

Truth and the Beautiful Appearance: The influence of Friedrich Nietzsche in the psychoanalysis of Otto Rank

Julio Roberto Costa, M. S.

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Abstract

Otto Rank was the only member of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society who had a Ph.D. in Philosophy, and this was reflected in his work. Taking this as a starting point, we may have a better understanding of what Rank denominated as *illusion*, which has always led to a problematic approach. We try to see the question of the illusion by means of Friedrich Nietzsche, who considered the *appearance* as unavoidable. Taking into consideration its meaning in Nietzsche's philosophy, we must understand that the problem was not a struggle on overcoming the appearances of the world in search of an *essence* that would be elsewhere, which presupposes redemption in a future world, or in science—which, according to Nietzsche, can only describe the world, failing in providing meaning. Therefore, Nietzsche values the pre-Socratic Greece, which dared to live the appearance *as appearance*, which was made possible by the aesthetic phenomenon. Art was shaped as a fusion of the Dionysian with the Apollonian, which we can understand as the union of everything that affirms *life* (the Dionysian element of instinct) with the love of *form* (the Apollonian element of proportion and measure). Thus, the question of what was most appropriate was no longer a question of *essence*, but of what *enhances life*, where Nietzsche found the art of Greek tragedy as the sublime paradigm. Therefore, many aspects of Otto Rank, once considered obscure, can be better addressed in a new light, including the relevance of the *artist* in his work.

Introduction

We can consider Otto Rank to be the most philosophical among the first psychoanalysts of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. First, we have the fact that he was not a physician. Second, he was used in reading the great philosophers, mainly Nietzsche, years before meeting psychoanalysis.

The chances are that Freud considered advantageous for psychoanalysis someone outside the medical field and familiar with the great classical works, not only

in the form of literature but of theater, poetry and human sciences in general. Therefore, Freud funded the studies of Rank until he attained his Ph.D. in philosophy. In his work, the presence of German idealism, and especially of Immanuel Kant, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Friedrich Nietzsche, was very relevant. And here, we have important questions regarding phenomena and noumenon, representation and will, as well as appearance and essence.

In this article, I would like to focus on Nietzsche's influence on Otto Rank, for the aspect that will be quite difficult in his work, which is the illusion. Initially, we need to know that Rank himself was aware of how this could be misinterpreted. Jessie Taft, who was a former student of Rank and then a therapist and translator of some of his works for English, talks about his concern in her introduction to his book *Will Therapy*.

The reader of psychoanalysis who set eyes on a book by Rank may have the impression that he was extremely subjective, and in favor of escapism, at the times when he uses the word *illusion*. Psychoanalyst Esther Menaker points this out in her book on Rank, *Separation, Will and Creativity*:

...Rank perceived the subjective nature of reality, the impossibility to humankind to live solely with a so-called subjective truth, and the need to create illusion in order to survive. He wrote: 'Our seeking the truth in human motives for acting and thinking is destructive. With the truth one cannot live. To be able to live one's needs illusions, not only outer illusions such as art, religion, philosophy, science and love afford, but inner illusions which first conditions the other. The more a man can take appearance as truth, the sounder, the better adjusted, the happier he will be.' (Menaker, 1996, p. 104).

Menaker continues:

And what of illusion, in Rank's view? The outer illusions to which he refers are twofold: first, the belief systems that pass in historical succession from one into another, consoling and comforting us as we try to find a meaningful place in the cosmic scheme of things; second, those creations of humankind—art, philosophy, religion and science—from which individuals, singly or collectively, derive meaning. Ernest Becker has expressed it well when he says: 'man needs a 'second world,' a world of humanly created meaning, a new reality that he can live, dramatize, nourish himself in. 'Illusion' means creative play at its highest level.'" (Menaker, 1996, p. 105).

Although Menaker shows us the question very precisely in terms of clinical practice, especially in the integrated sense of the self, relevant for example in the treatment of anxiety, one can find the root of the illusion in the strong presence of philosophy in Rank's thought, which also finds support in the fact that Freud, at the

beginning of psychoanalysis, sought to relate the unconscious to the Kantian *thing in itself*.

To the reader of today, the usual tendency would be to consider that Rank was escaping from Freud's ideal of having psychoanalysis as a natural science. Although, as we shall see, he was following his philosophical heritage with Nietzsche, and asked the question: Plato or Homer?

In his biography of Otto Rank, *Acts of Will*, E. James Lieberman shows with clarity of details the influence of Nietzsche on Rank, from his youth (Lieberman, 1985, p. 30). Moreover, according to Lieberman, one must observe Nietzsche as a philosopher in whom poetry played a significant role, not only in his writing but in his understanding of the world. When Nietzsche exalts the will, he does so in accordance with his own subjective experience. It must be considered that Freud sought to observe the will objectively by the model of natural science, even considering that, from phenomena, we can only have representations—and this according to his struggle to validate psychoanalysis as a natural science.

In the question of the *will*, however, difficulties arise. According to Lieberman, Freud and Nietzsche agreed on the importance of the irrational, but for Freud, the concept of will could only be linked to a pre-scientific view of psychology, still linked to the theology and the philosophy of morality. If there is a need to apply a deterministic approach of cause and effect, the will disappears, with *wish* remaining as the expression of the libido and, ultimately, of physiology (Lieberman, 1985, p. 33).

Lieberman tells us that the importance of sexuality was nothing new in relation to psychiatry at the time, although Nietzsche's narrative of the will would appear to be more philosophical and poetic than psychiatric or medical (Lieberman, 1985, p. 33-34). Regarding Kant's importance, however, we can observe that, at the same time that Freud valued the notion of the *thing in itself* as a reality behind appearances—and it was precisely this archeology of reality that he sought—Freud did not penetrate the concept of *noumenon*, because the objectivity that he sought was within the scientific positivism of his time. This positivistic view, admittedly, sticks to the phenomenon, and what lies behind a particular phenomenon could only be another phenomenon.

However, we have that the Kantian noumenon cannot be known, but can be thought of. This means that symbolism and poetry are free to speak of the noumenon,

keeping only the condition that they must not go against the moral imperatives of practical reason.

This, however, is far from *subjectivism*, which was associated by Kant with the old metaphysics. As an Enlightenment philosopher, he reacted against metaphysics, not only motivated by Hume's skepticism, but by realizing that subjectivism or idealism were close to the authoritarian dogmatism of his time. According to the Brazilian psychoanalyst Paulo Cezar Sandler, the strict positivism of the Kant era was called by himself "naïve realism," and still used in our times by Ernest Cassirer and Gaston Bachelard, among many others (Sandler, 2000, p. 25).

From there, the imaginary was not an illusion in the sense of being a lie in relation to the real, although, connected to practical reason by the *utility*, helps us in dealing with the real, as Hans Vaihinger asserts:

From this it can be concluded: just as science (especially mathematics) leads to the imaginary, so it also leads life to the impossible, which, however, is possible—to absolute responsibility for one's actions, absolute freedom, good deeds for their own sake (absolutely). You are a human being, and you must have these noble feelings.

Thus, the imaginary (the absolute, the ideal) is justified despite its unreality. Without this aspect of the imaginary, neither science nor life are possible in its highest forms. (Vaihinger, 2011, p. 174).

"Only ideas, albeit practical ones" – A panorama of the Kantian legacy on
fiction

Initially, we have that David Hume wanted to oppose his philosophy to dogmatism. To this end, he adopted an extremely skeptical stance on the certainties that were held as common sense until then, also attacking the possibility of metaphysics, through a skeptical standpoint, based on the limitations of the human capacity in understanding the world.

It was through David Hume that Immanuel Kant went to a certain appreciation for skepticism. However, Kant considered that Hume did not have satisfactory answers to the moral problems. What Kant will do, primarily through his books *Critique of Pure Reason* and *Critique of Practical Reason*, will be to separate skepticism, as a result of human limitations in knowing the world, of moral postulates, which now have an *a priori* source, detached from the sensible world.

What Kant will put forward is that when speculative reason—that which deals with the world that can be perceived with the senses—tries to penetrate the world of moral reason, it can only create the old dogmatism. Hence, metaphysics cannot aspire to the category of science.

Kant goes on to argue that moral postulates are necessary, but they are just ideas, as, for instance, God, which is not a phenomenon, although these ideas are practical ones, as necessary regulatory principles. Thus, it is necessary to think of morality as a coherent system, which is part of a world that is not the sensible world, but, as Kant named it, an intelligible world, which human beings partake, as they are beings endowed with reason. It is important to see that, through freedom, each individual could act differently, but the moral law imposes itself on the reason of each one, in such a way that the individuals agree with general rules. All moral actions, therefore, appear as if they spring from the same source, which imposes itself upon the reason of each individual, presenting itself as *sovereign, perfect and rational*. Such a source manifests itself within each individual as an imperative. We can see that Kant created a clear division between the sensible world and the intelligible world.

However, it is important to keep in mind that this philosophy was seen as extremely pessimistic concerning the culture of his time, especially regarding religion and morality, where it was considered necessary to have a real knowledge about God and the origins of morality. In his book *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* Kant places religion as assistance to ethics, which led him to be penalized by the then Prussian king.

Regarding his context, one must also consider that Kant was an Enlightenment philosopher, and that the separation of church and state was imperative within the new thought, together with the criticism of the “divine right of kings”—which in itself was a threat to the aristocracy as well as to the clergy that was intimately attached to it. Therefore, we must understand that Kant was regarded as a destroyer. Moreover, for the spirit of his age, to say that we can know nothing on God or on the immortality of the soul—even if these concepts were viewed as necessary postulates of morality—it was a great break with all metaphysics until then.

We see that Kant needed to question those that were considered absolute truths, and that this was fundamental to the creation of Western Modernity. This move also

created an instance of *fiction*, that is, those things that were “only ideas,” although had the attribute of practicality, that is, utility, even if they were separated from the possibility of empirical verification.

It is necessary to remember that all the philosophers of German Idealism will be tributaries of the path opened by Kant in relation to the primacy of thought, and here we have the answer to the British Empiricism of David Hume, that Kant considered unacceptable by its moral consequences. In broad terms, German Idealism will be the defense of moral reason in the face of the skepticism of British Empiricism.

Developments on the practical fiction

The philosophers Hans Vaihinger and Jules de Gaultier will make interesting connections between Kant and Nietzsche, precisely on the path that Kant provided. This path will be given by the recognition that those concepts, which are “only ideas,” albeit practical ones, could be understood as fictions that are necessary for life. This does not mean that the act of lying was considered ethical, but that fiction became an additional instrument for the relationship with reality, and, moreover, necessary due to the limitations of human cognition.

Jules de Gaultier gives us a very clear illustration of this question of utility, offering an insight that could be applied to any human group at the beginning of History:

... the human group itself takes cognizance of itself, of what is harmful and what is useful to it. It is going to do for itself what every scientist does for the chemical bodies that he wishes to preserve... The human group takes the same measures of defense against the surrounding milieu and against its own inner tendency. Everything useful to it it prescribes for itself, and everything harmful it forbids itself. (Gaultier, 1961, p. 7).

Gaultier was deeply influenced by Nietzsche. Thus, he will say that everything that preserves the human group corresponds to the “Vital Instinct,” to the strengthening of potency, health, and vitality, including the necessary interdictions—which are the self-imposed law of the group members. At this point, Gaultier is very close to Otto Rank, being faithful to the instinct that leads towards life (from Nietzsche), while admitting restrictions coming from self-determination (with similarities to Kant).

The question of Gaultier passes through the pessimism put on canvas by Schopenhauer, and Gaultier agrees with the solution provided by Nietzsche, that is, it is

by the esthetic phenomenon that the human being elaborates, by means of culture, the pains of the world, bringing it to the human experience in a way that does not weaken the will to power. However, Gaultier values Schopenhauer's pessimism more than Kant's moral solution in his *Critique of Practical Reason*.

Following the influence of Buddhism and Hinduism on Schopenhauer's thought, Gaultier argues that it is by the withdrawal of the *veil of Maya* that the human being can achieve joy, in the meaning of Nietzsche. What needs to be defeated is the belief that the typical representation of the world, through theoretical reason observing the phenomenon, is a correct view of reality, for in this way the world presents itself as a stage of pain and absurdity. The relief, in Buddhism and Hinduism, comes from the unveiling of this deception of the phenomenon, and the great joy of the individual is to realize that all his torments concerning the problems of life in this world are illusory, for the world, as a phenomenon, is the illusion of the will. By means of creating the work of art, the individual "leaves the stage," and allows himself to contemplate, as a spectator in the audience, all those vicissitudes and problems that once afflicted him or her. Now those afflictions can be seen with detachment, as the interesting plot of an ancient Homer narrative, beautiful to be heard and witnessed. Thus, we see that pessimism becomes the optimism of the *beautiful appearance*:

It was shown how the revelation of the unreality of the phenomenon, a cause of suicide in a depressed race, is the pretext for a new life in the western endowed with a superabundance of energy. It was shown... how western sensibility, perceiving life as woe, is following this initiation transformed into an aesthetic sensibility, eager to perpetuate the spectacle, to describe it, to evoke it and how, once informed and taken into confidence, now adores and celebrates Life for its beauty with the same ardor with which, in its state of blindness, it used to curse Life for its cruelty. (Gaultier, 1961, p. 236-237).

It is for this aspect of *utility* that we must understand the fiction and the illusion. According to Rank, from the world we can only have representations that need to be interpreted. Thus, here we have the meaning of illusion from the inheritance of Kant's regulatory principles, and also from the concept of appearance in Nietzsche.

The influence of Immanuel Kant in the beginnings of Psychoanalysis

We must understand that Sigmund Freud was deeply concerned to provide a solid foundation for psychoanalysis as a science. From the accounts to which we have access today, one can see that the influence of Immanuel Kant was relevant. Freud was

willing to relate the *thing in itself*, which is behind the phenomena, to the very unconscious.

Ludwig Binswanger wrote about the presence of Kant in the formulations of Freud, where he reports:

He [Freud] said that we behaved as if the unconscious were a reality in the image of the conscious. However, as a true scientific researcher, he says nothing about the nature of the unconscious, because we know nothing with certainty, or above all, we can only infer from the conscious. He asserts that, just as Kant postulated the *thing in itself* behind appearance, it postulated, behind the conscious accessible to our experience, the unconscious, but that could never be an object of direct knowledge. (Fulgêncio, 2006, p. 9).

We can see that Freud was working within the Kantian critique on the limits of human knowledge. At the moment of Binswanger's observation, he saw the unconscious as a *thing in itself* in the Kantian sense, that is, as an object unknowable in itself, but which must be introduced as a fiction, so that it can be better worked. However, in the sessions of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, Freud will always remain cautious in dealing with philosophical questions. Regarding the aspect of the epistemological approach to the unconscious, it will maintain the differentiation between what appears and what is not directly known. Therefore, what is postulated has a heuristic function, although it cannot be confused with the reality *per se*.

Thus, it is possible to say that Freud, even building psychoanalysis as a natural science, agreed with the Kantian assumption that the nature of the psyche is that of a set of representations, of the world and the sensations.

We must now see the contribution of Nietzsche. In common with Kant, we have that the two philosophers dealt with questions concerning duality: phenomenon and noumenon, in Kant, and essence and appearance, in Nietzsche. The connection between the two, in this respect, was studied by Hans Vaihinger, who adopts a position derived from pragmatism and perspectivism.

Vaihinger has a place in the theory of knowledge due to his concept of fiction as an abstraction that helps in bringing order to the understanding of the world; fiction is, therefore, an instrument for knowledge, such as deduction and induction. Fiction is something that adds to knowledge, being an approximation of reality, rather than being a departure from it. It will be differentiated from the hypothesis by the fact that it is the

hypothesis that can be confirmed with the empirical data; however, fiction continues being an auxiliary resource.

Vaihinger's question is: "How could we achieve the right goals, taking into consideration that we deal only with representations?" What Vaihinger places is that we preserve assumptions even if we are aware that they are only approximations, although, in doing so, we succeed in acting in the world.

Vaihinger will seek the roots of this position in Kant's work, and its continuity in the concept of Nietzsche's *beautiful appearance*. It is certain that Nietzsche will fight Kant in many points, just as he fights Schopenhauer, to whom he owes much of his concept of will. However, Vaihinger will consider Kant as the one who discovered, as the *thing in itself* as the frontier of knowledge, the practical value of appearance, and that it should be accepted as so. Vaihinger will value the practical aspects of fictions, with many examples from mathematics, and with notions as the *point*, which has no place within the sensible world, but which must be accepted as a convention: for instance, we must believe in the point for the purposes of geometry. Therefore, some concepts need to be accepted *as if* they were part of our certainties. Vaihinger bridges all this with Nietzsche's perspectivism. Here we have a passage in which Vaihinger quotes Nietzsche in this context:

... "being" is a "simplification for practical purposes," based on the artificial creation of identical cases, it is "an image" that we impute for the sake of practical utility and perspective, because "in us, there is a power that orders, falsifies and separates artificially." Its products, however, these many "falsifications," are useful and necessary: for "life is based on such assumptions." The pretend world of subject, substance, reason, is necessary. (Vaihinger, 2011, p.664).

Nietzsche and the beautiful appearance

Having made this bridge between Kant and Nietzsche, let us now turn to the question of appearance in Nietzsche, and his reasons. Nietzsche's great model was pre-Socratic Greece. He regarded the Greek spirit as highly vulnerable to the pain of existence. Moreover, they were bearers of a pessimistic wisdom, such as that of Silenus, whom Nietzsche quotes in the *Birth of Tragedy*:

There is an old story that King Midas had hunted for the wise Silenus, the companion of Dionysus, for a long time in the woods without catching him. But when he finally fell into his hands, the King asked: "What is the best and most preferable thing for Man?" The demon remained silent, stubborn, and

motionless; and then broke out into shrill laughter, uttering these words: “Miserable, ephemeral species, children of chance and of hardship, why do you compel me to tell you what is most profitable for you not to hear. The very best is quite unattainable for you: it is, not to be born, not to exist, to be Nothing. However, the next best for you is—to die soon.” (Nietzsche, 2013, p. 33).

Given this, how do we understand the creation of Apollonian art? Here we will have an approximation with his understanding by Vaihinger, as Nietzsche will tell us that “life is possible only by artistic mirages.” In the Greeks, art is closely linked with religion, and its virtue is to produce an abundance of life, the stimulus to life. Still in the wake of Schopenhauer’s pessimism, pessimism close to the wisdom of Silenus, it can be said that, despite the pains of life, one must be seduced to life through beautiful appearances, as Nietzsche shows us, in *The Birth of Tragedy*. He considers that the Greek gods do not make the apology for salvation in another world, in an afterlife, but they bring the stimulus to life, which divinizes that which exists. Moreover, to deify, here, means to make beautiful.

From the mythological narratives, we realize that the gods of the Olympus were not necessarily good, but they were beautiful—that is, they seduce to life. For its part, beauty is the measure, the proportion, and the elegant moderation, proper attributes of Apollo.

Thus, Apollonian art intended to replace the terrible truth of the world, as Silenus stated, by beautiful forms. This was the elegant and refined measure. However, the disruptive aspect of reality could not fail in being considered. This aspect seemed to be tough and disturbing, subverting the serenity of the Apollonian forms. This element will be represented by Dionysus, who can be terrible and bring back, in the eyes of civilization, the pessimistic wisdom of Silenus. Apollo, therefore, represented individuation, brought about by proportional and serene forms, for the individual, in order to exist, needs limits and measures. However, Dionysus brings the dissolution of limits into drunkenness, which presents itself as ecstasy. However, when the ecstasy ends, there remains only the vision of the absurdity of life. At that moment, the absurdity appears as the truth, but it is a truth that destroys the individual, and, not just the individual, but destroys the State, destroys History, and civilization. However, it is important to note that this is not the Dionysus that Nietzsche praises. It was clear how nature, in its raw state, could be destructive. Redemption will have to be done by means of art. However, if one previously sought to preserve Apollo by placing barriers against

Dionysus, this time the art will incorporate Dionysus along with Apollo. Thus, the absurdity of existence will be transformed into a beautiful representation, capable of making life possible.

Therefore, Nietzsche considers that the most important moment in Greek art is the reconciliation between the Apollonian and the Dionysian. The pure Dionysian is impossible to live, for it leads to annihilation and the feeling of absurdity. The Apollonian element brings a beautiful appearance to the cruel aspect of nature and redeems it; from now on nature can be lived without leading to absurdity and emptiness. As Nietzsche tells us in his *Posthumous Fragments*: “It is not in the alternation between lucidity and drunkenness, but in its simultaneity, that the Dionysian aesthetic state is found.” (Nietzsche *apud* Machado, 2017, p. 36). Therefore, it is as if Apollo had taught the measures to the Barbarian Dionysus, thus transforming him into the Hellenic Dionysus.

We have seen how the Greek world dealt with appearance and essence. Most importantly, to understand the illusion in Rank, is that appearance was not something that should disappear in favor of essence, but appearance and essence, if understood respectively as Apollo and Dionysus, needed to be united in the art of tragedy, and, more than that, to be together in life. When tragic art unites beautiful appearance with raw essence, it saves culture from the danger of annihilation.

It is, therefore, the disappearance of the opposition between Apollo and Dionysus that is needed. As the Nietzschean Dionysian is necessarily artistic, the conflict between beautiful appearance and essential truth that does not allow appearance, that is, which does not allow art, disappears. We must understand that the hero dies, but his death has meaning within a larger picture—thus, the hero dies, but his death is not the victory of the absurdity.

As this is the young Nietzsche, the presence of Arthur Schopenhauer is still strongly perceived, in what is, for Nietzsche, the *Primordial Unity*. As in Schopenhauer, the individual can accept to perish, knowing that life itself never dies. We see, then, that the tragic element of art translates the great wisdom of the ancient Greeks, and there must be some construction, some representation that is not merely an account of the sensible world, as Nietzsche tells us, elsewhere in his *Posthumous Fragments*:

The only possibility of life: in art. Otherwise, we stray from life. The instinctive movement of the sciences is the complete annihilation of illusion; if there were no art, the consequence would be quietism (Nietzsche *apud* Machado, 2017, p. 59).

The Welcoming of the Will in the Beautiful Appearance

At this point, we can more accurately perceive what Otto Rank tells us regarding illusion: that the human being is necessarily a creator, an artist, a creator of the beautiful appearance.

On this point, the Brazilian philosopher Roberto Machado adds:

One could say that while the “lie” of science would want to find the truth of the world as something other than appearance, the “truth” of art is to believe in the image as an image, in appearance as appearance. ... the superiority of art over science is not to oppose the illusion, it is to affirm life fully. (Machado, 2017, p. 59-60).

As Rank wrote in his book *Will Therapy*, we cannot have the direct assurance of the world, but, as a condition for action, the world must be interpreted. This interpretation is not perfect, although we must believe in it. So, we are always believing in interpretations. However, unlike what is commonly considered the “illusion,” this is not a narcotic that brings an escape, but is a tonic for life, and this is Nietzsche’s orientation, which Rank sets in his work.

Thus, concerning the use of the concept of “truth,” these considerations must be taken into account in the context to which they belong. In Nietzsche’s terms, the will to truth, where we have the metaphysical opposition between truth and falsity, belongs to what Nietzsche calls Socratism, as well as post-Socratic Greek philosophy. Equally, it must be understood that this philosophy of truth and appearance, where appearance is the equivalent of error, is a philosophy, according to Nietzsche, of weak men with weak will to power. According to him, it is a Christian morality before Christianity, which would be a “Platonism for the masses.” Nietzsche, therefore, poses as false the metaphysical opposition of values, and values the appearance of form precisely to go against this opposition. Art as appearance goes beyond the ascetic ideal. Thus, Plato becomes the “voluntary of the beyond,” a slanderer of life; in opposition, we have Homer, who makes the exultation of life and the approval of existence.

Thus, it is possible to affirm that Rank followed Kant in the aspect of the ethics, but, in the matter of appearance and the essence, followed Nietzsche. The question of

Nietzsche to which Rank follows is that the ultimate criterion of the validity of something is the intensification of life, the strengthening of the will to power. Thus, the ultimate criterion of judgment over knowledge is life; it is not, therefore, an epistemological judgment. As Nietzsche tells us in *Beyond Good and Evil*:

We do not see in the falsity of a judgment an objection to this judgment. ... The question is to know to what extent a judgment is apt to promote life. ... It is time to understand that the conservation of beings of our species requires that we believe in them. That does not stop these judgments from being false. ... Let us recognize: no life can exist except for the estimations and appearances inherent in its perspective. (Nietzsche).

This we repeatedly find in Rank, and we can thus understand the differentiation he makes between theory and therapy: theory seeks the truth, but therapy must stimulate the will of the patient, in which he or she must believe in representations and fictions, and this means confidence in his or her own will to power. However, as a differentiation from metaphysics and traditional moral systems, it should be noted that these values are at the level of life and the organic force of life. Nietzsche's question is always: do these values, for example, make an individual healthier, more courageous, more vigorous, or make the individual weaker and sicker? Thus, the question of Rank was to provide vigor to the will of the man, as Rank put it, to offer him faith in himself, which is different from faith in society or faith in a reason which imposes itself in a heteronomous way. And it is certain that here, in Rank's conception, is added the Kantian concept of an *a priori* morality, but always of a morality that is at the service of the affirmation of the human being—as Rank stated, in a clearly Nietzschean passage, that the true human values are the values of the affirmation of life.

We can conceive, then, that although Rank has affirmed the value of self-determination of the individual, and his ability to choose in relation to the moral law that he or she possesses *a priori*, the content of the moral law does not imply an ethics of asceticism. Ethics, in this vision, consists in the affirmation of human life, which unites Apollo and Dionysus.

The difference of Rank is that he accepts self-preservation. For Nietzsche, the will to power implies a constant growth, in a constant breaking of barriers. Thus, weak men, where the power is sick, cannot go forward, for they are afraid of losing the little life they have. According to Nietzsche, it is at this point that moral restraints are made, just as we understand the term in its moral and religious contexts. The barriers which

are now placed serve to preserve the little life that weak men still have, and Nietzsche sees this as demerit and denial. In Rank, the picture is different, and, in this passage from *Beyond Psychology*, we see that Rank embodied the Kantian virtue of *temperance*:

The individual ... automatically refrained from certain activities which directly or indirectly seemed to threaten his own self. Since the majority felt that way, the aboriginal law appears un-imposed, a requirement of vital importance ... We obey the moral law because, with its self-preserving function, it is merely an impression of our moral self. (Rank, 1945, p. 84).

Conclusions

Seeking to place psychoanalysis as a natural science, Freud was not willing to consider the will, seen in his day as a romantic idea. However, he was aware that the object of knowledge of the scientist are phenomena, not reality in itself, which is unknowable. However, while he acknowledges that psychic reality is representational, he will not penetrate philosophy in such a way to make a distinction similar to that of phenomena and noumenon, appearance and essence, and so on. Thus, even making references to Kant, he did not arrive at something that would be “only an idea, albeit a practical one,” that is, where utility provides space for the “fiction for practical purposes.”

In Jules de Gaultier’s book, *From Kant to Nietzsche*, we observe that it is precisely through his pessimism that optimism becomes possible. It is the art that makes the human condition beautiful, from the fact that nature, in its original state, presents itself as cruel, being the Barbarian Dionysius, who, according to Roberto Machado, differs from the Hellenic Dionysus of Nietzsche, which was necessarily artistic, and, according to Vaihinger, conveys the “fiction for practical purposes”.

By his understanding of psychoanalysis and philosophy, Rank will start from the most melancholic aspects of the understanding of the human condition, which leads to the absurdity, to welcome the Kantian value of self-determination. We realize that fiction for practical purposes is always present, not as a lie, but as the imaginary that is justified despite its unreality, with the necessary self-determination to affirm the laws derived from freedom. Therefore, health comes from the union of practical reason with the affirmation of life:

Here we can define self-determination as a voluntary and conscious creation of one’s own fate. This means to have no fate in an external sense, but to accept and affirm oneself as fate and fate creating power. This inner fate includes self-

determination also, in the sense of the pleasurable will struggle with ourselves, the conflict which we affirm as long as we interpret it as consciously willed self-creation, and not neurotically as the force of stronger supernatural forces or earthly authorities. (Rank, 1945, p.91-92).

In this way, both with the moral imperative and with the aesthetic phenomenon, the reason of the individual can offer meaning to what would have been only a blind and absurd fate. Now, instead of being a slave to the world of phenomena, the individual can take hold of his destiny, and truly make it a human destiny.

As we have seen in Nietzsche, all these things are not a benzodiazepine that needs to put the individual to sleep; in fact, they are a tonic that leads to action, for the truth that one can have of the world are the representations and their interpretations for the purposes of intensifying life—which are the beautiful appearance, or illusion. That is the only way to affirm life to the fullest. Among so many uncertainties in the sensible world, the individual must welcome the will to power that he or she has, which translates into believing in himself or herself, despite the fact that the individual is continually measured as inferior by the parameters of the dominant ideologies—the earthly powers:

The patient needs a world view and will always need it, because man always needs belief, and this so much more, the more increasing self-consciousness brings him to doubt. Psychotherapy does not need to be ashamed of its philosophical character, if only it is in a position to give to the sufferer the philosophy that he needs, namely, faith in himself. (Rank, 1945, p.96).

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