical phenomenology. The links between philosophy and psychoanalysis have been profuse since the second half of the 20th century. However, not much history is found in the articulation between P. Ricoeur and D. W. Winnicott. Although the French philosopher mentions it in *The paths of recognition* (2004/2008), it still remains as a challenge to build. Indeed, both thinkers reflected on the constitution of subjectivity: P. Ricoeur from the perspective of ethical intentionality and narrative identity, and Winnicott from the dependence of the early stages of infant development based on the protection and support of the person who takes care.

The work of D. W. Winnicott requires a particular reflection in order to be approached from a phenomenological-hermeneutical point of view. The reason for this is that Winnicott never intended to propose a closed system of thought as noted by M. Davis and D. Wallbridge (1988/2001), Green (1985/2008) and Bollas (1988). One of the reasons for this asystematicity of the theoretical framework lies in the audience that Winnicott addresses: parents, social workers, educators, nurses, etc. One of the risks of this enunciative policy is the trivialization of his concepts. To avoid this risk and, fundamentally, because Winnicottian thought contains a profound transformation of psychoanalysis, it is necessary to analyze the clinical and ethical consequences that are only indicated in his work.

In this work it is intended to make an articulation between the notion of "concern for the other" and "ethical intentionality" in P. Ricoeur with those of the development of subjectivity in Winnicott and its relationship with the environment. Through this crossing it can be established that both the maturation processes and the place of the analyst find their foundation in the theory of P. Ricoeur, not only metapsychological, but also ethical. The reason for this articulation lies in the fact that both authors approach the modalities of intersubjectivity from a plane of mutual correlation between the subject and the other. That is, the subject does not remain encapsulated in himself, interpreting himself, but constitutes himself as open in a condition of alterity in relation to others. At Ricoeur, "concern for the other" is linked in a meaningful plot where people are recognized as irreplaceable and that implies a request for recognition. While, in Winnicott, the subjective constitution is woven under a framework that has a certain similarity: the recognition that the mother grants to the child enables the constitution of the self in that encounter between the two. This process of recognition, of "an I am" becomes possible together and from a vital link that houses and shelters the subjectivation process. Said process manifests itself again in the clinical setting as that space is where subjectivity has the chance to constitute itself as a being from the experiences of transitionality, creativity and play to which the analytical work is oriented. In this sense, the articulation between both authors is the beginning of a journey of similar views that allow a better understanding of the processes of constitution of subjectivity. This is that, although Ricoeur belongs to philosophy as much as Winnicott to psychoanalysis, for both of them to exist means to unfold possibilities in which the self is involved. This is recognized as a possible being and constantly transcends the limits imposed by historicity, launches itself into the future and with it can take the initiative of its life.

The tour will be as follows. In the first part, the Winnicottian contribution on subjectivity and the role of the other in the process will be analyzed. In the second, the fundamental notions of Ricoeur's "little ethics" will be deepened. And, in a third, the relationship between the two and their link in the reflection on the clinical space.

## **1 SUBJECTIVITY FROM CARE: EXISTENCE AND WORLDLINESS**

Winnicott developed his work from the use of the baby's first objects, and this observation allowed him to build a theory that accounts for the intermediate space between the internal and external world. This between includes not only the structuring of the infantile psyche, but also a new way of approaching the vicissitudes of the clinic and of reflecting on cultural phenomena. The result of this is a set of notions or conceptual network whose flexible systematization has often led to confusion regarding its reception. Some authors have addressed

this problem and have considered it a work to be done.

Winnicott's clinic grew out of his discovery of play in children and babies. He finds that they manipulate objects in a meaningful way and that they become privileged to the child's universe. This does not mean that they have materiality, but rather that they are the concrete example of the progressive conquest of the world in the child's subjectivity. From there, he observes in more detail the mother-baby relationship at the beginning of the infant's life where the environment will act as a facilitator of development. To the point that Winnicott cannot separate the subject from his relationship with the environment, because between the two a mutual implication is established: the Winnicottian child gradually means the world and at the same time, he means himself. It is only from this baby-medium encounter that it can grow, giving rise to the spontaneous gesture as a sign of the infant's incipient creativity. These are the phenomena that Winnicott describes in his clinic, from the beginning of his work from *Primitive Emotional Development*, 1945, and that he will continue until his last work.

Therefore, it is only possible to consider the development of the baby from its relationship with the environment that surrounds it, specifically, the maternal environment. This explains the statement that "the baby does not exist" and that its place is occupied by the mother-baby pair. Here the term "mother good enough" appears to account for this fundamental role for the child's experience of living and existing. Like its counterpart, if this function is intrusive or indifferent, it will have as a consequence experiences of futility, isolation, violent intrusions and an arrest of the processes of development and individuation.

The facilitating environment refers specifically to the conditions of the maternal environment and the care that she is capable of providing. This function is divided into mother-object and mother-environment. Each one favors certain variables of the baby's growth. The first arises from a complex process of fusion, illusion-disillusionment propelled by the original encounters with the chest that will become more complex over time. The second refers to the possibility that the child has an environment that protects him both from his own impulses, and from the still strange world and that also enables different experiences promoting her growth. It is what C. Bollas (1987/1988) understands as the private discourse between the mother and the child whose language is sustained in the gesture, the look and the expression between them. Without another to accompany him, the fragility of the infant does not find any kind of protection. From this fusion, the child unfolds his potentiality, develops and signifies the world. Winnicott repeats this idea insistently: without the mother or another surrogate, the child has no opportunity to grow. Here the potential is conjugated with the factual: the *a priori* conditions of existence in Winnicott (creativity, spontaneity) are united with the mother who provides with her care the pragmatic conditions for the realization of these development guidelines:

In mother / baby fusion, the mother holds the baby and through love she knows how to adapt to the needs of the self. In these conditions, and only in these and nothing else, the individual can begin to exist. (WINNICOTT, 1956/2003, p. 292).

In the state of absolute dependence there is no I-not-I distinction. The child is fused with the environment in such a way that the child cannot cut himself into what is me and what is different from me. This experience is possible through an overlap between the baby and the object mother: the latter provides a breast to be suckled. That is, she is only capable of experiencing the illusion of omnipotence, if there is a highly reliable environment for it (mother-environment). The experience of omnipotence brings together what the child does versus what the mother provides. Note that it depends on both, but the illusion comes from the child. However, she answered it. This of the mother has a fundamental factor: it gradually opens the world to the child and allows him to conquer it.

In *The family and the development of the individual* (1957/2007), Winnicott establishes that children need a safe environment to be able to challenge it, based on the freedom to live with imagination. Gradually the baby experiences that despite her challenges and even her aggressions (which at first are "by chance") the environment continues with traits of durability and reliability. This has a very high value, since it allows the gradual experience of a world that is becoming enriched in subtleties. The importance of the intimacy of care allows the child to be safe from the unpleasant intrusions of the world that she does not yet know and to protect himself from his own impulses and her affections. The security of care provides the child with a personal and spontaneous life. Later, she will challenge this security: the mother allows the world to appear gradually and the child directs impulsive actions against it. This tension continues throughout childhood. Winnicott also finds it in creative artists: they remember the struggle between impulses and security by creating new forms and abandoning them to create others. The facilitating environment is one that allows the child to have the opportunity to grow, believe and create; however, any unusual or prolonged failure in this environment, particularly early on, brings the individual closer to the disease. This is the importance that Winnicott places on the issue of care, a term that

he associates with care. Due to the defenselessness and fragility of the infant in its first months, dependence on the environment is so radical that the term trust is essential for its development and growth. The interesting thing here is that this environment in which it merges and protects it, is experienced in an omnipotent way. It is what fosters in the child his capacity for illusion. What he unfailingly needs is that this environment be continuous, stable and welcoming. But at the same time, this environment has a dynamic character: as its capacities develop, the environment expands, so that the child can enrich her world. The relationship with the environment never ends; on the contrary, this link is part of the same subjectivity. If at first environment was synonymous with mother, later it extends to the parental couple, the family and society.

Now, this request for care does not refer to any intellectual question. Like Heidegger, Winnicott considers that any theorization could become inappropriate and, above all, useless with respect to the daily care of the child (BAREIRO; BERTORELLO, 2010). This request for the other does not refer to the question of objects (of use, subjective, objective, transitional), but to what Winnicott understands by love. That is, the affective disposition by which the mother identifies with her baby. Because of this, she can provide what she needs, that is, care, protection and support.

Thus understood, the Winnicottian contributions on the early stages refer to the fact that existence arises in relation to. This link does not refer to a merely operative reason, but also an ethical one. Winnicott warns that being effective with the care of the child, but indifferent in the affective, leads him to terrible experiences of abandonment. The notion of double dependency appeals to the fact that the infant needs much more than food or nutrition. Basically without love interest, development loses the condition of subjective growth, the foundation of all somatic and psychic processes. Concern for the other, the way in which the mother relates to her baby, the conditions of factuality of this care are the key to protection (holding) and support (handling) insofar as they involve the conditions of being Winnicottian.

The “little ethics” of P. Ricoeur indicates that the human being is linked in a meaningful plot with the other where people are recognized as irreplaceable. Ricoeur calls it a “request”, emphasizing that it will never be possible to talk about oneself without implying a request for recognition. This request for recognition is linked to concern for the other, which will be analyzed below.

## **2 P. RICOEUR: CONCERN FOR THE OTHER AND ETHICAL INTENTIONALITY: THE REQUEST**

The philosophy of P. Ricoeur has a rich and extensive history. From the reflection on the method of hermeneutical phenomenology, his thought expanded towards the study of textual interpretation to include new domains such as mythology, exegesis, psychoanalysis, the theory of metaphor or narratology. In *Self as another* (1996/2005), he emphasizes that moral identity is the basis of narrative identity. Here arises a vision of subjectivity possessing an ethical-moral dimension. It is based on two opposite poles: the Aristotelian teleological horizon, which, he calls, aspires ethical intention or intention; and Kantian deontology based on rules and justice. The relationship between the two is one of subordination and complementarity between the good and the obligatory. Under this conjunction, Ricoeur defines ethical intentionality as “aspiration of a good life with and for others, in just institutions” (RICOEUR, 1996/2005, p. 257). Such aspiration is inscribed in the horizon of the optional, not of the imperative referred to the intentional subjectivity, since the first implies that it is by appreciating the actions that the subject himself becomes a responsible subject before himself, before others and before the institutions (ZAPATA DÍAZ, 2006). According to Sanchez Hernández (2013), Ricoeur does not seek to constitute the subject, but rather to understand it. For this reason, he does not speak of the subject but of himself to avoid that this concept is linked to the imperialism of the self. Through this thesis he proposes to integrate the person, the other and society as non-separable parts of the good life. For Ricoeur, Aristotle’s question of what is the good of man as man is still valid, and the answer that that good is, living well is still valid. Based on these reflections, his definition of ethical intentionality is based on “self-esteem”, “solicitude for the other” and “sense of justice”.

By self-esteem, he refers to the possibility of introducing changes in the course of one’s life, that is, differentiating means from ends and constituting them over time as bios and not merely zoos. This should not be confused with the Cartesian cogito or a totally autonomous subject. Here autonomy distances itself from the Kantian definition and establishes ties with the notion of vulnerability. No longer as antagonistic but complementary terms: “autonomy is that of a fragile, vulnerable being” since “the human being is by hypothesis autonomous, it must become so” (RICOEUR, 2004/2008, p. 200). That is, the self is constituted from an ethical relationship with the other and not from the certainty of the self.

This self-esteem is linked in a meaningful plot with the other through friendship and respect. Ricoeur calls it a request, emphasizing that it will never be possible to speak of self-esteem without implying a request for

recognition. The request, that is, the possibility of the inclusion of the other than itself in the “good life”, is the condition of possibility of the subject as a project.

The request takes its origin from the Heideggerian principle of *Fürsorge*, that is, the type of treatment or way of bonding that Dasein has with another Dasein (HEIDEGGER, 1927/1997, p. 146). Opening in Heidegger involves thinking about the coexistence (*MitDasein*) of the world in common (*Mitwelt*) that intervene in the meaningful fabric of the world. That is, Dasein projects its possibilities co-originally, not as an individual act, but is co-open together with the others. original element of the claim to live well, man would be morally obliged to recognize himself in the other. This living well of self-esteem is not a closed trait of the person with himself, but is inextricably linked to otherness.

In the request, “the other makes me responsible, that is, capable of responding” (RICOEUR, 1996/2005, p. 374). This position is inspired by the reading about otherness by E. Levinas (1977/2007). As in the Lithuanian philosopher, subjectivity is fundamentally ethical and responsibility originates from dealing with the Other, acquiring direction and meaning. For Ricoeur, also alien to any individualism, the path in the constitution of subjectivity is from and with the other; to the point that a good life without the other would be a contradiction (VILLA SANCHEZ, 2015). The human being does not emerge as a self-sufficient monad, but from a need to be taken into the bosom of a society, and fundamentally, of another that responds to the lack of it. For Ricoeur, the lack or lack inherent in the constitution itself of the yes with its own existence, is assumed together with the request, based on the exchange of giving and receiving in a plane of reciprocity and responsibility (RICOEUR, 1996/2005). Necessity and lack are the ways that lead to the other. Or, to put it another way, they are the otherness of the other of himself. In order to be, the yes requests the other in his call. Thus, alterity is already present in the heart of the self that is understood from the other, from what the other says about him and from what the other does (SANCHEZ HERNÁNDEZ, 2013). Recognition is what unites and separates at the same time in this game between themselves and the other. The other is like me, without being me.

f equality is life in institutions, the request is with respect to interpersonal relationships. The request gives as a partner to the yes, another who is a face [...] she has the people They are irreplaceable. (RICOEUR, 1996/2005, p. 236).

The request is not added to self-esteem from the outside, but has a dialogical dimension that creates the conditions for continuity in such a way that self-esteem and request go together. When asked “what kind of being is the other?”, Ricoeur responds that it is about an alterity that does not come to be added from the outside, but is already part of the ontological constitution of the self. This means that there can only be esteem if there was a request; it is the other who, in his otherness, recognizes that lack and responsibly accompanies the development of that fragile and open esteem. The mediation of the other required in the journey of a power being is traced from a journey based on a “living together”. This “living-together” is sustained in the type of lack or lack that indicates the relationship of the yes with its own existence. Through the request, equality is sought through the initial constitutive inequality of the self in order to perceive oneself as another among others.

In *Paths of recognition* (2004/2008), Ricoeur takes up the relationship between otherness and self-recognition. Recognition is a structure of the yes that is reflected in the movement that brings self-esteem towards the request, and the latter towards justice, and introduces the dyad and plurality in the very constitution of the yes. In any case, recognition in its final form requires a condition of otherness, of plurality: there must be at least two for recognition to take place. Only under this circumstance is mutuality possible, which Ricoeur is interested in distinguishing from simple reciprocity (BELVEDRESI, 2017).

The “concern for the other” that Ricoeur points out may broaden the notion of “primary maternal concern”. For Winnicott, it is what allows the mother to identify with her baby in order to “put herself in his place” and satisfy his requirements (since the baby only communicates via crying and body signals, this identification with him is necessary to discover what is what you need throughout the day). Through this recognition based on her identification with her baby, she can satisfy her needs. These are bodily at first, but gradually they become needs of the self. For Winnicott, an ego relationship begins to exist between the mother and the child, a relationship from which the mother recovers, and from which the child can eventually build in the mother the idea of a person (WINNICOTT, 1956, p. 172). This process is part of the maternal movement that leads from concern to the request, in the Ricoeurian sense, of being able to respond. It is in the call before the infant’s lack, and the mother’s identification with him, that he takes that need as possible to be answered by her. Crying becomes request, and, in response, it becomes recognition. In this way, the process of subjectivation carries with it an ethical germ, care is not devoid of values, affections and beliefs, but is constituted from them. The constitutive human deficiency is answered in this significant network of world views and positions regarding needs as called to be filled and sheltered. The answer is not merely mechanistic or biological, but is framed within a plane of

recognition and assessment. First from the mother to the child when identifying with him, and then from the child to the mother in the I / not-I state of separation that allows her to be perceived as something separate from him. This “second time”, so to speak, is where recognition appears as a “thank you”, which is when Winnicott notices in the child the possibility of saying “ta”. Here is the recognition of a debt ignored in the beginning: “the primary ignorance of the debt and the recognition of it (Di“ ta ”)” (WINNICOTT, 2007a, p. 18). Debt means realizing that needs have been answered by someone who first recognized them as such and provided care in response. In this sense, it can be pointed out that in Winnicott there would be two stages of recognition, as suggested by Ricoeur and that correspond to the child’s development process, who at the beginning lives by the care received and then recognizes them as gifts provided by the mother. It can be argued that “good enough” are not only skills, but also affections and loving responsibilities. Under this aegis, an ethical dimension can be understood that opens a new look at the primary maternal function

### **3 WINNICOTT AND RICOEUR: CONCERN FOR THE OTHER AS A CONDITION OF THE CLINIC**

In the previous sections, the reflections of Winnicott and Ricoeur in relation to the constitution of subjectivity and the role of the other in said process have been addressed. In the English author, the maturation process is inextricably linked to the mother-environment or whoever occupies that place. Without this vital and continuous presence, the self or the Winnicottian self is thrown into the experiences of futility and early anguish that lead to serious and profound psychopathological conditions. In the French philosopher, the self can only be understood from another that responds to the call of the initial lack of the self. What both authors have in common is that both Winnicott and Ricoeur establish the early conditions of subjectivity (psychological in one, from ethical intentionality in the other) from the sameness / otherness relationship. The yes is not a loner on which a good practice or a fulfilled life depends, but the intentionality of the yes and its desires pass through the intentionality and desires of others other than the yes that somehow precede it out of necessity and educate it in the modes, ideals and styles of life (VILLA SANCHEZ, 2015). The birth of the human being requires the concrete care that allows it to live, it requires the existence of the ‘other’, a caregiver, a mother. In the mother-child bond, love arises, which represents the first stage of reciprocal recognition, where the infant shows her needy nature and the caregiver is recognized as being in need. It can be identified that each member of the dyad allows, through intersubjectivity, the construction of identity; that is, for a mother to exist there must be a child and the child exists because it comes from a mother (HERNÁNDEZ; CASTELLANOS, 2015). Now, as has been pointed out in the previous point, this relationship is not symmetric of I / you so to speak, but starts from the child’s dependence on his mother. If it is, he has no chance to grow and develop. The condition of helplessness at the beginning of the child has both biological and bodily needs (to be fed, changed, etc.) along with other more subtle ones such as being loved, looked at, spoken. In both conditions, both physical and affective, the child finds himself in a situation of fundamental lack of subjectivity. This is the request for recognition in the face of the lack of not being self-sufficient and that one can only grow from the initial care of another. The request for recognition takes the form of the ways in which the mother responds with her care. These are the responses that acknowledge the lack and accept it as a calling. This recognition that begins in the fusion stage extends beyond the family to new social institutions. The active recognition of each one of them is what makes it possible to “inhabit the world in a personal way”. In Ricoeur it takes an ethical aspect where ethical intentionality refers to tending towards the good life, with and for others in just institutions (RICOEUR, 2001, p. 175). In the sense that, to account for the place of man in society, it is necessary to establish the place that society occupies in man. That is, to what extent it is socially constituted in ethical-political relations because it is previously constituted and is part of the “others” as the “others” are part of it. Through this thesis, Ricoeur proposes to integrate the person, the other and society as non-separable parts of a life worth living. In this way, you can notice the process that starts from the intimate and the private, towards the public and social. Institutions contain the subjects that are part of them, and their interaction depends on the primary significant experiences. The condition of analysis, as a space instituted on the nature of the unconscious and its vicissitudes, reveals and reissues said primordial framework.

Thus raised, in this last section and by way of conclusion, the notions of both thinkers in the clinical space will be jointly analyzed. Winnicott takes as an analytical model the original experiences between the infant and his environment. The path that the child takes to unfold his own subjectivity is similar to what is put into play in the analytical setting. Indeed, the problems that every patient brings to his treatment involves questions relating to his own existence. Winnicott understood that at the beginning of life the bonds between the world and the child were related, and that both were reciprocally constituted. In the analysis, this particular relationship manifests itself again through the bond between analyst and patient. For Ricoeur, solicitude is the ethical basis of otherness and is a fundamental aspect of the identity of the self, since otherness is not opposed to identity

but is one of the ways in which self-understanding is achieved.

### **3.1 Analysis as a “play of two”**

Winnicott understands analysis as that area that must be located in precise time and spaces so that the patient can have “the experience of surprising himself”. For this, it is a necessary condition that the analysis be constituted as a superposition of spaces where two play. The notion of play in analysis refers both to the possibility of playing with (the analyst) and also to the ability of the patient to play (a term that for Winnicott has clinical consequences).

When Winnicott insists that the patient’s game is played in analysis, it can be considered that it is not so much about the analyst’s knowledge, but rather that the patient finds, in the analytical setting, the space to display her own singularity. This idea demolishes any reference to the analyst’s “strong-self” as the fulcrum for the patient’s “weak-self”. On the contrary, he refers to being able to experience the reality of being himself, in an environment shared with others, without the threat of compliance or obedience. What must emerge is the newness of the patient, in that “space between two”:

Playing has a place and a time, it is not found inside. It is not outside either; that is to say, it is not part of the repudiated world, the not-self, that which the individual has decided to recognize as truly external, outside the reach of the magical domain. To master what is outside, you have to do things, not just think or wish; and doing things takes time. Playing is doing. (WINNICOTT, 1971/2007, p. 85).

This involves the construction of a container space and reliability provider. This is the meaning that the function of the game acquires in analysis and that is constituted as prior to interpretation and transference. Basically, it is to consider it as a game space and as a way of playing. This idea suggests that in the analysis there are no fixed rules, insofar as the game obeys the spontaneous. It is not so much that the analysis does not “have rules” –so to speak–, but rather that the extreme adjustment to them would be of the order of compliance. Winnicott invites analysis not to remain embedded in enigmatic formulas or definitions, but rather to be a real and meaningful experience for the patient.

Thus, the question of creativity appears in the clinic as the very condition of analysis. This allows the patient to find new, unique forms of symbolization, without the risk of some kind of compliance or submission. What enables us to understand that the Winnicottian analysis is oriented towards an experience of freedom. It is under this substrate that creativity can unfold as the horizon of meaning that enables the expression of the self.

Due to this, his analysis proposal includes all those phenomena that refer to the problematic uncertainty between being and existing. It is not that he rejects the Freudian symptom factor, the Oedipal rivalry, the problem of desire and its satisfaction. Like Freud, he emphasizes the fictitious idea of a normal life, but this conception is more linked to problems such as inauthenticity, the futile feeling of existence and the inability to feel “alive, true and real”. This is the way he questions the formal parameters of normality and disease.

Under this perspective, the Winnicottian clinic enables the experience of being oneself to unfold, the interventions appear from the analyst side and the patient can risk being and doing. That is, the continuity of his own existence, contributing his own as novelty. This is how creativity is constituted as a game and as a way of playing. This idea suggests that, in the analysis, there are no fixed rules, insofar as the game obeys the spontaneous:

The awareness that the basis of what we do is the patient’s game, a creative experience that needs time and space, and that has an intense reality for it, helps us understand our task. (WINNICOTT, 1956/2003, p. 137).

If the analysis points to the arrival of the creativity of the self, in that encounter with the analyst, the intention of the good life is not understood without the presence of the other than itself. Here again the notions of “request for recognition” “request”, “lack” are woven. Clinical work can only be carried out under the premise of trust and it is established as a “request for recognition” in the sense of suffering and vulnerability. If in the early stages it was to be cared for and supported, here the request is metaphorized as a need for support and protection. This call to the other begins with the demand for analysis and is maintained throughout the analytical process. The analyst recognizes this request and grants and creates the conditions of reliability for the emergence of the true being hidden behind the pathology of the false. The emergence of the true self can only occur from the analyst’s commitment to be present in the processes that occur there. This commitment is an ethical response of vital presence to give space to the events that the subjectivity of the patient needs for their processing. For example, Winnicott refers that the analysis has to offer the possibility to the patient. He feels to “go crazy”, if it is required, with the confidence that it will be sustained and that at the end of it, creativity and

experience will emerge as a result of this painful path. This is not in solitude, but in front of and together with the analyst who accompanies on the path. Again, there would be two stages of recognition: from the analyst to the patient, who responds to the demand for analysis and builds the clinical space as a support; and from the patient to the analyst, especially at the end of the analysis, where what is received is acknowledged and can also say “thank you” as a farewell. Without this first part of the analyst to the patient, the second cannot manifest itself. The response to the call of the other’s ailment, its transit and reissuing of the patient’s historical plot, then allows the expression of transitional phenomena and arrival at the “life of being lived” as mentioned by Winnicott. This variable is not only a therapeutic but an ethical process: commitment, presence, dignity, are notions that express the ethical dimension of the clinical space. For Winnicott, to consider the end of the analysis is a radical question because it supposes the command of the own self. Even in the most difficult cases and “when there are years to go”.

Now, ethics in clinical work does not appear as something from “outside” or linked to a certain sentimentality, but as a way of carrying out the psychoanalytic technique. One last relationship between Winnicott and Ricoeur can be made here. When the French philosopher analyzes the *techne* in Aristotle, he relates it to the notion of *praxis*. What he makes of a practice is the space of meaning that he opens up for the participants in it, whether they are directly or indirectly involved. It is in this open space that the rules that constitute said practice find their place and not first the other way around in the sense that it was the rule that constituted the practice before thinking about the rules of the game, children simply want to play. Then come the rules of that practice that informal games are more serving wishes than wishes are subject to the rule. The space of meaning opened by the desire for the practice and the rules that constitute it carries with it the evaluative appraisals in relation to whether the practice is being carried out well or badly. The dual character of the analytical game allows it to be established as a practice that goes beyond a simple solitary game, as Ricoeur says, practices are cooperative activities whose rules are socially established (RICOEUR, 2008). This social character of the game is what leads Winnicott to consider psychoanalysis as a “sophisticated game of the 20th century”, and which is still in force today.

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