

Neutrality as “undecidable” between mind and body: The Role and Vicissitudes of Sublimation in a Clinical Case

M. Linardos¹, P. Araoz¹, F. Bobos¹, D. Tabacof¹

¹ EPF Committee, *Psychosomatics in Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, Athens, Greece

Abstract Content (EN)

The paper presents the case of a former missionary nun who left her vows at the age of thirty due to a severe somatic breakdown that prevented her from continuing to care for the sick and needy. About twenty years later, the patient, married and childless, sought psychotherapy, which later led to analysis due to a wide variety of symptoms, including chronic fatigue, headaches, and a vague sense of uselessness. Neutrality emerges as a point of arrival that the analyst must continually strive to achieve, feeling compelled to continually decide whether the symptoms described are somatic or psychic, given the difficulty of thinking in a profoundly psychosomatic sense. This case raises the question of the role and vicissitudes of sublimation in psychosomatics. The patient's original religious vocation was abandoned due to a condition of chronic physical fatigue (failure of sublimation?), which now recurs. In the patient's hypothesis, her symptoms are related to a feeling of "Godlessness."