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The Psychotherapy: Beyond Psychology

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THEPSYCHOTHERAPYBEYONDPSYCHOLOGY

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The Psychotherapy: Beyond Psychology

La Psicoterapia: Más Allá De La Psicología

Juan Diego Lopera Echavarría

Abstract- It is common for the psychologist to be homologated with the psychotherapist, as if the psychotherapeutic practice, which we can define as psychic treatment (Freud, 1890/1998, p. 115; see also Ávila, 1994; Ramírez, Lopera, Zuluaga, Ramírez, Henao and Carmona, 2015), was one of the modalities of application of psychology. Psychotherapy is then taken as just another occupational field of the psychologist, along with work in fields such as organizational, legal, educational, sports, social-community, etc. However, psychotherapeutic practice involves a dimension that is beyond psychology and demands another type of training, different from the one the psychologist undertakes to obtain his professional degree. This article intends, in the first place, to clarify what we understand by psychology and what by psychotherapy. Second, to examine the relationship of psychological science with the scientific method and with psychotherapy; and third, the conception of the scientific method as an art suitable for psychotherapy, and the importance of psychotherapist training.

Keywords: psychology, psychotherapy, asceticism, scientific art.

Resumen- Es frecuente que se homologue al psicólogo con el psicoterapeuta, como si la práctica psicoterapéutica, que podemos definir como tratamiento psíquico (Freud, 1890/1998, p. 115; véase también Ávila, 1994; Ramírez, Lopera, Zuluaga, Ramírez, Henao y Carmona, 2015), fuese una de las modalidades de aplicación de la psicología. La psicoterapia es tomada entonces como un campo ocupacional más del psicólogo, al lado del trabajo en los campos organizacional, jurídico, educativo, deportivo, social-comunitario, etc. Sin embargo, la práctica psicoterapéutica comporta una dimensión que está más allá de la psicología y que exige al psicólogo otro tipo de formación distinto al que emprende para obtener su título profesional. Este artículo pretende, en primer lugar, aclarar qué entendemos por psicología y qué por psicoterapia. En segundo lugar, examinar la relación de la ciencia psicológica con el método científico y con la psicoterapia; y, en tercer lugar, la concepción del método científico como un arte, apropiado para la psicoterapia, y la importancia de la formación del psicoterapeuta.

Palabrasclave: psicología, psicoterapia, ascesis, arte científico.

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I. The Psychology

Usually, definitions of psychology are exclusive: they are made from a focus, tendency or private school, that ignores other perspectives. Thus, for example, defining psychology as a science of behavior (Watson, 1982/1916) leaves out all those psychologies that emphasize psychic structure (Freud, 1895, 1915, 1923a, 1923b / 1998; Dilthey, 1945; Maslow, 2010) or cognitive processes (Rivière, 1991). Freud (1923/1998, p. 247) defined his psychoanalytic psychology as *"Ciencia de lo inconcienteen el alma"*[3]; special conception that little or nothing had in common with the definitions of the psychology of his time, and much less with behaviorism.

Nowadays we find more comprehensive definitions that nonetheless seek to eliminate the concept of *psyché*, even though it is the affix before the word. Thus, for example, it is defined as "estudio del comportamiento en todas sus manifestaciones y contextos"[4] (Duro, 2003, p. 1), avoiding the reference to the psyche (soul) and preferring the concept of *behavior*, which would include, among other activities, the mental.

This has led some authors to consider that a general definition of psychology that includes all currents, perspectives and modalities is impossible and that, therefore, it is preferable to talk about *psychologies* and not *psychology* (Duque, Lasso and Orejuela, 2016), appealing in each case to its multiple ways of being defined. To consider the definition of what psychology consists in as impossible means to assume that every definition is a reduction, an attempt to joint to a symbolic field something that, in principle, is inarticulable.

However, this position could lead to a psychological activism without guidance or north, or to the idea that there is no comparison or possible contrast between investigations derived from each approach. Thus, behavioral theories would only be testable to each

[3] "science of the unconscious in the soul".

[4] "[…] study of behavior in all its manifestations and contexts".

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other; just like cognitive, humanistic and psychoanalytic theories also. We fall into the error that Popper (1997) calls *the myth of the common framework*: to suppose that each theory or each scientific discipline (or philosophical, psychoanalytic or other) would only be comparable if it is part of a common framework (paradigm, according to Kuhn, 2006). In other words, each one is considered irreducible and absolutely unique, which leads them to be radically different to each other. So then, in what corresponds to the knowledge that investigates the *psyché*, it is thought impossible to find relationships other than from difference, from opposition, and not from what is related. In our opinion, it is clear that between psychology and psychoanalysis there are many common aspects, confluences, agreements; but also differences, oppositions, divergences. A dialectical thought that tends to an *intermodification* of the discourses considers both the common and the different. Precisely this possibility of proposing a broad and inclusive definition (without ignoring the differences) opposes dogmatic or totalitarian positions and allows progress in the understanding of the discipline.

a) Logos

Let's start from a simple approach: the decomposition of the word into the Greek terms *psyché* and *logos*. The term *logos* has many meanings, the most general being *articulating principle* (Ramírez, 2012, Ens. 49, 50; Lopera, Manrique, Zuluaga and Ortiz, 2010); therefore, it is translated as *reason* (Pabón, 1967, pp. 371-372) that, in the human field, would include the primary reason (imaginary and usually unconscious) and the secondary reason (symbolic). Both forms of reason operate mixed (fractal logic) (Ramírez, 2012. Ens. 56, 233, 234, 235) and use linguistic signs as much as possible, since they attempt to articulate what in principle appears disjointed, poorly formalized or confusing. In this case we could refer to the *logos* as a *word*, resource that, when naming a field of phenomena, make it apprehensive for human reality.

Linguistic signs allow to build words, phrases, theories, propositions, systems, knowledge. There are many kinds of knowledge: myth, religion, poetry, philosophy, literature, science, among others. In the case of psychology, we seek to study the field of psychic phenomena in order to build a set of articulated knowledge about these phenomena. If the knowledge built by psychology derives from the repeated and rigorous application of the scientific method, we would say that it is scientific knowledge[5]; if in addition it fills the requirements of the scientific community of the current era, it would be science (Ramírez, 1991)[6]. This last circumstance, referred to the scientific community of an era, is what makes science historical, changing with the criteria that each community, according to its traditions, considers a priority. Now, a psychological current could be foreign to the scientific project (such as religious or philosophical psychology) or be part of that project, as most currents and schools of psychology have usually intended[7]. In sum, psychology can be understood as a scientific or non-scientific project (Ramírez et al., 2015). In the latter case, their formulations would derive from other diverse sources of the scientific method (divination, inspiration, revelation, literature), but that doesn't mean they would be disposable or uninteresting although there would be no way of knowing about their validity, a possibility that the scientific method does give. For this reason we privilege the latter, with which we can advance much more in knowledge. From the perspective of science, psychology would be then sought to be a *set of articulated and scientific knowledge about the psychic*.

b) Psyché

The term *psyché* (soul), as well as that of *logos*, has multiple meanings since classical antiquity. One of them, perhaps the most common among different thinkers, refers to the principle of life, encouragement, that is, what animates a being[8]. This principle was considered in various ways such as fire, air, breath of life, warm breath, spirit, number, first engine, movement. Among these elaborations—as in so many others— the classical philosophers stand out: Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, because they sought to systematize previous knowledge about the soul. In Socrates, we have his insistence on caring for the soul, his asceticism, as a result of the search for truth, which gives birth to a philosophical and psychological aspect that we call *ascetic*; in Plato (1988a), the soul as eternal and incorruptible; in Aristotle (1994), the soul as a specific form of the body.

With medieval thought and its privilege for religious thought the soul was considered a particle of God, understood as transcendent and immortal (Brett, 1972; Vanzago, 2011; Abbagnano, 1973). His ascetic

[5] It may seem a pleonasm but no: it tries to indicate that there is psychological knowledge that does not derive from the scientific method and, therefore, is not scientific. It can be literary, religious, metaphysical or other.

[6] With this, we are differentiating between scientific method (dialectical contrast path between theory and practice) and science, which would be one of the possible results of the application of the scientific method (Ramírez, 1991).

[7] Psychoanalysis thus differs from psychology in that it is a scientific method (as defined by Freud, 1923a/1998) and not a science; according to Foucault (2002), it would be a discipline that attempts to account for spirituality understood as care and self-awareness.

[8] Regarding this, see the interesting reflections that Gadamer (1996) makes about the term *psyché* and its relations with the German words *Leben* (life) and *Leib* (body).

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perspective is accentuated while the salvation of the soul is sought through a virtuous way of life based on spiritual exercises derived from antiquity (Hadot, 2006). It is thus coming to understand the soul (*psyché*) as something specifically human, although also an expression of a higher reality.

Modern scientific thought retains this human specificity, but mistrusts an immortal or transcendent soul and, in the footsteps of Bacon (Bacon (1984/1620; see also Brett, 1972) and in general English empiricists (Hume, 2001/1740), turns its gaze to the sensations, to what is supposed to give a firm basis for the knowledge of what has been called soul. At the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, within the scientific spirit of the time, different thinkers proposed different denominations for *psyché* or soul: immediate experience (Wundt, 1896/1982), psychic apparatus (Freud, 1923a, 1923b/1998), psychic life (Dilthey, 1945); or its replacement for behavior (Watson, 1913/1982); consciousness, among others.

Among these diverse definitions there are, however, common, constant aspects which have been gradually highlighted by different researchers and that seem indispensable to understand *psyché*: on the one hand, the cultural environment; and on the other, the human organism. But neither of these is constituted in its research center since culture has been a privileged field of sciences such as anthropology, sociology, history, among others; and the human organism of sciences such as biology, physiology, neuroanatomy, neurophysiology.

Psychology deals with what results from the encounter (conjugation) of those two orders. In this way, the *psyché* is considered as something that *emerges*[9] from the combinations between the hereditary constitutional of each individual and their ecological and cultural environment. Summarizing, the psychic is specifically human and arises from the way in which the human "puppy" (the infant with its inherited and acquired dispositions) incorporates culture (norms and fundamental laws). Therefore, we can say that the psychic, as a resulting structure, is the *incarnated culture* (Lopera et al., 2010). Some call this result personality, others call it character, consciousness, behavior, mind, subject, mood apparatus, behavior, self, unconscious, subjectivity, concrete man, etc.

Now, the human soul, from this perspective, derives from a process of culturalization, that can be understood as a *process of subjecting the individual to culture*, which psychology studies from the perspective of the subject (the individual) and not from what he holds, which would be the object of study of sociology.

The construction of a set of articulated knowledge about the incarnated culture (*psyché*) is usually carried out taking into account three aspects: 1) The way in which the soul works as an incarnated culture, that is, the structure, its elements and composition laws[10]; 2) The way in which that structure was constituted, that is, the evolutionary process, the structuring (socialization, learning, culturalization, Oedipus' crossing); and 3) The effects or expressions of the structure or soul; it refers to behavior, symptoms, everyday expressions, failed acts, dreams, symptomatic actions.

We have preferred to keep the term *psyché* and translate it to soul as an incarnated culture instead of the term *mind*, since the latter is more related to intellect and intelligence, and much less with other facets such as affective, emotional, pulsional (Ferrater Mora, 2004, p. 2364; see also Lopera, 2016). Even the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) defines mind as "intellectual power of the soul." The word *psyché*, on the other hand, has been traditionally referred not only to the rational and intelligible, but also to life (Gadamer, 1996) and from ancient and medieval philosophy, to the vegetative, sensitive and rational (Aristotle, 1994; Tomás de Aquino, 2001); with the rational (thinking soul), with the irascible (combative soul) and with the concupiscent (desiring soul) (Plato, 1988b). The word mind derives from the Latin *mens* (intellect) or from the Greek *nous* (νουζ). This last word is defined as agent intellect. For Lopera and others (2010, pp. 125-126): "*Noûs* es entendido como algo intelectual, un *principio pensante*; mientras que *psyché* se ha concebido en ocasiones como una realidad orgánica, afectiva y emotiva, un *principio vivificante* (principio de vida)".[11] For Pabón (1967, p. 412) the νοῦς is "inteligencia, espíritu, mente, pensamiento, memoria […]; sagacidad, buen sentido, prudencia […]; proyecto, intención […]; razón, intelecto […]"[12]. The soul, as an incarnated culture, expresses both facets: the intellective, represented by culture as one of the expressions of the *logos* translated as reason; and the bodily, represented by that organism that receives and embodies culture becoming a body, that is, cultured meat. In other words, we claim (and preserve) the beautiful expression *psyché-logos*, *psychology,* to highlight the rich philosophical and scientific tradition that sustains it.

[9] The fact that *psyché* 'emerges' from the encounter of the individual with culture indicates that it is not an immediate reality; at most, only as genetic and constitutional dispositions that, however, are not enough to determine what is specifically human: cultural imprint is required.

[10] In this aspect we have all the studies on the basic and superior psychic processes; about personality structure and its types; about the primary and secondary processes (psychoanalysis); about systems 1 and 2 of thought (cognitive psychology); the information processing; the narrative structure; the linguistic components and their structures, among others.

[11] "*Noûs* is understood as something intellectual, a*thinking principle*; while *psyché* has sometimes been conceived as an organic, affective and emotional reality, a *life-giving principle* (life principle)."

[12]" […]intelligence, spirit, mind, thought, memory […]; sagacity, good sense, prudence […]; project, intention […]; reason, intellect […]".

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c) *The psychological science*

As we can deduce from the above considerations, *psychology is the study of the soul*. As a science, it is composed of an articulated set of theories that constitute the knowledge related to its field, and that derive from the application of various research methods (experimental, clinical, analytical, phenomenological). Any theory, whether referred to a single case (phenomenon) or, as is most usual, to a series of cases, must be based on the regularities, invariants and repetitions of these phenomena, to infer and construct the laws that govern them. In the case of psychological science this is evident: each theory or set of theories seeks to express the common, found in the addressed field of research.

This characteristic of theories serves as the basis for science to achieve its first and most important objective: *to know*, explain reality, corresponding to its investigative spirit and, consequently, *transform it*, which would be its second objective. Ramírez (2012, Ens. 24) proposes about this:

El primer objetivo de la ciencia, conocer la realidad (explicarla), está estrechamente relacionado con el segundo: transformarla, modificarla, actuar sobre ella. El científico no sólo quiere contemplar la realidad como el místico, el iluminado o el filósofo especulativo; él quiere actuar, moldearla conforme con su deseo, acomodarla a sus pretensiones: es una actitud *creativa (yang),* masculina, activa, dominadora. Quiere "mejorar" la naturaleza sin descartar la admiración por ella, transformarla según su designio (p. 60)[13].

This transformation of reality is carried out from the moment that scientific theories are built on it, but also, from a more active perspective, when *scientific practice* is carried out, that is, the application of specific methods and techniques from each science to a concrete reality.

II. The Psychotherapy

Drawing on the decomposition of the word *psycho-therapy* also, we would have *treatment* of the *psychic*, that is, *soul treatment* (Freud, 1998/1890). If the soul, as we previously considered, is what's characteristically human, that which results from the conjugation of the biological constitutional (human puppy) with the social institutions mediated by language (Lopera and Roldan, 1992, p. 6) and so with the incarnated culture; if this, we say, is the conception of the soul, then a treatment of the same consists of an *asceticism of the subject himself*, a purification of himself, a radical transformation that leads to a change in the way of facing existence.

It is not about intervening the symptoms exclusively since these are, among others, expressions of the soul; neither is it about solving a specific problem that makes a subject suffer; nor to intervene on certain aspects of a person's life and restrict or focus work to that field. An intervention work on a localized and specific problem in a subject is preferable to be called *consultancy* (Ramírez, 2012, Ens. 45) or *symptomatic psychotherapy* (Ramírez et al., 2015), since it is a treatment limited to a symptom or adefined problem; unlike psychotherapy itself that consists in a modification, a radical transformation of the subjective structure. We have called this *ascetic psychotherapy* (Ramírez et al., 2015).

In many moments of life, consultancy is essential and a very valuable help, especially for those who wish to solve an aspect about which they suffer or that represents a concern, doubt or worry[14], but do not want an exhaustive review of the way in which they face existence, of their way of being, which would definitely be the cause of their symptoms. It would be a work "restringido, localizado al conflicto específico (…) con la posibilidad de extenderlo a otros aspectos de su subjetividad, de su discurso existencial"[15] (Ramírez, 2012, Ens. 45, p. 102). From this perspective, there is no oppositional relationship between ascetic and symptomatic psychotherapy (or consultancy), but rather a continuity; or better, a gradualness, since a work on a focused aspect can be extended to other spheres of life.

Psychotherapy, from this conception of the treatment of the soul, from the search for a radical subjective asceticism (purification, transformation, self-care), derives from a whole philosophical tradition that we've already seen in the Greeks with their concern for the education of man from the perspective of *paideia* (Jaeger, 1962); in Socrates, for example, with his insistence on the construction of the truth through the maieutic dialogue and with his constant concerns about the *areté* (virtue): whether it can be taught or not (Plato, 1985, 1987); Foucault (2002, 2010), taking up this Greek tradition, speaks of *parrhesia* as that subject's commitment of making what he says to correspond to his feeling and his doing; and of the experience of truth as a modifying experience, transforming one's own subject. In *Technologies of the Self* (1990) Foucault presents an overview of what, in the history of mankind,

[13]" The first objective of science, know ingreality (explainingit), is closely related to the second: to transformit, modifyit, act on it. The scientist not only wants to contémplate reality as the mystic, the enlightened or the speculative philosopher; He wants to act, mold it according to his desire, accommodate it to hispretensions: itis a creative attitude (yang), masculine, active, dominant. He wants to "improve" nature without discarding admiration for it, transformit according to its design".

[14] An example is that of a young man who does not know which university program to choose and decides to attend consultancy to make an analyzed decision.

[15]" […] restricted, located to the specific conflict (…) with the possibility of extending it to other aspects of its subjectivity, of its existential discourse".

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has been considered fundamental for the cultivation of the soul, both from the self-awareness point of view and from the selfcare perspective. Pierre Hadot (1998, 2006, 2009, 2010) shows ancient philosophy as a discourse but, fundamentally, as a way of life, in which caring for oneself through spiritual exercises was fundamental to the achievement of a good life (*eudamonia*).

A subject decides a treatment of the soul when, fundamentally, he doesn't put up with the suffering generated by his way of being and facing existence. He undergoes a transformation of himself, an asceticism, driven by suffering and the desire of it being reduced. Psychotherapy seeks, through subjective transformation, a modulation or moderation of symptoms (rather than their elimination) with the purpose that the subject builds his own desire and takes charge of his destiny, taking responsibility. We then define psychotherapy as:

> […] *tratamiento psíquico —desde y hacia lo psíquico— con el propósito de moderar el sufrimiento o de transmitir una actitud que permita enfrentar la existencia.* El énfasis en la circunstancia de que se trata *desde y hacia lo psíquico* busca mostrar que, entre los medios utilizados y considerados esenciales para los efectos que se pretenden, se encuentran la palabra y demás expresiones simbólicas. Procedimientos que preferentemente utilizan otras vías como los masajes, la meditación, la relajación, la gimnasia, los aromas, entre otros, y que relegan a un papel secundario el uso de la palabra, más correctamente pueden llamarse *terapias,* no psicoterapias (Ramírez y otros, 2015, p. 199)[16].

Now, in psychotherapeutic work the patient can build or discover that, beyond his desire of moderating suffering, there is a more fundamental and prior wish: *his desire to know*, to be aware of himself and his environment (Ramírez, 2012, Ens. 71, p. 146). In this case, psychotherapy would not be enough. It would require a work based on the *Freudian device*, in which it is sought to take the analysis of the discourse to the last consequences. From this perspective, the asceticism or modification of oneself is not motivated by the desire to mode rate suffering but by the desire to know, which leads much further in this way towards accountability and subjective singularization (Ramírez, 2012, Ens 16).

III. The Psychotherapy: Beyond Psychology

To the extent that psychotherapy points to a treatment of the soul of a subject to a radical modification or asceticism of itself, it must fundamentally attend to the *singularity* of that subject, that is, to what characterizes him as such and, to a lesser extent, what is common with others. In order to intervene, it must be based on the subject's discourse, and not on psychological theories that, as previously stated, are of general nature. When it is intended to direct a psychotherapy from psychology (that is: from the articulated set of knowledge about the psychic), the singularity of the subject is not being addressed as an essential way for him to build his own desire and take charge of his destiny, but he is being accommodated in a generality; in the worst case, he is being *standardized*, addressing to defined norms and, instead of tending to his own freedom, he is being subjected to a new domination in addition to that derived from ignorance of himself and his not-analyzed prejudices. This is the reason why psychotherapy is beyond psychology (Ramírez, 2012, Ens. 25), which leads, at the same time, to a commitment to freedom.

The above considerations do not mean we must repudiate and reject psychology and all the acquired scientific knowledge with the excuse that they alienate the subject or subject him to a subtle form of domination (Lopera, 2002, 2004a). This perspective, according to some nihilistic expressions of postmodernism, is wrong although it is recognized that in some cases psychology becomes an instrument at the service of domination (Braunstein, 1979; Deleule, 1983; Politzer, 1969). The fact that psychotherapy is beyond psychology does not imply that theories are therefore negligible and that general knowledge (or great stories) should be destroyed. Quite the opposite. Psychology as a science fulfills a great function: to know and explain the reality of which it deals. It also contributes, in this way, to man's desire to know, to his epistemic pulsion, the foundation of science.

If we no longer refer to psychological science but to *psychological practice*, that is, to the application of psychological methods to specific cases —the social-community, educational, legal, sports, consultancy, etc.— we see that general knowledge plays a vital role but fundamentally depends on the position of the psychologist, that is, on the attitude he adopts towards it. The use of theory in psychological practice depends on two elements: 1) the way in which the psychologist

[16] "[...]*psychic treatment — from and towards the psychic — with the purpose of moderating suffering or transmitting an attitude that allows us to face existence.* The emphasis on the circumstance *from and towards the psychic* seeks to show that, among the means used and considered essential for the intended effects, are the word and other symbolic expressions. Procedures that preferably use other routes such as massages, meditation, relaxation, gymnastics, fragrances, among others, and that relegate using words to a secondary role can be called more correctly *therapies*, not psychotherapies".

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incorporates the theory; 2) the attitude of learned ignorance[17] that he assumes in his practice.

As for the first aspect there are also two ways of assimilating theory: in an uncritical way, simply assuming it without examining it and without subjecting it to a rigorous analysis in the company of others, which makes it part of its set of prejudices; or it can be incorporated from an exhaustive review, mediated by an analysis of it through *understanding*, *criticizing* and *contrasting* to finally come to *comprehend* (incorporate) (Ramírez, 1991), so that the theory will no longer be the same, since it assumes it as personal, part of its way of being. In this second perspective, psychological theory can be recreated by the psychologist who seeks to express it in consensual language so that other colleagues can understand it and, recurrently, criticize it as a path for the advance of psychological science. Theory incorporated from this second way transforms the psychologist, creates an attitude of openness to other positions and speeches, dissimilar or similar to his.

Learned ignorance corresponds to the attitude of the psychologist, in each of the fields of his psychological practice, of *recognition of knowledge* of those subjects with whom he works, with which his own knowledge is put on hold[18] operating only from what's incorporated, which is no longer theory as such, but a way of being, attitude, method. If his knowledge has been incorporated in an uncritical way it will influence as prejudices of the work generating obstacles and, in the worst case, unsuspected alienations, submissions and standardizations; if it has been incorporated through a method of analysis (understand, criticize, contrast and incorporate) it will operate precisely as an open attitude of listening, criticism and contrast[19]. From this last position can be privileged, in any type of psychological practice, the singularity of the subject (individual or in group), his own desire; for Ramírez (2012, Ens. 23):

La psicología puede usarse para conocer las regularidades e invarianzas de los sujetos, e intentar adaptarlos a un patrón general (en su doble sentido); pero también el conocimiento de dichas leyes puede ser invaluable cuando se quiere privilegiar el deseo singular de un sujeto (p. 59)[20].

Then, Learned ignorance is not reached by ignoring, in an indifferent way, the theory, as some will think when they go firmly against diagnosis—to cite a single example among many, which is also expressed in those who want to destroy science and all "great stories"—. Rather, learned ignorance can be assumed when an effort is made to examine, with extreme rigor and with an analytical disposition, the psychological theory that is studied, when it's delved into it, when it is recreated and contrasted with other theories, disciplines and knowledge; in summary, when it is incorporated through understanding, criticizing and contrasting leading that theory to professional and existential practice. The use of diagnosis will depend on the position assumed by the psychologist, as well as the use of any general theory.

For the attitude of learned ignorance there are two moments: one in which the psychologist, without the urge to intervene —since he is not in the specific situation in his practice— takes the theory into account and incorporates it through the analytical method (understand, criticize, contrast and incorporate); and another moment in which, upon a specific case, the psychologist suspends the theory intervening only from his listening, his analysis, his criticism and his contrast. In both cases, although different, his attitude must be of humility and recognition of his lack of knowledge: learned ignorance (Ramírez, 2012; Ramírez et al., 2015; Ramírez et al., 2017; Ramírez et al., 2019; López, 1995).

IV. Pyschotherapy: A Scientific Art

To propose that psychotherapy is not a science, that it does not derive from a psychological theory but from an attitude and that, therefore, is beyond psychology, can lead to a misunderstanding expressed in the idea of some that it is not possible to know which achievements, results and effects the psychotherapeutic work has. As in a drifting trip, subject to the chance that a favorable or harmful result was obtained. There would be no guide, no torch that would light the taken path in psychotherapy. This un-blaming attitude leads to all kinds of abuse being committed and to avoid any ethical commitment. Contrary to what one might think,

[17] Learned ignorance is a concept that derives from a long philosophical tradition: from Socrates with his phrase *I know that I know nothing* (Plato, *Apology*, 1985); with Nicholas of Cusa (1440/1985) in his book *On learned ignorance,* from the perspective of the relationship with God; with Montaigne (1580/1985) and his art of conferring; with Descartes (1637/2008) and its debugging of prejudices; with Bacon (1620/1984) and his elimination of idols and anticipations in the knowledge of nature; with Freud (1912/1998) and his floating attention or psychoanalytic listening; with Lacan (1989) and his concept of dismissal of the Subject Supposed to Know; with Gadamer (1992, 1993) and his theory about precomprehension in philosophical hermeneutics; with Foucault (2007) and his genealogical archeology; with Popper (2001) and his knowledge of ignorance; with Rancière (2003) and his proposal of the ignorant teacher.

[18] In psychoanalysis the concept of learned ignorance has a central place. Jacques Lacan (1981, p. 404) takes it back from Nicholas of Cusa (1440/1985) to think about the position of the analyst in the cure, the analysis and management of the transfer, as well as in the transmission, study and approach of psychoanalysis as such.

[19] In many cases he will do it from his intuition, but an analyzed one. For the concept of intuition in science see Hogarth, 2002; and for intuition in psychology and psychoanalysis, see: Ramírez, 2012, Ens. 231, 232 and 233; Lopera, 2009, 2004b; Lopera, Echeverri and Goenaga, 2019; for the concept of intuition in decision making, see Manrique, 2019; Builes, 2017.

[20] "Psychology can be used to know the regularities and invariances of the subjects and to try to adapt them to a general pattern (in its double sense); but also the knowledge of these laws can be invaluable when it is wanted to privilege the singular desire of a subject".

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although psychotherapy is not performed from a science, it is carried out from a *scientific attitude* which dialectically contrasts theory and practice. With this we establish a difference between science and the scientific method.

Science, as we expressed before, is an articulated set of articulated knowledge that derives from the systematic application of the scientific method and that meets the requirements of the scientific community of an era (Ramírez, 1991). Science, as a set of theories, consists of sedimentation and articulation of diverse knowledge in knowledge, in a coherent and consistent manner.

The scientific method, on the other hand, is the path taken to reach the construction of science. It seeks to contrast the theory with practice and vice versa, in a constant dialogue that modifies them both. This particularity of the scientific method of establishing a constant dialogue between theory and practice transforms its application, to a large extent, into an *art*, where creativity, intuition and ingenuity are played (Ramírez, 2012, Ens. 231, 232 and 233; Lopera, 2009, 2004b; Lopera, Echeverri and Goenaga, 2019) and not, as occurs from some dominant positions in the scientific community (as a new, unrecognized version of positivism), into a set of standardized steps and regulated to be followed—as usually appears in the manuals on methodology of scientific research available for all— from which a new truth would be supposedly obtained. This second conception of the scientific method, exclusively algorithmic and prescriptive, leads precisely to "research" without creativity, without ingenuity, without invention and without transformation of the researcher, that is, without *scientific spirit*. On the contrary, the conception of the scientific method that highlights its dimension of art (or craftsmanship) enables intuition and creativity within a range given by the validity criteria of any scientific method: consistency and efficacy (Ramírez, 1991; Ramírez et al., 2017, 2019); it also allows us to understand that from the systematic application of this scientific attitude many results derive.One of them is science, but it is not the only one[21].

Psychotherapy is based on an attitude (learned ignorance), not a theory. This attitude is precisely that of the scientific method understood as art, in which there is a guide given precisely by the *patient's theory* (his speech) and his *practice* (his existential doing). This relationship between art and learned ignorance in the field of psychotherapy was also proposed by Bruno Bettelheim, who Rosenfeld tells us that, with the expression *the art of the obvious,* "aludía al arte de ver claramente aquello que está ahí para ser visto, en vez de superponerle nuestras propias ideas previas y nuestros prejuicios"[22](Bettelheim and Rosenfeld, 1994, p. 239).

The psychotherapist, based on the attitude of learned ignorance, relies on the patient's speech for the analysis he wishes to perform in the process of transformation of the subject. This analysis of the patient's speech, based on listening —basis of understanding, criticizing and contrasting—draws on a *consistency* test (Ramírez, 1991), that is, a comparison between different parts of the patient's speech in order to find contradictions, discrepancies, gaps, hidden senses, etc., that will allow him to intervene so that the patient gradually gains knowledge about himself; the consistency will also be applied, as a consequence of the above, to interventions themselves: if they derive from the patient's speech, if they are congruent with it, etc.

It also draws upon an *efficacy* test (Ramírez, 1991) whereby the psychotherapist addresses the effects that are produced by the interpretations (his and the patient's) in the discourse and in the existence of the latter: new memories, creation of meanings, changes in the way of relating to others, attitude of accountability to oneself, progress in the analysis, changes in the way of behaving; moderation of suffering, clarification of problems and concerns. Consistency is theoretical and efficacy is practical. Both interrelate in a mutual dialogue that will transform, at the same time, the theory and practice of the patient: feeling, believing, thinking, saying, expressing and doing will gradually become congruent with each other (Ramírez et al., 2017, p. 53). Thus, the patient, rather than incorporating a theory or doctrine (with which he would alienate), incorporates an attitude of listening, of analysis, of criticism, of contrast; scientific attitude that will allow him to face, for himself and according to his subjective desire, his own existence.

Psychotherapy, derived from the scientific method and not from psychological science, can, however, contribute to the latter's progress. The psychotherapeutic experience leaves the psychotherapist with a knowledge that he may partly formalize in theories and, subsequently, submit to the methods of psychology to proceed with its corroboration

[21] The scientific method, from this broad conception, has been used for different purposes since the earliest antiquity: as maieutics for the search for truth; as sophistry for persuasion; as rhetoric to find power; as reflection and meditation (stoic, epicurean, cynical, skeptical) for the sake of living; as religious exercises for the salvation of the soul; as a methodical doubt (Descartes, 2008) to find certainty; as genealogical archeology (Foucault, 2007) for the constitution of oneself as subjects; as a psychoanalytic method, to make the unconscious conscious; as a communicative action (Habermas, 1987) for a vital self-reflection that leads to disalienation; as an experimental method for the construction of general theories by controlling variables; as a clinical method for the study of a case in extension and depth, among other possibilities.

[22] "[…]alluded to the art of clearly seeing what is there to be seen instead of superimposing our own previous ideas and our prejudices".

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or falsification. It is not as if he were constructing theories when listening to his patients, but after the end of the session or, preferably, after closing a case. This was Freud's experience: a large sector of his psychoanalytic conceptualizations derives from the experiences obtained in his analytical work with his analyzers.

It remains to be noted that the psychotherapist must have incorporated (or be in the process of incorporating) that scientific attitude, that art of listening well, of analyzing well, of intervening well, in order to direct the psychotherapeutic work of others. It is therefore appropriate to have trained as a psychotherapist through personal experiences as a patient in a psychotherapy or in a psychoanalysis, in addition to constantly work on the psychological (general) theory and the clinical and psychotherapeutic theory that others have developed and contrast it with his own and the one he elaborates. He will hardly be able to assume this de-prejudiced attitude if he has not himself undergone a purge of prejudices in a psychotherapy in which he can talk about his life, his entanglements, his problems, his history, his traumas, his primordial signifiers. In summary, he must live, before authorizing himself as a psychotherapist, a process of subjective asceticism, as we have proposed in this article.

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- Ens. 16. La responsabilización.
- Ens. 23. Estandarización.
- Ens. 24. La teoría como instrumento.
- Ens. 25. El deseo del psicólogo.
- Ens. 45. Preguntas sobre el psicoanálisis.
- Ens. 49. La pluralidad de las tendencias.
- Ens. 50. Logos y Ananké.

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- Ens. 56. La dialéctica fractal.
- Ens. 71. Los tres modos de vivir.
- Ens. 98. Análisis de un discurso.
- Ens. 231. La intuición analizada.
- Ens. 232. Análisis de la intuición.
- Ens. 233. La intuición fractal.
- Ens. 234. Sobre lo fractal.
- Ens. 235. La actitud gractal.

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