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Analysis in the Age of Globalization

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Editorial

Mental is the journal of applied psychoanalysis of the European School of Psychoanalysis (ESP) and of the New Lacanian School (NLS).

In order to apply psychoanalysis to contemporary clinical and therapeutic practice, two conditions are necessary. One is that what is applied is pure psychoanalysis.

As Lacan tells us, psychoanalysis is, firstly, an original, completely new experience. It is an ethical experience, guided by the silent and invisible ferret of desire; as opposed to need, necessities and demand, whether that of the subject or the master. This experience has visible and assessable therapeutic effects on the speaking being.

An analytical cure is not just one of many kinds of psycho-knowledge with an objective that oscillates between the patient's well-being and an adaptive socio-educative solution. It is, rather, a new social bond, not informed by previous subjective experiences – philosophical, religious or scientific – because it sets up a different structure of discourse and thus permits the subject to define and describe his own mode of enjoyment.

The other condition is that analysts work at “keeping abreast of the subjectivity of their time” as Lacan wrote in 1953. This implies that analysts be thoroughly aware of the developments in their civilization and of the corresponding changes in the clinical and therapeutic aspects of their profession.

The Unconscious is Political

Milanese Intuitions [1]

[Invited last May 12 to Milan for the creation of the Lacanian school of the Freudian Field in Italy, Jacques-Alain Miller improvised a talk on the theme chosen for this study day: “Psychoanalysts in the City.” In the text that follows he pursues the theme for his Course in Paris three days later, after a six-week interruption for vacation.]

Politics, during the interval in which I did not give my class, reminded us it was still around.¹ The eruption came as a surprise. I have to admit that my taste for surprises can go even that far: I welcomed this one with a smile. For a brief moment. After which I realized to what extent the calculations of the experts could, like those of the multitude after all, prove false, to what extent they could be thwarted. How, with the evidence staring them in the face for so many years, these calculations could crumple and produce a mass effect, with certain traits of depression or panic, but also of defense and mania. A political mobilization followed and the psychoanalysts and a certain number of their associations were explicitly part of it.

Before that, we must admit, we were far from suspecting what was transpiring in the depths; we were laboriously studying counter-transference and the history of the analytic movement during the past half a century. It was in these circumstances that I accepted with pleasure the opportunity given me last Sunday to speak in Milan, on the occasion of the creation of the Freudian Field in Italy, on the theme “Psychoanalysts in the City”, resuming the inspiration of the Seminar that Eric Laurent and I gave in Paris in 1996-97 entitled “The Other who does not exist and his ethics committees”.

Improvising, I entertained in Milan some thoughts about things that concern us in psychoanalysis, and I do not want to bypass that moment. I am, then, going to share with you my Milanese intuitions and begin to develop them. They were about the relations between the unconscious and politics.

My departure point was a remark of Lacan’s taken from his Seminar “La logique du fantasme”, a remark that I found in a book, a sort of psychopathology of political life, which had just been published before I took off. This is the remark: “I do not say ‘politics is the unconscious’ but simply ‘the unconscious is politics’”.

The person who used this quotation purely and simply ruled out the second formula as abrupt and absurd. He accepted the first, but with restrictions. So we must give him credit for having grasped that the two formulas are not equivalent. It is not: if $A = B$, $B = A$. Yes, the author says, there is something of the psychic in politics, but in politics there is not only the unconscious, even if there is in it something of the unconscious, fantasies, dreams, blunders and torments...

¹ “The Disenchantment of Psychoanalysis, The Lacanian Orientation”, course given under the auspices of the Department of Psychoanalysis of the University of Paris VIII, May 15, 2002; text established by Nathalie Georges, published with the authorization of J.-A. Miller.

What is the point of quoting Lacan if it is only to take the edge off his purport and extract from it such vacuity? We find fantasies, dreams, blunders and torments everywhere man is, in action and contemplation, in cultures and ways of doing, in State or society, alone or in a crowd. There is nothing left of Lacan when someone makes this kind of comment on his statements, when there is evidently in his formula a flash, which provokes at least an instant of surprise, before disappearing into the night where all cats are grey. We have in these remarks of Lacan's something worth hearing, and this is precisely what the comment I have referred to has amputated.

But, the *agalma* of this statement is a formula, "The unconscious is politics", and it must at least be remarked that this formula is within the competence of a psychoanalyst, while the other, which proposes a definition of politics, is more of a risk when it is pronounced by a psychoanalyst whose business is not to define politics. This is why Lacan says "I do not say [...], but simply [...]".

This is how I summarize the theme that our Italian colleagues proposed to treat: are the psychoanalysts in the City? This is up for discussion. In any case, psychoanalysis is in politics. That allowed me to find a thread in Milan to develop the theme under discussion. I will, then, pursue my reflections, in the order that they came to me in Milan.

First reflection: "politics is the unconscious"

"I do not say", says Lacan, who thus places his remarks within the empire of denegation, saying all there is to say when he says he does not say. Let's say that, from the logical point of view, Lacan recoils from transforming this statement into a thesis and he stresses that if it were a thesis, it would go further than the other.

Still, is it the thesis of no one, a thesis without a father? If this thesis had a father, it would be Freud, Freud who says something like this, that politics, at least when he writes about it, can be reduced to the unconscious. This is the thesis he put forth in *Group Psychology*, where he analyzes collective formations as unconscious formations, having the same identificatory signifier and the same cause of desire.

Thus politics can be reduced to the unconscious and that is why this thesis, even if it can be found in Freud, calls forth objections which are all of the type: there is more in politics than what belongs to the unconscious. As soon as we find ourselves in face of a reductionist thesis, the objections are variations on the theme "it is only partial, it is more complex, more extensive, etc". I evoked *Group Psychology*, but we could read *Civilization and its Discontents* and *Moses and Monotheism* in the light of the same thesis.

And we could take exception to this thesis by saying that it's not politics Freud is talking about, but still the unconscious, taking his examples from the field of politics. We must nevertheless remark that this field is structured by the instance of the father, that Freud broaches it within the paternal regime, and that is why the terms, the themes which organize his approach are identification, censorship, suppression, including the suppression of *jouissance*.

Second reflection: "the unconscious is politics"

This thesis qualified as abrupt, absurd, which this author thinks he can eliminate with a wave of the hand...! I left for Milan, exasperated by the offhandedness manifested with respect to this formula, which is more modest than the first since it proposes a definition of the unconscious. That's the way it is with Lacan, and it is much more reasonable. We know so little about what the unconscious is, it is so unrepresentable that it is implausible and very risky to define anything, taking the unconscious as a

departure point: on the contrary, it is always the unconscious which must be defined, because we do not know what it is. So it is never for Lacan the *definiens*, but always the *definiendum*. Take the formula “the unconscious is structured like a language”. This is a thesis that supposes we have at our disposal a definition of language and in effect Lacan uses the one that Saussure and Jakobson produced. There is of course not this “like” in the statement that I am commenting on today, so, what we need to ask is how we can define politics in such a way that saying the unconscious is politics makes sense.

What I found amusing was that after having fallen on this irritating comment, I opened a second recently published book, *La démocratie contre elle-même*, by a politician who has probably read Lacan, Marcel Gauchet, and I fell on a definition of politics: “Politics consists specifically in this: it is the place of a fracture in the truth”. Nice definition, both infiltrated with Lacanism and perhaps, underneath, with a sort of Merleau-Pontyism; “fracture” is a word this author is fond of and we also find him using, in a 1992 work, the expression “social fracture” taken up again in 1996 when it fell beneath the eyes of a French political figure who was able to go very far with this signifier...

This politician is, to begin with, a Lacanoid figure who defines politics as a field structured by $S(A/)$, in which the subject undergoes, with pain, the experience that the truth is not one, that the truth does not exist, and that the truth is divided. And this is a definition of politics which retains all its virulence at the time in which we live, a moment that is, after all, on the whole a “post-totalitarian” moment – I put it in quotation marks –, within which we have been enclosed since 1989 with the fall of the Berlin Wall, which, it must be added, everyone did not applaud.

I do not necessarily validate this category, totalitarianism, which served a certain political propaganda during the twentieth century. Totalitarianism was a great hope; it enchanted the masses of the twentieth century, something that we who are of the twenty-first century have almost forgotten. It was the hope of mending the division of truth, of installing the reign of the One in politics, in conformity to the model of *Group Psychology*. At the level of this aspiration to concord, harmony and reconciliation, totalitarianism is perfect, taken as these terms resound in the discourse of President Schreber.

So, the triumph of democracy, which has the wind aft in the spirit of the times, at least in a good part of the globe, – obviously the case of China is a bit apart, and my attention has been drawn to the appearance there of a new pathology, death by overwork, in a region where the word “union” would be a new idea – does not generate the same enthusiasm and as a matter of fact a depressive effect does seem to be its marker; it comports this effect insofar as it implies consenting to the division of the truth, a division which takes the objective form of political parties engaged in an unresolvable contradiction, since the truth is fatally divided.

Which is what Mr. Gauchet says with a lyricism worthy of Merleau-Ponty: “From now on we know that we will inevitably encounter the other under the sign of an opposition without violence, but also irrevocable and irreparable. I will always find myself in face of not an enemy who wants my death, but a contradictor. There is something metaphysically terrifying in this pacified encounter” – I like this link between terror and pacification – “a war can be won”, he says, “whereas we never get out of this confrontation”.

From this comes the paradoxical idea that the pacification of the public space is accompanied by a private, intimate, subjective suffering, and that, at the same time we celebrate the virtues of pluralism, tolerance and relativism, we undergo the experience of a truth, I quote, “which is proposed only in the figure of dilaceration”. The approach of politics we find here, as a question of you or me, remains nevertheless to be reconsidered.

The definition of the unconscious by politics goes very deep in Lacan's teaching. "The unconscious is politics" is a development of "the unconscious is the discourse of the Other". This link to the Other, intrinsic to the unconscious, is what inspires from the outset Lacan's teaching. This is also true when it is pointed out that the Other is divided and does not exist as One.

"The unconscious is politics" radicalizes the definition of the *Witz*, of the witticism, as a social process that finds its recognition and satisfaction in the Other, as a community unified by the ring of a laugh.

Third reflection: the unconscious is political

The Freudian analysis of the *Witz* authorizes Lacan to articulate the subject of the unconscious to an Other, and to qualify the unconscious as transindividual. We can pass from "the unconscious is transindividual" to "the unconscious is political" from the moment that it appears that this Other is divided, that it does not exist as One.

Because of this, "the unconscious is politics" does not at all mean the same thing as "politics is the unconscious". "Politics is the unconscious" is a reduction, and when Lacan formalizes the discourse of the master, he says at the same time that it is the discourse of the unconscious, and thus he gives us the key to a great number of Freud's texts. Whereas "the unconscious is politics" is the contrary of a reduction, it is an amplification, it is the transport of the unconscious outside the solipsist sphere, to place it within the City, to make it depend on "History", on the discord of the universal discourse at each moment of the series which is effectuated by it.

Fourth reflection: the City does not exist

Today, we no longer have "the City". It is imaginary. We hear it as a metaphor for politics, but in the Wirklichkeit, historical effectiveness, politics, is not developed in the form of the City. The City is a residue nostalgia, it is also imaginary in the sense that we look for it today to find it in the television.

In Milan, in *La Repubblica* of the previous day, consecrated to a criticism of Mister Berlusconi who owns three of the six Italian television channels and orients the three he does not own as President of the Council, television was qualified as *agora*, modern *agora*, stressing to what extent it is crippled. The first move of the ancient *agora* would have been to ostracize Mister Berlusconi. At the same time, the journalist considered television as the place where a consensus is elaborated and propagated. This can only highlight the fact that the *agora* of the epoch of the market has nothing to do with the *agora* of ancient times, which was a place of social homogeneity, supposing the exclusion of those to whom the democratic privilege had been refused.

Not only does the homogenous City no longer exist but the Nation-State itself is shaken; challenged, it turns out to be porous, waning to the extent that some go so far as to prophesy its disappearance. Above and beyond the City, it is the Nation-State that is at stake, so that, rather than talking about psychoanalysts in the City, we should dare pose the question of psychoanalysts in "globalization", an approximate concept but one that is certainly more operative than that of City.

I was able to read, in Italy, in a work of Hans Magnus Enzensberger, a description of the astonishing characters that can be found in the Lower Bavarian countryside, which leaves the country bumpkin flabbergasted in the face of these new identities, a somewhat anticipatory poetic carnival that shows we are exceedingly far away from the homogenous space of the City.

“Globalization” is a term for the glimpse we can have of a social space in which nothing is still in its place, which we already perceived by opposing the ancient and new worlds, but here it is really the notion of place itself that is subtracted, what we amiably call losing one’s marks. When nothing is left in its place, it is the category of lack itself that tends to become obsolete, in accord with the example of the book that can “be out of place” only in a well-ordered library... And suppose “globalization” were the name of what makes that obsolete.

For that, we need a new reflection.

Fifth reflection: Freud and Queen Victoria

I shall recycle one of Lacan’s jokes, told at his Seminar. One day he had read Lytton Strachey’s *Queen Victoria*, and he got a laugh from his audience by situating Queen Victoria as the historical cause of Freud. He was thus tracing the link between the birth of psychoanalysis and the disciplinary society, the exacerbation of this society, which sustained powerful interdictions, censoring any utterance touching on sexuality, although this must be modulated because transgressive forms always existed but, precisely, as transgressions: the prohibitions remained in place.

It is sufficient, *a contrario*, to think of the banalization of the sexual spectacle today, which extends from the pornographic film to Ms. Catherine Millet’s book, in order to grasp that we are in another regime of sexuality: no longer the queen Victoria, but the queen Catherine!

This is not the first time that I emphasize the fact that the entire Freudian conceptual apparatus retains the mark of the disciplinary epoch: interdiction, repression, censorship... which is what permitted a junction between psychoanalysis and Marxism, in the form of Freudo-Marxism or the 1968 style of contestation.

It must be noted, in effect, that the Lacanian Renaissance of psychoanalysis during the sixties and seventies is contemporary to the times described by Antonio Negri – who sleeps every night in prison, for having, in those days, been the inspirer of the Red Brigades. He attempts, in his most recent book, *Impero*, to give a doctrine to the international far-left and he notes, p. 333 of the French edition: “During the period of crisis in the 60s and 70s, the expansion of social protection and the universalization of discipline, both in the dominating and the dominated countries, created a new margin of liberty for the laborious multitude. In other words, workers used the disciplinary era in order to extend the social powers of work, etc.”

He underlines what the concept of liberation itself owed to the disciplinary forms of domination, and attempts to conceptualize what we might be after this society. What he calls *impero*, empire, is a regime which no longer proceeds by prohibition and repression and which, thus, renders transgression and the very idea of revolution and liberation problematic, Antonio Negri is the son of Deleuze and Guattari; he recycles their *Anti-Œdipe* written 30 years ago. We can find profit in what is after all a reading of Lacan.

That is the essential idea: that Lacan conceptualized psychoanalysis during the disciplinary epoch, but that he also anticipated the psychoanalysis of the imperial epoch, and this is what we tried to bring up to date with “The Other who does not exist”.

Sixth reflection: Lacan and the queen jouissance

Lacan had the historical role of bringing Freud up to date and preparing psychoanalysis for the new order that Mr. Negri calls *Impero*. If we take things as such, three phases can be distinguished:

— The first phase is that of the formalization of the psychoanalysis of the disciplinary epoch. It is founded on the formalization of the concept of the unconscious, starting with the algorithm of the sign; on the unifying formalization of the Œdipus complex, castration and repression through the concepts of the Name-of-the-Father and the metaphor; on the formalization of the libido through the concepts of desire and metonymy. This classical Lacan is Freud formalized.

— Then we have the transition during which Lacan achieves a subversion of Freud, via the subversion of the Name-of-the-Father, which he pluralizes and whose place he also alters by attributing the operation of repression not to interdiction but to the fact of language itself; *via* the subversion of the concept of desire linked to interdiction, a concept he replaces by that of *jouissance* — he places the accent on what fills the lack rather than on the lack itself; via the definition of the function of the object *a* that remains attached to the theme of the lack but in which what prevails is what comes to fill the lack .

— Finally we have the third phase of Lacan’s work in which the essential term is that of *jouissance*, a *jouissance* which has no contrary. Until then it was in tension with the repressive and mortifying signifier, and now the signifier has itself become an operator of *jouissance*; it was in tension with pleasure and it is precisely the opposition pleasure-*jouissance* that tends to dissolve now, not that all validity has been subtracted from it, but pleasure becomes one of the regimes of *jouissance*. The level of the drive, which, unlike desire, is not intrinsically articulated to a defense, is the level to which Lacan has attributed the property “the subject is always happy”, always happy... on the level of the drive that is, the only question being that of the mode of satisfaction, pleasurable, painful etc., while axiomatically, the drive is always satisfied.

This corresponds to the end of the disciplinary epoch. Everything is now an affair of arrangement. We no longer dream of what is outside. There is nothing but trajectories, arrangements and regimes of *jouissance*. The Borromean knot is already an effort to find a way out of a structure based on binary opposition and the disciplinary organization that this cleavage implies.

I should come back to this notion of the disciplinary society. The opposition between the disciplinary society and the society of control comes from Foucault and was defined by Deleuze. It indicates two regimes of mastery. The disciplinary society is the epoch in which there is an exteriority between the structures, the apparatus of repression and training on the one hand, and the subjugated on the other, and in which domination as such is salient, the indoctrination that permits a head-on opposition and a delineation of the figures of the oppressors. Resistance can then get its support from the forms of coercion. Foucault treated these structures one after the other — the prison, the asylum, the hospital, the school, the university — where “surveillance or punishment” supposes a clear delimitation of the “in” and the “out”.

This becomes of interest when we distinguish what, thirty years ago, was already being modified, that is to say that mastery was somewhat immanent to the social field, that the mechanisms of domination the Marxists could analyze were interiorized and the society of communication or information was transmitting fleetingly or invisibly; which produced the idea that, from now on, it is by flexible, transformable and fluctuating networks that a mastery which is no longer exterior can circulate — to the point that Negri gives us the formula of “autonomous alienation” to designate a mastery that is no longer external but internal, and for which the term of *extimate* is perfectly suitable.

Seventh reflection: the analytic cure in the epoch of globalization

I can reassure you: Negri’s book is not the new *Capital*, it is rather a great poem. A Spinozist, he describes

with pathos a world without operators, an empire which is no longer the imperialism of anyone, which is everywhere, nowhere, and at the same time without borders, without an exterior. It is very repetitive, rather a chant; Negri is the Dante of globalization...

So, the cure, of course, is marked by these times, which take their toll. Conceived first as a treatment distinct from medical treatment, it was proposed as an ideal of maturity and a norm of personality, and even Lacan spoke of the achievement of the personality and the effective realization of the Œdipus complex and castration. The effective realization of the Œdipus complex and castration – Lacan went so far as to speak of phallic disidentification – supposes, in effect, a norm and an ideal that operate. As long as Lacan was in this phase of his teaching, the pressing question on this point insisted on this sequence, no doubt refusing it as such, but nevertheless besieged, invested by the insistence of the norm and the ideal.

A second phase can be distinguished in the accomplished demedicalization of the cure. This is the moment at which the cure could be conceived as an experience, the place where something happens for you. We can compare this to the current doctrine concerning the edification of stores, such as those we see developing already in Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, and New York, for which the new stores must be conform to the concept of *experientialization*, or the transformation of shopping into a unique and irreplaceable experience, without which everyone would just go do their shopping on the Web!

Lacan “experientialized” the cure before everyone, by putting the stress on the analyzing activity and the production of a new subject, and the pass crystallized that, with the end of the cure being conceived in the transgressive mode, as a passing beyond the fantasy.

There is now a third phase, specific to the regime of globalization. This appears at the end of the *Autres Écrits*, where the pass is resituated as a successful narrative that satisfies an audience, as a procedure. We all know that, in the Freudian Field, the products of the pass have been taken into a process of spectacularization. We have invited the Analysts of the school (the AE) to speak before the largest publics we were able to assemble on an international scale. We were criticized for this, but we do not want to go back on it! And there, if we follow Lacan — of course, everything is compatible, like in Italy, you have the pagan temple in the very place where the church is erected, it’s the Freudian unconscious realized! — the end of analysis is stripped of the pathos of the beyond, of transcendence, of the passage, and the accent is put on the changes in the regimes of *jouissance* that can be obtained in the cure. Because it is a question of the satisfaction of the drive, which has no contrary, which means that the reference here is the passage from one regime to another.

The extraordinary formula “there is no sexual rapport” is inscribed within this framework, and it signs the definitive obliteration of the norm. We are free of what had kept psychoanalysis rooted in the disciplinary epoch: there is nothing but *jouissance*. That is what happens in globalization, where we have been for some time. The space of sexual invention opened up at this level, that of norm-less creativity, which today renders inaudible the themes of maturation and achievement. This is obviously congruent with the inclusion of *jouissance* in human rights, the juridification of *jouissance*.

And this must be connected to the promotion of the Lacanian writing of *sinthome*, a new name to indicate the symptom that has no contrary or no longer has one, the subject being, as such, doomed. It must be said that the symptom appears as the regime inherent to *jouissance*, the subject – or rather the living being who speaks – experiencing it necessarily as such.

There are more reflections to come.

Eighth reflection: The depreciation of psychoanalysis

This concerns the depreciation of psychoanalysis such as we find it in this epoch. It must be said, in spite of all. The operators also are aware of it; their act is threatened by depreciation, as psychoanalysis is besieged by psychotherapy. How are we going to classify that? If we have recourse to a particularly astute American economist, psychoanalysts will be put into the class of “attention givers”, those who pay attention to, in which we find psychotherapists, but also baby sitters, butlers, private gym instructors, etc. It is certain that this is a class in expansion, but this growth goes along with a certain disqualification. This achieves a certain depreciation of the position of the analyst.

(to be continued...)

Translated by Thelma Sowley

Ethics in the Era of Globalization

In this title we have the conjunction of two terms, ethics and globalization. We can note the importance of the first term in the beginnings of philosophical thought. The second term, “globalization” on the other hand has not yet acquired, at least in the dictionaries consulted, the signification which interests us for the purposes of this debate.

Although it looks like a neologism, the term “global” is not new and can claim some titles of nobility. The word was used for the first time in 1950, of course in a different context, but still in the way we use it, by the most modern champion of the subjectivist concept of politics, Carl Schmitt. Let us recall that Jacques-Alain Miller commented on this author several times in his course “The nature of semblants”¹.

In *Il nomos della terra*², Carl Schmitt introduces the term global, not as a solution but as a question, into a series of problems to be resolved. What is to be resolved is the necessary dialectic between the norm and the localization, between *die Ordnung* and *die Ortung*. We might say, using our categories, that the norm and the law belong to the symbolic and that the real is linked to the earth, the thing that Man inhabits³. The solution he sees as feasible – again, using our categories – is that of semblance. In this light, making war is considered as a purely symbolic game in which, despite deaths and devastation, the rules of the game are followed.

For Carl Schmitt, “global” has a purely political sense, whereas the current use of the term shrouds the political aspect in economic finery. We must recall in passing the importance Lacan gave, not only to politics but also to what could be the weight of psychoanalysis in politics – a weight it does not have at present. And recall as well, the importance Lacan gave to economists' studies, as he emphasizes in Seminar XVII, *L'envers de la psychanalyse*. It is for analysts, says Lacan, to institute this other field of energy – that of *jouissance* which would require other structures than those of physics⁴.

Psychoanalysis and cybernetics

Globalization is a revolution, a silent revolution, a total revolution. It is a revolution because it modifies the relationship of the subject to the Other. It is a revolution because it disrupts the level of communication.

This disruption breaks up the borders separating individuals. In a globalized world, anybody, near or far, can become our neighbor. Globalization implies a radical transformation of time and space never achieved before now. Globalization means that a human action can spread simultaneously from one part of the world to another, annulling time and space.

So what is the vehicle for diffusion such as this? It is communication. But communication, the

1 J.-A. Miller, "La natura dei sembianti", *La psicoanalisi n° 13*, Astrolabio, Rome, 1993, p.183.

2 C. Schmitt, *Il nomos della terra*, Adelphi, Milan, 1991.

3 For a confrontation of Carl Schmitt's thesis with that of Hans Kelsen, see N. Irti, *Norma e luoghi. Problemi di geo-diritto*, Laterza, Rome-Bari, 2001.

communication of globalization, uses time and space in the particular dimension of cybernetics where space is without space and time is timeless.

In 1955, in his conference “Psychoanalysis and Cybernetics”, Lacan speaks, when he refers to cybernetics, of “wonders”⁵. These wonders touch on the fact that cybernetics, like psychoanalysis, is coextensive to language. Today, others speak of the wonders of cybernetics as well, but in a different sense – in the sense of the results obtained by globalization in the politico-economic field through cybernetics.

“Why does globalization do us good?” asks the subtitle of Paulo Del Debbio's recent book⁶. If that were the case, and nothing is less certain, the problem would be to find out if globalization does others good as well.⁷ Noam Chomsky thinks that it does good neither to us nor to anyone else.⁸ In fact many are those who deplore, each in their own way, the disasters past and still to come. I will not enter into the merits of the voluminous literature about the *Global or No-Global*, nor the different models, of would-be *Global Governance* anymore than the comments on the goodness or perversity of globalization. Nevertheless, we will briefly allude to certain aspects of globalization.

Globalization

First aspect: globalization contains within itself the reduction of just anyone to the function of the neighbor, a neighbor to love according to the principles of biblical law and one to be eliminated according to the principles of structure – the other, as we know, occupying our own vital space.

Second aspect: globalization is a universalisation through the imaginary, where the third party is eliminated. This brings about the suppression of the dialectics of friend/enemy, and the reduction of the adversary to a criminal. Fear and insecurity find sustenance there.

Third aspect: globalization, which has no defined space, imperils the sovereignty of States whose laws, for their part, are tied to defined space.

Fourth aspect: globalization does not produce communities but shopping centers. Rather than citizens, it produces consumers.

Fifth aspect: globalization goes hand and hand with information, where facts and opinions are intentionally manipulated on a worldwide scale.

Sixth aspect: globalization generates tension with the local, for which the supposed remedy would be the so-called *Glocal*.

Seventh aspect: globalization questions the pact between citizens and States upon which democracy is founded, a word often used in many States, and not the least among them, for nothing more than to conceal oligarchies. Democracies swallowed up in an *Empire*⁹, the title given to a book by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, in which we see *The End of Liberty*, another title, this time of a book written by Gore

4 J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire Livre XVII, L'envers de la psychanalyse*, Seuil, Paris, 1991, p. 93.

5 J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire Livre II, Le moi dans la théorie de Freud et la technique de la psychanalyse*, Seuil, Paris, 1978, p. 339.

6 P. Del Debbio, *Global. Perché la globalizzazione ci fa bene*, Mondadori, Milan, 2002.

7 See A. Bononi, *La comunitamaledetta. Viaggio nella coscienza di luogo*, Ed. di Comunità Turin, 2002 and Z. Bauman, *Dentro la globalizzazione. Le conseguenze sulle persone*, Laterza, Rome-Bari, 2001.

8 N. Chomsky, *Sulla nostrapelle. Mercato globale o movimento globale?* Tropea, Milan, 1999.

9 M. Hardt, A. Negri, *Impero. Il nuovo ordine della globalizzazione*, Rizzoli, Rome, 2001.

Vidal.¹⁰ A. Baldassarre hypothesizes that the era of Locke's morality of democracy is over and that the revenge of Hobbes' absolute sovereign, enlightened or not, is looming on the horizon.¹¹

The grinding machine

Lacan's teaching could shed multiple lights on all these aspects but I will limit myself for the moment to isolating just one of them. I would like to emphasize the functioning of this grinding machine which strives towards its own ends.

For some time now economists have realized that the free market functioned according to its own internal laws, strictly symbolic then, which express the real functioning absolutely independent of any subjectivity.

Lacan reminds us that cybernetics on which the free market bases itself, and globalization therefore, is a science of empty places, of encounters in and of themselves, a science where there is combination, totalization – Lacan does not say globalization. It is a science that starts functioning all by itself¹². This accounts for the irrepressible character – like that of the signifying chain – of the functioning of the politico-economic system that is the free market. Yet today we come to give a meaning, a direction, finality to this irrepressible functioning, articulated as Lacan says specifically for cybernetics, as a syntax.

The market is thus comparable to a self-regulated machine, after Adam Smith's image of “the invisible hand”¹³. From whence comes the free marketers' command to not upset the free market machine, since not only is its functioning inescapable but it knows where it is going as well. I want to underline these two aspects: it is a machine and a machine with a direction. We are familiar with the nature of this machine because it is founded in cybernetics – it is a language machine. If this self-regulated machine has a direction, then its final cause enters into play.

May I remind you of Aristotle's definition: the final cause of ethics is that towards which strive all things¹⁴. Ethics is determined by its final cause. And its final cause is good. It is a question of man's good and not a univocal good as a reality in and of itself¹⁵ in the way Plato conceived it. Even if, through the Scholastics' reelaboration, this good coincides with God¹⁶, the enjoyment remains specific to each man¹⁷. Throughout the entire aristotelico-humanist tradition, despite the multiple meanings of good, both concrete and particular, it has always been a question of the good towards which human action strives and of which Man is the beneficiary. This central position of the good of Man remains, whether we put it in theistic terms or not.

The ethic of the machine

The great change, the great chiasmus¹⁸ as Lacan says, comes with utilitarianism. For two reasons: first because utilitarianism, in confronting the question at the level of the signifier, highlights the functioning of

10 G. Vidal, *La fine della Liberta. Verso un nuovo totalitarismo?*, Fazi, Rome, 2001.

11 A. Baldassarre, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

12 J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire Livre II, Le moi dans la théorie de Freud et dans la technique de la psychanalyse*, *op. cit.*, pp. 350-351.

13 A. Baldassarre, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

14 Aristotele, *Etica nicomachea*, Rusconi, Milan, 1979, I, 1, p.1094a.

15 C. Mazzarelli, "Introduzione alla lettura dell' *Etica nicomachea*", Aristotele, *Etica nicomachea*, Rusconi, Milan, 1979, p.15.

16 Tommaso D'Aquino, *Somma teologica*, I, 6, 1.

17 *Ibid.*, 2-2, 180, 7.

18 J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire Livre VII, L'éthique de la psychanalyse*, Seuil, Paris, 1986, p. 269.

the signifying machine as we call it, which functions inescapably and without eroding. And secondly because the aim of ethics is no longer the good of Man as the philosophical-humanist tradition formulates it, but is inherent rather in the good functioning of the machine itself¹⁹. In this sense, Bentham initiates a dialectical movement between the symbolic and the real that will soon besiege the entire Freudian experience.

The utilitarian ethic and the ethic of psychoanalysis both underline the importance of the functioning of a machine – a symbolic apparatus articulated to a real. With utilitarianism will emerge, much later of course, the supposed ethic of the free market. Psychoanalysis with Lacan will promote the ethic of desire.

The ethic of the free market does absolutely not have the good of Man as its final aim. Its final aim is that the machine go where it is going, following its own circuit inescapably and irresistibly. Free marketers uphold that the final aim of the machine is necessarily positive because it is the best system of resource creation yet invented. So the good of the market becomes the good of Man because it does not proceed directly from man's intention, since Man could very well want evil. Of itself, they repeatedly say, the process cannot strive toward evil. In fact it strives neither toward good nor towards evil. Henceforth we are outside the moral categories of good and evil, while we are still in the problematic of ethics founded on an Aristotelian ethic, an ethic founded on that towards which all things strive.

An ethic of desire

There is a substitution. The beneficiary is no longer Man but the functioning of the machine itself. Max Weber says it in these terms: “there where the market is left to its auto-normativeness, it knows only the dignity of the thing and no longer the dignity of the person.”²⁰ The ethic of psychoanalysis too is situated, like the ethic of the free market, on the side of the symbolic machine and its functioning.

What is the difference between these two ethics?

The difference certainly does not reside in their humanism – neither the ethic of the economy nor the ethic of psychoanalysis is humanist. Neither wants the good of Man. The difference resides in the relation to the real. The ethic of the market economy wants to make believe that the real in play is the accumulation of riches. This is, without a doubt, a pure illusion and certain to cause confusion. In fact, riches are nothing more than the results of the machine which functions according to the principles of the law of the signifier while ignoring the value and the rights of men. It would be as if we, psychoanalysts, considered that the real was an accumulation of understandings and knowledge enriched by the psychoanalytical process and of which the ego would be the master. Besides which, in the free market riches have their own riches, those Marx called surplus value.

The ethic of the free market makes believe that the real is riches, whereas the real, as Lacan reminds us, is what the rich does not pay²¹. This real consists in the hole implied by the symbolic. They pretend, like Hegel's beautiful soul, to believe that there is no hole in the functioning, that the symbolic is intact and entire. They pretend to believe that there is no surplus value, that there is no surplus enjoyment. In this way, the free market falls in a rut analogous to that of a kind of psychoanalysis, that school of psychoanalysis that is an accomplice of hermeneutics. In the field of economics and in the analytical field, they pretend that everything can be reduced to the signifier, that the machine of language totals itself up in the signifier, without wanting to know anything about the real. But psychoanalysts know that this exclusion of the real

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

20 A. Baldassarre, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

21 J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire Livre XVII, L'envers de la psychanalyse, op. cit.*, p. 95.

is paid for at the highest possible price because what is not inscribed in the symbolic returns in the lives of people in a devastating way.

Globalization is the unleashing of the hermeneutic utopia in the field of economics.

But what differs from hermeneutics, that can remain an abstract game for philosophers and intellectuals, possibly showing the very inaptitude of the various kinds of psychotherapy to which it aspires, is that the free market could very well be the field in which the death drive unfolds itself globally.

Fifty years ago, in a careful study of law and place, between the symbolic and the real, Carl Schmitt predicted a situation that would have been unthinkable at the time, that of the unleashing of terrorism, the installation of a so-called just war and finally, a global civil war. He said these were decisive agents for the future.

The death drive is inherent in the functioning of the signifying machine. The flip side of language is *jouissance*, in Lacan's sense of the word. How then to deal with this *jouissance* that Lacan says in Seminar XVII, only God knows where it will take us?²² The machine knows where it is going. But we do not know where the machine is taking Man. Let us say frankly that the solutions offered at the moment are ridiculous.

We cannot look for solutions from the free marketers because their solution is to accompany the automatic movement of the machine. Their *credo* is do not disturb the helmsman. Even though the machine in fact maneuvers of its own accord.

We cannot look for a solution from the Left, the entire Left, Italian, European. Because the people of the Left do not know which fish to catch and act brave while waiting for a solution to fall from the sky. They would like to stop or at least master the machine, but their will resembles that of the neurotic faced with the inescapability of the symptom, and their words go no further than so many good intentions revealing only a growing incapacity.

Then there are those who are terror stricken by the functioning of the machine, or those who are carried off by the death drive. Those choose extremist political parties, whether they be left or right wing.

The Lacanian solution

Let us come back to Lacan. I quote: "The intrusion [of psychoanalysis] in politics can only come about by recognizing that whatever discourse, and not only the analytical discourse, it stems from *jouissance*."²³

Belonging to the Lacanian field – a title J.-A. Miller gave to the chapter of Seminar XVII that deals with these propositions – is not only psychoanalysis, but the free market as well, which can seem paradoxical if we forget that they are both in the order of *jouissance*.

Here we enter into the crux of the Lacanian solution to the problem. It is not an easy solution, nor is it a utopian one and it may prove to be inefficient because of our incapacity to give psychoanalysis its rightful place in this world.

This Lacanian solution is called discourse and its "hot spot" is "that which refers to *jouissance*" – "discourse touches on it incessantly, in that it begins there"²⁴. As Jacques-Alain Miller points out in his four

²² *Ibid.*, p. 88.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

discourses, Lacan shows the mode of treatment of jouissance according to the structure: “the introduction itself of the signifier depends on jouissance and . . . jouissance is unthinkable without the signifier”²⁵. Jouissance centers Man – to be litter, a scrap, is what he aspires to, without knowing it, by the fact that he is a speech being.²⁶

I will close with a few thoughts.

The first concerns revolution. Lacan considers that revolution is what permits each element to permute with the others in an ordered rotation, as the four discourses show us. Only a revolution such as this, where the elements circulate, can permit a change in the master’s discourse. It is a matter of trying to make it a little less limited, “a little less damned stupid”²⁷.

The second thought concerns the displacement Lacan operates when, in place of philosophers, he starts speaking to political economics experts, in other words, experts in jouissance. It is not at random that Lacan links the name of Marx to the analytical symptom and to surplus enjoyment. Even the Marxist primacy of the value of exchange in its relation to the value of use underlines the signifying nature of the economic machine.²⁸

The third thought is about capitalist discourse. Lacan gave the mathema for it here, in Milan, thirty years ago on March 12, 1972²⁹, during a conference at the State University. This mathema shows Man in the reign of capitalism as reduced to a consumer of countless objects, false objects of desire. I quote Lacan: “The consumer society takes its meaning from this; that what makes up the element in quotation marks that we qualify as human, is given the homogeneous equivalent of any other surplus enjoyment that is a product of our industry, a fake surplus enjoyment”³⁰.

The fourth thought is about the Catholic Church, “the real one”, as Lacan says. Faced with the unleashing of the pastoral theology of “we are all brothers” who want each other’s good, it would be timely to restore the primacy of the Son and part ways with the dogmatic theology that is a discourse developed around the hole of mystery, of the *Mysterium fidei*.

The last thought concerns jouissance. Lacan ties, curiously at first sight, the solution of jouissance in the social and political order to sexuality, precisely to the possibility of isolating a type of jouissance that we call phallic³¹. Phallic jouissance is always localized – never globalized then – it is particular, so not universal. But he also ties the solution to jouissance to the incidence of another type of jouissance in to which the woman plunges her roots, like the flower³².

We understand why it is so difficult to keep democracy alive in a globalized world. Democracy is like *The woman*. It does not exist. There are democracies. For this reason, the jouissance of democratic living, following the example of feminine jouissance, is difficult to find and difficult to inscribe.

We propose that ethics, in the era of globalization, be an ethic of discourse.

Translated by Julia Richards

25 J.-A. Miller, “Les six paradigmes de la jouissance”, *La Cause freudienne* 43, p. 24.

26 J. Lacan, “Il fenomeno lacaniano”, *La psicoanalisi n°24*, Astrolabio, Rome, 1998, p.10.

27 *Lacan in Italia*, La salamandra, Milan, 1978.

28 On this subject, see Adriano Voltolin's comments from this Symposium.

29 *Lacan in Italia*, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

30 J. Lacan , *Le Séminaire Livre XVII, L'envers de la psychanalyse*, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-93.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 86.

32 *Ibid.*, p. 89.

Ethics and Practice

Over the last few years we have been experiencing the effects of a process of worldwide integration, economic above all but also cultural. It was inevitable that this should happen, perhaps over a longer time or in different ways. But because of the rapid evolution of communication media and the appearance of the virtual, this process was enormously accelerated. It has produced a new order, a new logic, and a new “power structure”.

In a book by Michel Hardt and Antonio Negri entitled *Empire*, first published in English in 2000, and recently in Italian, this phenomenon is interpreted as a new form of sovereignty that the authors call “empire”. “Empire is the new political subject that regulates world exchanges”, instilling a power without a center and with moveable limits. Progressively it incorporates the entire planet, administering “hybrid identities, flexible hierarchies, and plural exchanges”. The aim of its power is the totality of social life”. Its effective action is inseparable from extreme violence, but the empire itself rests on a concept of “perpetual and universal peace, outside of history”.

This global process spreads rapidly and crushes every existing thing, decomposing and re-articulating according to processes hitherto unknown. Traditional evaluation systems and old ideas of rationality prove inadequate for producing the meaning – or the meanings – they want to sustain. An insistent and radical demand is emerging now, concerning the importance and significance of our action. This calls for ethics, because ethics have something to say about the nature of processes leading to ravages that threaten survival itself.

The fallacious recourse to ethics

A first way one resorts to ethics calls for the creation or fixing of criteria, of rules, for resolving the problem of the relationship between applied knowledge and the social impact of its effects. That leads us to speak of bioethics, of deontology for doctors and lawyers, of ethical codes for economic operators, of ecology in our demands concerning nature and, finally of ethical war.

Ethics re-emerges today, and is supposed to save the situation we find ourselves in by displacing the sick part through regulating systems. How can one not be neurotic with a neurotic existence? How can one not be ill when life makes us ill? How can we maintain the symptom while taking away its capacity to handicap us?

Is it possible to produce ethical behavior, that is, can we draw up a list of norms to respect that will put us at peace with our actions?

We are witnessing a growing demand for behavior protocols that effectively exonerate the subject from all decision-making responsibility by presenting the ethical problem as already solved.

In this case, talking ethics is a way of getting rid of them. One cannot want behavior to be ethical and, at the same time, for it to be guaranteed by a pre-constituted norm.

Calling on ethics because it produces problem-free protocols is to engage in frenetic activity that turns out

to be the cause of the problems. In fact, we are asking the “ethicians” to get us out of embarrassing situations the easy way.

Having recourse to ethics is to avoid getting to work, or, more precisely, to avoid doing something worth being called work. Therefore, in asking oneself questions about ethics, one is led to redefine the very notion of practice.

Redefining practice

As has been shown by some important modern philosophical studies and by psychoanalytic research, we cannot understand practice to be only the concrete application of pre-existing theoretical information – and even less as pure empirical action. There is practice (when practice is not reduced to technique), only if one is not satisfied with simply reading results, but when one also takes in the complex form of the relation between the operator and his operation. There is no practice without encountering one’s limits when faced with the new and pressing demands of the real. In fact, there is no practice without practice.

The activist frenzy promoted by globalization uses an enormous amount of intelligence for resolving problems and inventing new procedures, but this is not, in itself, real practice. We wear ourselves out in a no-exit activism. Things get done; jobs are filled, without being real acts. Acts that imply uncertainty, suffering, risk, doubt, consent for a cause and being available to become something other than what we were, as Roberto Cavasola pointed out, are states of being that the post-modern subject is no longer used to sustaining – perhaps because that ardent core of action that is love has been spared him.

Can one say that, or is it too sentimental, too outmoded, or too directly related to a convention of a confessional nature? Why call on love when one evokes the relation of ethics to practice? Because love is necessary as a power for opening that transcends the immobility of the conventional and the known. Love is what goes beyond the law. Love accepts the challenge for which we are all unprepared, love tears apart and, as Plotinus said: “awakens the faculty of seeing that all have, but few use”¹

The psychoanalytic solution

What does this have to do with psychoanalysis?

I would say that psychoanalysis has a leading role: it is constructed on the “centrality” of the subjective position, and opens up to the recognition of singular journeys. Psychoanalysis gives essential importance to what is new, to what happens today, and to what demands, through suffering, being listened to, considered, interpreted, in order to avoid being crushed by what *is*, something more convenient to leave alone. Psychoanalysis has a greater plasticity than other realms of knowledge; it is able to translate the paralyzing and segregating effects of globalization, in a practice that allows the emergence of new circuits of meaning. That is not to say that psychoanalysis is founded on labile principles but rather that it has mobile principles, precisely because it is rooted in the discovery of the unconscious.

The unconscious has moved the subject off-center in the face of knowledge, breaking up the narrow view of the Cartesian “I think” and its mastery of the world that oblige it to keep at a distance everything that could shake its position. The unconscious is not attached to any particular state, it subverts what seems to be stable; it lets things happen, it welcomes contraries from which, in discomfort, the truth emerges.

Provided, of course, that psychoanalysis does not freeze up the unconscious. That it doesn’t get too

1 Plotinus, *Aeneiades*, vol. 2.

attached to its theoretical treasure and doesn't follow its ideology so closely as to make of it its foundation, its justification, or even an unequivocal explanation of the reality of things.

Psychoanalysis has to be open to incessant rediscovery in concrete practice so as to encourage, on a grand scale, an active relation to innovative processes that can create subjectivity and order. In the globalized world, of course the reciprocal implication is greater and greater, but it is also increasingly difficult to produce order. No judicial system is adequate to the new reality and its economic and social relations. We try to guarantee stability by reducing, simplifying, eliminating complexity. Such a move closes the ethical space, not because ethics needs to be conservative, but because whatever is built on closing is born censured. In this sense, we can take as an example Antigone, as commented on by Lacan in Seminar VII, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*.

The ethics of Antigone

We ask of Antigone that she obey the needs dictated by the political order of the City. We are continually bombarded by demands issuing from the need to be abreast of our times. Antigone, following "a free impulse of the heart", gives her brother a grave. She thus devotes herself to something that falls outside of order, contravening Creon's laws – an act she will have to pay for. If the law accepts that this body is rubbish, all order will be built on this rubbish. Antigone sees the implacable singularity of what order has to push aside so as to maintain life.

When the implacable singularity is trodden upon, all singularity disappears and the symbolic order in which we live is impoverished and devitalized.

We can add one other thought. In the play, the twin brothers have different destinies: one body is symbolized and the other is excluded. We have a piece of a body detached from Creon because what he retains is that he is incompatible with the order of the City.

Today, we are more and more encumbered with laws of the City that are incompatible with the body – dead or alive – think of the boat-people, sometimes like dead bodies. Great sections of humanity are on the outside, excluded from symbolization, without graves. The economic system ends up with surplus human beings, parts of bodies that could still be parts of life. Each has its part – its half, its third, its quarter – that is not accepted; a vast portion of humanity that is marginalized and mutilated.

The subject of the unconscious is also mutilated, just when it needs welcoming, the creation of new spaces, so it can appear in these moment of articulation, of original invention, of authorization to act.

An edifying story

Belonging to a School of psychoanalysis does not shield one from the risks we have enumerated.

We can become part of a School obediently, adhering to the representation of knowledge founded on the texts of Freud and Lacan. Or we can adhere, ready to disappear because we accept repeating the authorized words of those who found it. Or we can remain immobile in relation to the School, because we feel we don't measure up, or are badly prepared, or that we do not know how to subjectively be part of it.

I have recently remembered something that happened to me a long time ago, when I was a schoolteacher in the remote countryside of Venice. I was teaching the alphabet to primary-school students and, as was the custom, I drew a picture and wrote the name underneath, inviting the pupils to copy it: a lovely majestic goose.

Translated by Sylvia Winter

Lacan and the Legacy of the Enlightenment

Over the last century, Enlightenment reason has run counter to multiple readings that have noted its dual nature, at once liberating and alienating, emancipating and subtly repressive. From Heidegger to Horkheimer and Adorno, up to Foucault, the classical representation of Enlightenment thought – philanthropic humanism – as rational, as characterizing, in particular, the spheres of politics, of morals, and of law – has been challenged by a different representation of Enlightenment: as the systematic domination of technical-instrumental reason, the exclusion and reduction of the Other to the same. In these different movements, twentieth-century philosophy has endeavored to bring to light the silent obscurantist aspect inherent in Enlightenment rationality. The fundamental struggle of this rationality had precisely been the polemic against obscurantism in all of its different forms.

In this context, it may seem surprising that Lacan should position himself against the current of the most advanced developments in twentieth-century philosophy – from which he drew, more than from any other source, for the elaboration of his analytic theory. He inscribes his own place in the field of psychoanalysis, as well as the status of analytic practice – as J.-A. Miller reminds us in the second of his *Lettres à l'opinion éclairée* – in the line traced since the legacy of the Enlightenment. What, then, is the value of Lacan's choice of this trend, in which he recognizes Freud's so-called scientist intention?

Psychoanalysis and Enlightenment

First – it is a thesis – Lacan places psychoanalysis within the heritage of the Enlightenment from the ethical perspective according to which, in this tradition, the rapport of the subject with knowledge is articulated. This perspective is clearly laid out in Kant's well-known 1784 text, *Response to the question: What is Enlightenment?* When Lacan situates psychoanalysis within the heritage of the Enlightenment, he is not concerned with the imperialism of instrumental reason, but with the ethical relationship of the subject to knowledge.

According to Kant's famous definition, Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed nonage. The nonage is the inability to use one's own understanding without another guidance. This nonage is self-imposed if its cause lies not in lack of understanding but in indecision and lack of courage to use one's own mind without another's guidance. Dare! Have the courage to make use of your own intelligence! This is the driving force of the Enlightenment. Kant stresses courage and decision in the locus of knowledge and stresses the struggle against willful ignorance that makes man a slave. It is with regard to this slavery that Enlightenment reason proposes not to back off in the face of knowledge, proposes to submit what is transmitted by tradition to the critique of the intellect, without taking its truth value for granted and proposes an unmediated experience of knowledge.

For Lacan, the Freudian discovery is situated in this line traced by the Enlightenment experience. The ethical status of the unconscious, which he underscores in Seminar XI, is an invitation for the contemporary

subject to know something of his unconscious, thus renewing Freud's inaugural experiment. According to Lacan's reading, if the Enlightenment marks a new ethical status for reason, Freud's psychoanalysis underscores the ethical status of the unconscious; in this way the temporality at stake in the definition of the unconscious is no longer that of a past codified by tradition, but that of a future inciting the subject to the courage of decision. For Lacan, rather than the past, the unconscious is the future of the subject, his "coming to the outside", his singular emergence beyond the monotonous repetition of what has been. This is what the subject expects from an analysis: that it allows him to no longer be simply what he has already been.

For Lacan, the experience of psychoanalysis can be formulated in a two-fold movement, which is the most advanced level of the position of the Enlightenment: disillusion the subject from his fictive identity so as to awaken him to the real of his particular desire. It is exactly in the dialectic between these two terms – dialectic between disillusionment and awakening – that I will try to articulate what I have to say about the enlightened responsibility of contemporary psychoanalysis.

The responsibility of psychoanalysis

The most enlightened psychoanalysts announce the crisis of Freudian practice. That they, rather than the declared adversaries of psychoanalysis, are announcing it is not insignificant. The feelings range from the regret of someone like Christopher Bollas, who attributes the defeat of psychoanalysis to a progressive distorting of its practice, to the sense of freedom which one hears in the most extreme theses of the relational California school, who are all too thrilled to remove the weight of the scaffolding of Freudian theory from the direct interaction with the patient. This year, Jacques-Alain Miller, sniffing the air of psychoanalysis today, titled his course in such a way as to give us clues for reading these diverse tendencies at the heart of the psychoanalytic movement, a title which has an interpretation value.

Whatever the psychoanalyst's predicament with regard to analytic practice, J.-A. Miller provides us with a vital lead in his question about psychoanalysis as disillusionment. If his course is a critical analysis of disillusionment in contemporary psychoanalysis, his *Lettres à l'opinion éclairée* are a first move to reawaken psychoanalysis. I will try to work out several thoughts within the general framework he traces for us.

The first aspect of the problem lies primarily in how to understand such disillusionment. Since this is a concept that is foreign to psychoanalytic theory, instead coming from philosophical discourse, it could be understood as an extension of the *Stimmung* of contemporary times and of subjects living in post-modern society – nihilism and a general loss of values – to psychoanalysis. From this historical perspective, psychoanalysis does not escape the destiny of generalized decadence, and in this sense, we could speak of its disillusionment. There would be a movement from the enchantment intrinsic to the epoch during which Freud's discovery of the unconscious and its formations took place, to the disillusionment of contemporary psychoanalysis, this is turn leading to the eclipse of the unconscious, or to psychoanalysis becoming diluted in the heterogeneous group of psychotherapies.

Without being untrue, this reading does not allow us to account for the disillusionment internal to psychoanalysis and its, not only theoretical consequences, but its clinical and ethical ones. First, this historical parable, which distinguishes the golden age of origins from contemporary decadence, overlooks the fact that already from the beginning the question is amply articulated, if not put in so many words. It suffices to think of this great text "Analysis terminable and interminable" and the way in which Freud confronts the problem of residual manifestations internal to any thorough analysis, those points of libidinal inertia: man's castration complex and woman's penis envy.

Disillusionments

We could venture to suppose that on different levels, the problem of disillusionment is the crucial problem of psychoanalysis today. First, it is that of the disillusionment of psychoanalysts with regard to their own practice and in their relationship to psychoanalysis. Lacan warned us about this when he asserted that psychoanalysis would exist only as long as there were psychoanalysts. He did not take it for granted that there would always be psychoanalysts.

At the same time, it is also a question of the conclusion of the cure, whether it is a personal or a training cure. How can the cure go beyond the collapse of ideals and fundamental identifications unveiled by it, without being stopped in this valley of tears that is disillusionment, a breeding ground for all types of cynicisms, roguery and other perverse practices of jouissance?

Again, it is a question of the disillusionment of the contemporary subject, who suffers more and more without formulating a demand, because he no longer believes in the value of speech, nor in addressing another who will help him to find his truth. How can psychoanalysis operate with a non-divided, disillusioned subject who “enjoys”, as with the new symptom forms – drug addiction, anorexia and bulimia – sometimes to the point of death?

Beyond disillusionment

This historical reading of disillusionment leads us, then, to understand it as a sort of degenerative illness, a sort of pathology of aging. This perspective does not enable us, in disillusionment itself, to account for the recurring trait specific to analytic practice that is registered almost automatically in the course of an analysis. In interrogating the effect of disillusionment in analytic experience, one must pose the question in this way.

Psychoanalysis frees the subject from the slavery of ideals that have constituted his identity: this is one of the aspects of disillusionment. However, there is another one revealed by the pathogenic mark, exposing the subject, in the experience of the falling away of his or her identifications, to the pure experience of jouissance, without the awakening of desire. There, it is a question of the degradation of the effect of disillusionment produced in analytic work. This is where the analyst is called on for the most difficult of tasks: to enable the subject to not stop being disillusioned from his ideal, but to tie this disillusion to an awakening related to the real, specific to his own desire.

Psychoanalysis awakens the subject to the real of his own particular desire. In this way, for Lacan, in order to be able to operate on this level of the experience of the subject, there should be something traumatic about the analytic encounter. What reawakens, in fact, is never the ideal, but the encounter of the subject with the real of the drive, with an unexpected jouissance that surprises and shakes him, like in a nightmare, or in the contingency of the unforeseen event that marks him in his relationship to love and death.

Translated by Vivian Rehberg

Endless Training?

The Action Committee document of the School One about supervision and guarantee addressed the problem of analytic training as endless training. Such a characteristic represents an undeniable particularity regarding the classic concept of training. The notion of endless training is a paradox insofar as it designates a never-ending path. It is in total contradiction with the very idea of “training”.

The root of such paradox, elaborated by J.-A. Miller in a conference held in Valence last year, has to do with the fact that analytic training is a reverse training: it begins where training generally ends: in its exhaustiveness. J.-A. Miller says that analytic training begins with the separation of the two terms, symbolic and real, that are a complement to the lack of being of the subject, what we call the fantasy.

Reverse training

This means that analytic training does not end on identification but it deploys in reverse from identification to dis-identification. It begins where identification has its constituent shape – were the *Bildung* happens –, to arrive to its de-subjectification. It is reverse training, as is the analytic path regarding the construction of fantasy. This structure taken reversely is the condition of the endlessness of training. We can think of analytic training as endless, because in theory, the dis-identified subject is no longer searching for a fantasy complement neither on the level of knowledge nor on the level of recovering identification such as an analytic title for instance.

The subjective dis-identification is the analyst’s new capacity to accept any signifier, without being encumbered by a preliminary identification nor by a form of supposed knowledge or guaranteeing the mastery of the real of jouissance. An educative activity based in knowledge, versus psychoanalysis, is structurally incompatible with the logic of the position of the “trained” analyst.

Sufficient training

Nevertheless there is a fact: the School takes on the responsibility of awarding analytic titles by which it guarantees the training that it provides. It is here that we must introduce the notion of “sufficient training”. The *sufficient training* that the School strives to guarantee points out that an analyst can testify to his/her capacity to become any signifier and to take the place assigned by the algorithm of transference. The School introduces therefore, with its titles, a quilting point in the training, showing that the endlessness of training is not the equivalent of the indefinite or indefinable.

That the School thus creates, with the signifiers of its titles, a “training” signified, is not in contradiction with the endless training that it promotes and sustains. In fact, it shows that the meaning to give to such endlessness is not the indefinite suspension of the signified of training.

Sufficient training is insufficient

It is essential that sufficient training does not become training of sufficiency and we will qualify as “virtuous” link the required rapport between endless training and sufficient training. I use here this word

in the precise meaning given by Lacan in his text “Situation of Psychoanalysis and Training of the Analyst in 1956”. The virtuous dimension of the link between sufficient training with its titles, and infinite training as an ethical principle, should prevent training from closing up on itself thus becoming sufficiency of knowledge. Lacan showed 30 years ago how the institutional figure of sufficiency and beatitude are a real subjective re-institution.

It is only when training is not sufficiency that the analyst can consider that his own training is insufficient. Hence Philippe La Sagna recently gave testimony of having continued his training because it seemed insufficient in terms of the demands of the School and the level of work of his colleagues. The ethical perspective of an endless training is what prevents the always possible subtle sliding between sufficient training and training of sufficiency.

It is about preventing the fantasy of mastery as modality by which the analyst closes the gap that the real of contingency permanently opens in analytic practice, through the knowledge acquired from experience. In fact, there is no knowledge acquired in the experience or about one’s own case that can make the analytic act an act of mastery. The mastery of the act is an analytic contradiction insofar as one cannot calculate the effects except by annulling the real.

The experience of destitution of the subject supposed to know at the end of the treatment guards against fantasy and acts as antidote. This experience uncovers the analytic pedagogy and the idea that there could be a mastery of knowledge over jouissance, to open, on the contrary, to the condition that Freud held as indispensable in the relation to the analytic act.

Knowledgeable ignorance

Indeed, Freud wanted each case to be considered as the first and not as the “x” of a known series and therefore the analyst to remain at the level of the contingency of the real of the practice. Freud wanted an analyst who would not end the game by calling on knowledge but who would withhold and accept the ignorance of the one who knows. In “Variants of the standard cure” Lacan indicated what an analyst must know: how to ignore what he knows. The clarity of this statement seems to suggest simplicity, but it is not the case. The assumption of ignorance as effective, that would be passion of ignorance, is crucial in order not to slide into the register of sufficiency. It is in fact the risk emphasized by Lacan relating to the AME title calling it forgetting the act.

In any case there is no automatic passage between the end of analysis and the experience of the destitution of the subject supposed to know and the analyst’s necessary assumption of the passion of ignorance.

It is one of the least obvious passages, even at the end of analysis, precisely because it is not automatic. The most complicated is to re-inject this passion of ignorance to an experienced analyst who might feel completed by his knowledge and fascinated by its exercise. Therefore there is no automatic passage from the “sufficient” training to the assumption of ignorance. It is this passage that opens the way to a possible beyond, to training that might be extended all along the analyst’s practice. This assumption of the passion of ignorance, because non-automatic, can only be ethical. Therefore each analyst must want to entrench his own desire to know.

The School has an active role and it exerts “pressure” precisely because the crystallization of the position of “sufficiency” is the main danger. If the duty of the School is to deliver the analytic titles of the “sufficient” training, it is nevertheless under the condition of constantly elaborating a larger frame, where each one can have the feeling of his/her relative insufficiency. It is a rather difficult objective, but absolutely necessary to the progress of psychoanalysis.

Translated by Maria Cristina Aguirre

Applied Psychoanalysis
Clinical Input on Ways to Jouissance

Can Psychoanalysis Be Cured?

This provocative title introduces a difference between psychoanalyzing and curing¹. It is certain that psychoanalysis gained its acceptance in civilization on account of having presented itself as a therapeutic technique. Freud first ensured his acceptance in the stream of hypnotherapies, themselves developed in the wake of romanticism. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Enlightenment Europe gave way to a stress on the body, its powers and mysteries, which romanticism put so much emphasis on. Whilst in our Latin countries, i.e., where Catholicism is the dominant religion, we are very fond of the soul and therefore of psychology too, in Protestant countries, in the countries of German romanticism, it is the somatic and psychosomatic therapies which occupy the place that the soul occupies for us. One only has to cross the Rhine to find no shortage of signs recalling the constant preoccupation of the German language countries with their somatic health. The least opportunity is seized to take a hot bath, no doubt because it is rather chilly there, but above all because a certain ideal of somatic health is at work. One encounters this difference again in the Europe of therapies. In the German language, the air is dominated much more by preoccupations with the psychosomatic than with the psychotherapies. These are the deep traces in civilization that Freud was part and parcel of.

Therapeutic psychoanalysis and psychoanalysis as science

If psychoanalysis established itself as something therapeutic, it ought nevertheless to be said that while Freud was still alive, difficulties arose putting the effective therapeutic powers of psychoanalysis into question for both psychoanalysts and others outside the field. Within psychoanalysis, during the famous “turning point of the twenties”, the emphasis was put on the therapeutic difficulties as such. The practitioners were discovering that their patients knew as much about the unveiling of the Œdipus and the sexual signification of symptoms as they did. This paved the way for therapeutic voluntarism on the Ferenczi model, Ferenczi being particularly sensitive to these difficulties. Freud responds to this difficulty within psychoanalysis in his recognition of the influence of the death drive. He also responds to the objections from outside psychoanalysis in his 1926 text on “The Question of Lay Analysis”. Here he marks especially the distinction between therapeutic psychoanalysis and psychoanalysis as a science, noting quite reasonably that psychoanalysis had therapeutic effects, that these effects were limited, and that no doubt something better would be found for many complaints, but that in any case psychoanalytic science appeared to him to be well-founded – he did not want therapeutic preoccupations to overtake scientific preoccupations. Therefore, the first sense of our title would be thus: to rid oneself of the concern for curing, in order to preserve psychoanalysis.

Freud showed himself to be quite ready to negotiate with the authorities on the safeguard for the therapeutic dimension on condition that his higher mission would not be renounced: the mission that he gave to psychoanalytic science. He constantly warned against strictly therapeutic ideology. He formulates it in a

1 [This paper originally bore the title, ‘Guérir de la psychanalyse’. The above title has been proposed by the author, TN.]

decisive way in his 1926 text, “I only want to feel assured that the therapy will not destroy the science.”² He also evokes the counterpoint to this therapeutic drift away from psychoanalysis. “[The representatives of the various mental sciences] must learn to understand analysis in the only way that is possible – by themselves undergoing an analysis.”³ The training analyst, the *lehranalytiker*, is not originally the trainer of therapeutic analysts but the analyst of these representatives from the human sciences. He has to have received a “careful education” to dedicate himself to whomsoever should choose psychoanalysis as a discipline for the study of civilization. Be sure to understand this paradox, it is not a matter of teaching psychoanalysis, but precisely of a type of treatment, one by one, with the aim of transmitting the contribution of psychoanalysis on civilization as such to others, something akin to a work transference. For the “careful education” of these analysts however, they will have to start out in the field of therapeutics. Freud therefore, is not in favor of the existence of two categories of analyst. “All this, however, requires a certain amount of freedom of movement, and is not compatible with petty restrictions.”⁴

We are familiar with the reception that Freud’s proposals had in the existing psychoanalytic societies. The opening to “non-doctors”, that is to say, the bringing to heel of the therapeutic aspect, would come to be rather poorly received. This ranged from the most point blank refusal from the Americans, to the grudging acceptance on the part of the English⁵, passing by way of the enthusiastic support from the Hungarians led by Ferenczi, albeit encumbered by his therapeutic activism. As concerns authorization, the Berlin Institute model went on to be imposed and transmitted in the Anglo-Saxon countries under an adapted form. The “non-doctor” had his place in the program in an exceptional or transitory capacity.

The hope placed in the prevention of neuroses by the analysis of children was very quickly to give rise to a completely new category: child psychoanalyst. These were on the whole practitioners trained like Anna Freud or Melanie Klein, “non-doctors”. Furthermore, after the war, in Europe, Latin America, Brazil and the USA, a tacit pact developed. The obvious benefits brought by psychoanalysis and its therapeutic reach, testified to by a large number of doctors with a psychoanalytic training, were recognized by the de facto tolerance of the therapeutic activities of the psychoanalysts. University psychology too wanted to rush into the furrow Freud had opened up and to have the title and practice of university clinical psychologist recognized. Some psychologists joined the psychoanalytic societies, and the ranks of “non-doctors” were soon to be divided between psychologists who functioned as paramedics, and the rest. The problem that Freud was posing thus found an apparent practical answer. But is this addition a satisfying response to Freud’s question? It is necessary to preserve it within psychoanalytic societies in order to assure their necessary legitimization in the social organization of the desire to cure and thereby avoid the “petty restrictions” that never fail to arise, but it is not enough to fulfil our obligations to psychoanalysis.

The integration of psychoanalysis into civilization

For Freud, something else was at stake: the integration of psychoanalysis into civilization. Lacan first noticed that the system was functioning contrary to how Freud had pictured it: the system was allowing itself more and more to go down the therapeutic slope. The spontaneous ideology of the therapist was

2 S. Freud, “The Question of Lay Analysis”, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works, Vol. XX (1925-26)*, Hogarth Press, 1959, p. 254 [P.F.L. 15, p. 359].

3 *Ibid.*, S.E. Vol. XX, p. 248 [P.F.L. 15, p. 351].

4 *Ibid.*, S.E. Vol. XX, p. 249 [P.F.L. 15, p. 352].

5 Jones gives his opinion as follows: “A non-doctor analyst can in many cases – but surely not all – conduct an analysis almost as well as a doctor, and consequently, with certain precautions and in a subordinate fashion, find his place in the psychoanalytic organisation.” Quoted in M. Schneider, “La question en débat”, which features in the appendix to the French translation of Freud’s paper: *La question de l’analyse profane*, Gallimard, Paris, 1985, p. 147.

becoming increasingly widespread: thinking that the individual is not the collective, that the individual is not the social, and other conceptions refusing to see that the Other, the social bond and identification are primary⁶. Far from assuring the bond between psychoanalysis and the social sciences, the class of “the best trained” analysts committed itself to assuring an extra-territoriality for psychoanalysis. Far from following the far-reaching movement of reorganization in the social sciences by way of the formalist models, far from following the “linguistic turn” of our century, the psychoanalysts were barricading themselves into a vague biological reference with no other consequence than that of allowing them a status of exception within the human sciences in the name of the biological fiction of the “drive” and a status of exception in medicine in the name of the unconscious. After having tried to redefine, within the framework of the IPA societies, from the study programs and existing hierarchies, syllabi open to human sciences and literary studies conceived as a collection of remarks about love and phallic adventures, Lacan concluded that all this was an impasse. The system would have to be recast for it to function.

Whereas Freud distinguished two levels of functioning, therapeutics and civilization, Lacan distinguishes three. In the founding act of his *École*, he isolates a first section that is to investigate pure psychoanalysis, this being the true problem of training analysis [*la psychanalyse didactique*]: how to define the analyst other than by a trait of the Ideal. The stake of the Pass would be deduced from this. The supervisions also come under the section for pure psychoanalysis, open to all once they have a practice entailing transference effects.

The section for pure psychoanalysis does not stand alone. It is connected to the second section: the section for applied psychoanalysis, “which means therapeutics and clinical medicine.” Lacan carefully distinguishes therapeutics and psychotherapy, underlining the fact that this practice is less developed in France than in the Anglo-Saxon countries⁷, but that there where the psychotherapeutic perspective prevails, it is effectively, “conformist in its aims, barbarous in its doctrine, a complete regression to psychologism, pure and simple.”⁸ On the other hand, as concerns the section for applied psychoanalysis, Lacan speaks about it completely differently and connects psychoanalysis to “therapeutic projects”. It is undoubtedly that, for Lacan, there is but one sole form of therapeutics and that, for him, psychotherapy does not exist.

The third section takes up the project of the Freudian *lehranalytiker* again in a clear way, by adapting it to the situation in the sixties. The Freudian project was contemporaneous with a certain form of university and a particular kind of dropout from the system: the intelligentsia that constituted the first recruiting-ground for psychoanalysis. The students in the sixties were built differently. This section has to extract, starting with psychoanalytic publications, the principles of its practice that must attain a scientific statute, it has to instruct itself in the reorganization in the human and more widely “conjectural” sciences, and recall the contributions from psychoanalysis, be they of the order of knowledge or of ethics. In point of fact, it is a matter of recalling, in the whole field of culture, this indomitable contribution from psychoanalysis: the taking into account of subjective particularity, which goes beyond the respect for the rights of man.⁹

From this ensemble and this reconstruction of the Freudian project we can retain the elements between

6 We are following the movement of Lacan’s texts here. We are well aware that it could be objected that for the Lacan of the seventies, it is jouissance that is primary. The dialectic is imposed of starting from the Other in order to go to the other. Then, one travels the inverse path.

7 “...the Freudian message, in its radical thrust, goes far beyond the use to which it is put by practitioners of Anglophonic obedience. Even if one lends a hand in France, as elsewhere, to a practice mitigated by the unfurling of a form of psychotherapy associated with the needs of social hygiene...” J. Lacan, in, “Preamble”, included in, *A Challenge to the Psychoanalytic Establishment*, Norton, New York, 1990, p. 103

8 *Ibid.*

9 See on this point the editorial of *Mental 2*.

which the analyst in training [*l'analyste qui se forme*] has to circulate. He is required to be able to respond to questions bearing on pure psychoanalysis, i.e., the end of analysis, the necessity of the supervisions, the adaptation of the treatment to the case, etc. He ought also, whether doctor or not, to be able to have a training in applied psychoanalysis, to be familiar with the indications for psychoanalysis and their limits, to be trained in the discipline of the clinical interview, in the necessity of knowing how to orient oneself in diagnosis and adapt the treatment to different therapeutic projects. Finally, he has to be able to answer for the ethic of the analytic act and its place among the actions and human institutions. An equilibrium has necessarily to exist, no one element should prevail in a destabilizing fashion leading to a loss of orientation in the different tasks of psychoanalytic action. Being in training [*Se former*] implies familiarizing oneself with this project and making oneself responsible for it.

To cure of science

Is the ultimate end of this project to center ourselves, straight and to the point, on psychoanalytic science? It would still be necessary for psychoanalysis to be a science. Freud maintained as such, even as he tempered his scientific optimism with the death drive. This reference found its translation on the therapeutic plane in the limits brought upon psychoanalytic action by the recognition of negative therapeutic resistance. This immediately led to incomprehension on the part of the therapists. Only Melanie Klein, through her particular relation to death, accepted it. By skipping over the death drive, Freud's scientism was transmitted to the 1940-55 generation. More precisely, in the fifties, scientism in psychoanalysis fractured when it was a question of giving a status to the advance of the "human sciences". Lacan thus proffered a version of the unconscious compatible with the advances of linguistics and the sciences that it brought to life around it. It is this alliance that he broke up between 1967 and 1969 with "Radiophonie". In 1969, Lacan elaborated the "four discourses" and turned psychoanalysis into a discourse, and not a science.

When, in 1969, during the Seminar *L'envers de la psychanalyse*, Lacan introduces the four discourses, when he says that psychoanalysis is a discourse, it needs to be understood thus: psychoanalysis is not a science. No more than the master has a science of power, no more than the university academic has a science of knowledge, no more than the hysteric has a science of desire. "Discourse" is a way of establishing a relation with the jouissance that cannot be without limits. All human training [*formation humaine*] says Lacan, implies a curb on jouissance. The discourse is approached as a bond, as a social bond, a human training. The term "human training" rests on the established usage of "formations of the unconscious" and thereby subverts the Aristotelian definition of the social bond, "man is a political animal." Starting from human training permits of sending Freud's speculations on the prehistory of the social bond, inspired by the Darwinism of his time, back to the mythical plane.

To say that the unconscious is the discourse of the master is to say in short that all power comes to the place of the ego ideal and that, at the same time, at the heart of the unconscious lies the superego. The very essence of the command, of moral conscience, comes from the fact that the superego is at once an interdiction and a push-to-crime, a command that is impossible to satisfy. At the heart of the unconscious lies the master-signifier, noted S_1 by Lacan, and the confrontation with jouissance. The "discourse of the master" yields a new version of Kojève's reading of *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. Here, Kojève gave a major place to the struggle for recognition of master and slave. These two terms find themselves subverted by the introduction of jouissance, noted *a*.

The psychoanalytic experience of the interpretation of the unconscious allows one to consider that the second signifier, noted S_2 , which interprets the first, is of the order of knowledge or of the sexual *meaning*

that ends up by settling in *knowledge*. Just as Freud threw light on *jouissance* linked to the master signifier, Lacan throws light on *jouissance* linked to knowledge. The proof of this is that this knowledge engenders a social bond too, like the master signifier. This bond “in the name of knowledge” will be the “university discourse”. It includes the university of course, but also bureaucracies in the most general sense.

The bond engendered in the name of the subject divided by desire will take on the name of “hysteric’s discourse”. In the hysteric’s discourse, in her provocation-evasion with the master, another term is introduced besides that of “impossible”, namely, “impotence”. The master is impotent to satisfy her through the knowledge about desire that he produces. It is a happier question since phallic impotence presents a comic dimension. Lacan will be able to write his “discourses” with four letters, two modalities and a direction of permutation. History, which has permitted the successive revelation of the different discourses, uncovers a permutational synchrony.

Generalized bureaucracy

Psychoanalysis’s contribution to the political sciences and the interpretation of the social bond is not limited to the Church and the Army as we too frequently have the impression when reading the literature. Before getting to the Lacanian writing of the discourses, we ought not to forget an intermediary link, the analysis of bureaucracies that Lacan undertook. He pursued the Freudian operation on a conception of bureaucracy derived from that of Alexandre Kojève. Kojève professed a doctrine that we might call “generalized bureaucracy”. Lacan added the grain of sand of *jouissance*, with surprising consequences.

What is a bureaucracy in this sense? We have forgotten to what extent the development of these organizations as an instrument of management was generalized in the period of the world’s reconstruction that followed the Second World War. We often limit the phenomenon to the establishment of a bureaucracy necessary for the functioning of the welfare state. Many other bureaucracies sprang up and were established to manage ever-larger social groups both nationally and internationally. There were bureaucracies intended to manage the economy, the diverse reconstruction, the plans made to foil crises. Next, there were the bureaucracies of financial industry: the banks, essential to the crisis-prevention system. To this should be added the domain that would change scheme with the new functions of the welfare state: insurance. Internationally, a whole new field opened up with the new international institutions. First, the military pacts, of course. Next, the United Nations and all their dependencies. Then the whole European project, which assumed various forms, from the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) up to the European Economic Community (EEC). Post-Stalinist Russia would itself become a bureaucracy, consumed by multiple bureaucracies in competition. In America, the multinationals achieved unheard of degrees of integration. We will leave it there.

The ownership of the means of production was, for some, the radical discriminant that rendered the phenomenon heterogeneous. Contrary to this, Alexandre Kojève read it as the very realization of the Hegelian vision of History on a new scale. In the previous century, Hegel had situated the place of Enlightenment bureaucracy with regard to civil society. He gives it the place of a new clericalism of civil servants of the universal. Kojève considers that the post-war situation confirms the advent of bureaucracies in a world where it is no longer only the clerk but also the warrior who have disappeared in the modern technological army. The church and the army have indeed disappeared in their genuine particularities, and it is the extension of the bureaucratic form that is the essential element of civilization, even more, we might add, than the technology that is an instrument of it. He immediately learnt a practical lesson for himself. This sage *par excellence* was reabsorbed into the bureaucracy of international negotiations at the heart of the French administration. From the moment that he had the certitude that the end of history had arrived, it only remained to negotiate what it could be in order to bring about the universal homogenous state.

Lacan adopts and criticizes the Kojévian perspective on bureaucracies. At the very least, he accepts the essential form of the social bond that they establish and the necessity of giving an account of them in psychoanalytic theory beyond the repetitious commentaries on the “society of brothers”. He analyses it starting from a particular bureaucracy, of which Freud had only seen the premises, even though he made the blueprint for it: the International Psycho-Analytic Association (only in its English title can it be properly said).

Lacan would first reveal its stable Freudian group structure constructed on the dead father¹⁰, the irony of the affair being that the place of the father is immortalized above all in the fact that he is no longer understood and that the sense of what his teaching really means has been lost. He is left to an infinite jouissance of psychoanalysis, and no-one can any longer either elucidate his comments, nor say what his work is about. Bureaucratic reason then leaves the field open to the competition between equals under the democratic mask of the society of brothers. All bureaucracies operate in the name of a knowledge, and have done so since the most ancient times, since the mandarin, throughout all the clericatures. The originality of psychoanalysis resides in the fact that the position of knowledge in the theory and practice of psychoanalysis operates in a particular fashion. The psychoanalyst can very well content himself with exhibiting a non-knowing, if he is surrounded by the bureaucratic seriousness that is appropriate. So it is that, “This situation accounts [...] for the apparent ease with which what have to be called nullities get established in leading positions in existing societies. [...] ...it is that this nullity (of knowledge) is recognized by everybody, an everyday object, if I can put it like that, for the subordinates and common currency of their appreciation of their Superiors.”¹¹ The radical formulation of what was first pinpointed as a chiasmus between the two types of functioning of knowledge for psychoanalysis is stated in 1967 as the supposed subject of knowledge, which functions in the analytic treatment to the point that it accommodates itself very well to the practitioner’s non-knowing, if he does not make a major blunder.

Lacan then indicates the return effect that this analysis entails for knowledge such as it functions in the other bureaucracies: “The induced effect of structure privileged in this way is further illuminated if one adds to it the function of the supposed subject of knowledge in the Church and in the Army. A study for whoever would like to undertake it: it would go a long way.”¹² We must be sure to give full prominence to this indication. It is a matter of constructing a theory of Freudian groups [*foules freudiennes*], beyond Œdipal identification. As is often the case when Lacan indicates a path in this way¹³, this study will be undertaken by Lacan himself and this will furnish the writing of the discourses in general. More particularly, we should be sure here to adopt the use of the writing of the university discourse in order to decipher the functioning of bureaucracies. In this discourse, knowledge is in the place of agent and plays the same role as in the Lacanian analysis of psychoanalytic bureaucracy in 1956. In 1969, Lacan explicitly considers the Soviet Union as the triumph of the university discourse. So it is that he gives its matheme to the Brejnev event. Brejnev whose appointment in 1964 as first secretary to the Central Committee, then in 1966 as General Secretary, would be fatal, heralding a glaciation that led to the explosion at the end of the eighties and the destruction of the bureaucracy itself. It was the fatal promotion of a zero that thereby caused a dramatic fall in the temperature of the regime’s functioning, leading to its downfall.

10 In the text that he considers as the preface to his proposition on the psychoanalyst of the School, “Situation de la psychanalyse et formation du psychanalyste en 1956” J. Lacan, *Écrits*, Seuil, Paris, pp. 459-491.

11 J. Lacan, “Proposition of 9 October 1967 on the Psychoanalyst of the School”, *Analysis*, No. 6, 1995, p. 6.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 12.

13 Jacques-Alain Miller has shown several examples of this type in Lacan’s teaching.

Psychoanalysis is a way of obtaining jouissance [une façon de jouir]

Let us move on to the hysteric discourse. The hysteric discourse is a way of obtaining jouissance, not from a knowledge, and not from a text. The hysteric obtains jouissance from a not-knowing [*jouit d'un non-savoir*], she obtains jouissance from the provocation to knowledge and its epidemic, hence the existence of these major epidemic phenomena to constantly remind us, even though hysteria has completely disappeared from the psychiatric nomenclature. In the US itself, where the DSM triumphs, it is no longer possible to diagnose someone as hysteric. The diagnosis of hysteria leads to a lawsuit for injury to the subject, to her credibility, or, if it is a man, to his sexed being. But, on the other hand, at the level of epidemics, the term “hysteria” is conserved. Diana’s funeral was an extraordinary demonstration that even in the most pragmatic country in Europe the force of a hysterical epidemic was present and palpable. Likewise, when the Queen celebrated her jubilee. In the United States, after September 11th and the deaths from the anthrax bacillus, a hysterical epidemic struck tens of thousands of teenagers in the American secondary schools who felt a suspicious itching. They called upon health institutions across many States. It was a question of large red patches that came up at school and disappeared when they got back home. The phenomena lasted a certain time, until the anguish subsided. It then occurred to someone in charge that this must be a hysterical epidemic. Here we can see the character of the social bond as discourse in hysteria. No need for an institution, no need for a committee of hysteria, no need to name the hysterics through a process of selection. The community produces itself de facto and what the human social bond is can be seen in all its force in this discourse.

To say “discourse of psychoanalysis” is above all else to say that psychoanalysis is a way of obtaining jouissance [*une façon de jouir*]. It is a way of obtaining jouissance from the unconscious with the twofold aspect that this entails: firstly, this discourse opens an access to jouissance, and secondly, it is a limit to this jouissance since it passes by way of the unconscious “structured as a language”. Thus, it is a very strong thesis: psychoanalysis is a discourse, it is a way of obtaining jouissance. It fits with the previous thesis that psychoanalysis is not a science. It allows one to state that science is “trivial” [*futile*]¹⁴. How can one dare to say this when at each moment science is threatening death, when we will end up destroying our planet and our species thanks to these lethal techniques that we are endlessly perfecting? Science is trivial because it does not tell us where to obtain jouissance. Science is trivial because in fact it only scares people off. It does not manage to indicate the path toward jouissance. This means that science leaves the discourse of the master, the discourse of the hysteric and the university discourse intact. Certainly, there was a time, with Galileo, when there was a hope that science would not be trivial. Galileo made the church tremble with his knowledge. Those days are over. Today one can be scientific and fundamentalist, like in Pakistan. In general, the scientists have a watered-down and universal Buddhism, the same that Lévi-Strauss predicted at the end of *Tristes tropiques*. This is the current state of the belief in the “God of philosophers and the learned.” Science will overcome neither the master nor university bureaucracy. As for the hysteric, she only profits from it all the more. Psychoanalysis, which is not a science but which indicates a way of obtaining jouissance, is less trivial [*futile*].

To obtain jouissance from the unconscious is not so straightforward. The living being can obtain jouissance from many other things. Drugs for example are a short-circuit of jouissance that does not necessitate any unconscious whatsoever. To obtain jouissance from the unconscious is to obtain jouissance from an *appareillage*¹⁵ that is not the nervous system. It is an *appareillage* that has its own topology, its own

14 J. Lacan, “Introduction à l’édition allemande des *Écrits*”, *Autres écrits*, Seuil, Paris, 2001, p. 554.

15 [The noun *appareillage* may be rendered in English as “fitting-out” or “kitting-out”, but one would lose the essential reference to “apparatus”, TN.]

consistence, and which the human being uses like an apparatus [*dont l'être humain jouit comme d'un appareil*]. Here, Lacan indicates the fundamental reason why humanity cannot be cured of psychoanalysis. When Lacan makes of the unconscious an apparatus of jouissance, when he says that jouissance proceeds by way of the *appareillage* of the unconscious, he designates the fundamental reason why humanity cannot be cured of the apparatus that psychoanalysis has unveiled. It is a symptom of civilization, he tells us in "La troisième", even though religion, no doubt, will get the upper the hand. Psychoanalysis is something which humanity cannot be cured of but which it wants to be cured of. It could be said that there is a will to be cured of psychoanalysis that is neither a simple negative therapeutic reaction nor a misrecognition of psychoanalysis. There is a will in civilization to be cured of psychoanalysis, to silence it, just as science has managed to silence the messages that used to come to us from above. There are, within psychoanalysis, among the psychoanalysts, those who would like to get to the end of the malaise that the existence of psychoanalysis creates. It may be said that the efforts, within psychoanalysis, to absorb psychoanalysis into other discourses, have never stopped: first into medicine, then into general psychology (Hartmann), and finally in general neurology. They each betray a will to kill analytic knowledge, to kill this hitherto unheard of desire to treat "meaning with the means of science", as Lacan tells us in the "Note italienne". The will to kill this desire also passes through the vague attempts to absorb psychoanalysis into the current movement of knowledge where everything has "tipped over into course-credits [*unités de valeur*]". We have recently taken an additional step: now it is the baccalaureate + 2', bac + 3', bac + 4', bac + x'. Whatever you learn, it is of no importance, it is only worth its price on the labor market. Since either way there are too many of you, it is not worth very much. The functioning of this knowledge reduced to quantitative grading can find itself satisfied with the will to reduce psychoanalysis to a calibration through evaluation scales. So it is that what was at one moment given to be the IPA's best school of psychoanalysis on the east coast of the United States, at Columbia, is now devoted to the elaboration of evaluation scales that seem really to have been of psychoanalytic inspiration.

To finish, saying that psychoanalysis is not a science but a symptom in civilization is to tie our lot to the desire to cure of this symptom. Civilization will not be cured of psychoanalysis, regardless of what it may want or search for, including the success of clinical psychology. At the same time, this desire to be cured of psychoanalysis will remain like a thorn in the side. To cure of psychoanalysis is the will to cure mankind of itself, to transform it, to end up with a mankind that would no longer have any kind of unconscious. This is the hope of all those who want to cure us of psychoanalysis: to enter into a post-human era.

Translated by Adrian Price

Death and Resurrection of the Hysteric

The hysteric, through whom Freud found, with the “talking cure”, the path to the analytical cure, is dead. Banished from the DSM’s psychiatric categories, by virtue of nominalism there are no more hysterics today.

The return by way of the epidemic

And yet, as we could see in a recent American press article published in *Courrier International*, after 9/11 and the rumors about terrorists spreading anthrax, young people – especially young women – teenagers in American colleges, were plagued with itching and rashes for which no medical cause could be found. The hysteric, a subject suppressed by prevailing mental health policies, has come back by way of massive epidemics – we could add to this kind of epidemic the increasingly frequent current eating disorders. This form of epidemic in the hysteric shows the fundamental role of identification that defines, as Freud showed so precisely, the essential way the hysteric functions.

The fact that these are physical symptoms only underlines the location proper to the return of the repressed in the hysteric. So, far from being dead, the hysteric is very much alive. The political dimension that has always accompanied the hysteric, is more present than ever: from the singular act of defying the lie of bourgeois morality, the hysteric has moved, thanks to being an object of repression, in the direction of planetary truth. She can be responding to a consumerist craze through an impressive forced weight-loss born from a desire to be thin, or she can be titillating the worry about sanitary security specific to developed societies.

What has become of the hysteric in the analytical field opened by Freud? The study days of the *École de la Cause Freudienne* in 2001, where we saw psychoanalysts publicly discuss cases, showed that something is missing: this category of differential diagnosis, essential to the clinical discussion of neurosis, seems to have retreated – at least in discourse. The decline of hysteria? What is not yet clearly apparent in our work in the Lacanian orientation has already become dominant in the IPA, where the hysteric seems obsolete. Yet, references to hysteria remained important for Lacan, even in his last teachings. Why?

Firstly because most of Lacan’s Seminars, like his *Écrits*, make of Freud’s hysteria cases, Dora or the Belle Bouchère, an essential part of the clinical practice, to the extent of producing a mathematical formula of the hysteric’s fantasy. After the turning point operated by the logic of sexuation and the borromean clinic, the hysteric continues to teach Lacan about psychoanalysis.

A radical and scandalous solution

The first determining element is the raising of hysteria to the category of a discourse. We know that Lacan modeled four discourses, among them the discourse of the hysteric, closely linked to analytical discourse.

This modification from a clinical category to a discourse is discussed by Lacan in his seminar *L'avers de la psychanalyse*; he reformulates the data of civilization's discontents in the light of the current events of the 1970s and the advances of his teachings. He reinterprets Freud's rapport with hysteria and what knowledge he was able to extract from it for psychoanalysis: the wound the hysteric feels from phallic deprivation cannot be compensated by the satisfaction that the carrier (of the phallus) could get from pacifying her. It is, on the contrary, revived by its presence in the form of the regret that causes this wound. It is from this point on that one understands that the hysteric symbolizes primary dissatisfaction¹. This is why she is a spokesperson for a radical solution: she chooses desire through dissatisfaction; and scandalous: she objects to the idea of happiness in the phallus, preferring to leave the object to someone else. Of course in this way she contributes to reinforcing what she denounces. In doing so, she reveals what is for her a truth: in speaking beings, the game of desire is based on phallic exclusion.

A specific jouissance of the lack

Hysterics taught psychoanalysis that all discourse only sustains itself from a position of jouissance, by manifesting itself in transference. Speech, insofar as it is a link, is a device of jouissance; that is the truth the hysteric discovers in psychoanalytical investigation. The discourse of the hysteric is ordered by a specific jouissance, that of lack. Freud extracts the master signifiers from the oedipal theory of psychoanalysis, but at the same time he encounters a question that stops him short: what does a woman want?

The hysteric's answer to this question is "a master over whom to reign" as Dora shows. But is what she wants what she desires? On this, Freud was deceived. Certainly, she wants a master and she is looking for an ideal father, but what she desires is to unveil his impotence in order to allow the triumph, that is to put in the place of truth, of knowledge about the master-father's impotence. The hysteric is the one who reveals the impotence of the signifier-master, his semblant, and at the same time she incarnates feminine jouissance as jouissance of being deprived by the mother, by the Other woman. These are the last two points brought to light by clinical practice with hysterics, women or men biologically speaking. On these two points precisely, Freud - as Lacan points out - does not follow these "Golden Mouths". He stops listening to them and puts in place of their words the Oedipus myth with the strength of the paternal function - which is not exactly what they are saying - and which is frankly opposed to the myth of Totem and Taboo.

The Lacanian orientation, on the contrary, in a radical way from the 70s on, does not shrink from the scandal of the hysteric's discourse that it prefers to the Freudian myth of the Father. The beyond of the Oedipus complex, in the logic of sexuation as well as in the borromean clinic of the sinthome, takes the hysteric literally, according to the interpretative principle "those are your words, not mine". To follow the logic of the hysteric's mode of jouissance implies sacrificing the dream of happiness through the phallus and the universality of the paternal meaning. Moving from the enunciation of the "all women"

Moving from the enunciation of the "all women"

This has three consequences.

The *first* is to renew the definition of hysteria. On June 16th, 1971 in the Seminar "D'un discours qui ne serait pas du semblant", Lacan said: "To the question, what is a hysteric? The answer of the analyst's

1 J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire Livre XVII, L'avers de la psychanalyse*, Seuil, Paris, 1991, p. 84.

discourse is “you’ll see”, you’ll see by watching where she takes us”. She pushes us to define the phallus as semblant and to approach the impossible of the sexual relation.

The *second*, clinical, is that this redefinition of hysteria, starting with the idea of discourse, permits passing beyond penis envy, the blocking point of those Freudian cures, which is only the meaning given by Freud to the desire unsatisfied by phallic meaning.

Because the hysteric is also capable of doing what Lacan calls the “all man”, that the “all man himself, through imagination”. The hysteric does not need an analysis for this. She does not expect to obtain this phallus from analytical treatment since, from the start she conceives of herself as castrated, because that is not without enjoyment. No, the result of analytical treatment for her is to leave the statement “all women” which is dearer to her than any partner, and which needs to be differentiated from “all the women” in order for her to become *a woman*, that is to say, in Lacan’s terms in June 9th, 1971 course, not to use the “not more than one of her being for all possible situations”. This is a fundamental acquisition that modifies the direction of the cure in analysis.

The *third* consequence is this new view of the feminine position, indicated negatively by the hysteric, who, in order to act as man, is not in a viril protest.

The denunciation of the “state-supported” sexual relation

The hysteric’s speech is one of protest: it served as support for the feminist protest movement but, more generally, it is a revolt against the law of symbolic exchange. This is why it can be considered as a model. All discourse that is ordered around an attempt to reduce the impossible of the sexual relation to master-signifiers, can give rise to the hysteric’s response; it tries to make her being known by establishing it outside the law, by equating herself to a sign of the limit of language. On May 19th, 1971, Lacan shows that as soon as the sexual rapport is, according to his own expression, “state-supported”, that is, as soon as one tries to contain it in master-signifiers, (which has the effect of revealing the fictional structure of truth) there comes an enunciation that makes evident the “marked deficiency of a certain kind of almost arbitrary fictitious promotion of the sexual rapport”.

The hysteric tries to make herself the subject of the letter of denunciation of this state-supported status. For a while this letter was written with her body in a theatrical way which was always striking. In this same lesson Lacan adds: “hysterics are those who *tell the truth* about the sexual relation. It is hard to imagine how psychoanalysis would have found its way without them”. But the advent of analytical discourse, in founding this truth on knowledge – that of the unconscious – made them relinquish the theatrical dimension that was their way of occupying the space that had been left empty of the sexual rapport. So today the sexual non-rapport does not shock anyone anymore, modern hysterics don’t use it any longer to tame the master. They use images instead.

This demonstration by Lacan permits us to delineate, and even to anticipate, the new political modalities of the hysteric’s discourse, as a model response to all forms of state support, to any appearance of new master-signifiers.

The real does not respond to the law of the father

Like the analyst, the hysteric only has the unconscious in order to consist. It is the common ground between the hysteric and the analyst, “the hysteric and me” as Lacan puts it, is that the unconscious of the hysteric

is sustained by love for the father when, after an analysis, the master-signifier unveils its link, not to the father but to the mode of enjoyment determined by the object. In other words, in hysteria, the symbolic includes the two other dimensions, which also happens in an analysis that requires a hysterization. But in order for an analysis to lead to the analytical discourse as such, it is necessary for the symbolic to lose this privilege, for the knotting of the three dimensions to be restored, for the imaginary and the real to no longer be included in “the practice of psychoanalysis itself”.

So, while the hysteric needs meaning in order not to put her unconscious in the position of the truth to which she sacrifices herself, psychoanalysis, paradoxically, objects, showing that meaning is always a mode of enjoyment, that the real does not answer to the law of the father and that the unconscious is not different from the conscious.

Dead, the hysteric? Certainly not. She has changed with the times and unveils a new politics that no longer consists of supporting the sexual rapport. But she only has the analyst as a partner worthy of her, who because he is not a master, escapes her design. That way he can reveal the value of the symptom, that is to say protesting a desire which is irreducible to the discourse of science on sex.

Translated by Francesca Pollock

The Clinic of Detail and Hysteria

In clinical practice, one necessarily has recourse to differential clinical diagnosis, – this is my thesis*. There is an advantage in speaking of hysteria relative to obsessional neurosis and speaking of obsessional neurosis relative to hysteria. Indeed, there is a dialectic between hysteria and obsessional neurosis that allows us to see that, for Lacan, there is a dialectic man/woman. There where Hegel invented the master slave dialectic, Freud added something new in considering that the dialectic must be re-thought, reformulated, re-conceptualized, from what I call the man/woman dialectic. This is what I would like to bring to the fore today, speaking more particularly about hysteria.

The clinical position

From the moment one draws support from a clinical case, on fragments of clinical cases, a question arises which concerns the way in which one speaks about it. When a psychoanalyst speaks of a clinical case, of fragments of a clinical case, the right way to speak about it is to put his own clinical position into question. In other words, an ethical problem is posed from the moment that one speaks about clinical aspects. And this ethical problem must be dealt with from the following – that the referent of the comments on these clinical aspects is not the patient, but the analyst.

In order to show what I wish to make patent, – that is to say, that Lacan chose to speak about hysteria from the point of view of the dialectic – and to say that *hysteria is a dialectic*, I will be taking as point of departure two clinical case fragments. I will then comment on the chapter in Seminar XVII, *L'envers de la psychanalyse*, in which Lacan speaks about the hysteric in relation to the man, of taking advantage of the man in some way, as if he were saying that it's not possible to speak about the position of a feminine subject except by means of the man, except with this tool. For Lacan, if hysteria corresponds to a dialectic, in other words to a contradiction, well, then the hysterical contradiction is not the same thing as the feminine contradiction. To make this patent, I will refer not only to the Seminar *L'envers de la psychanalyse* but also to a passage in "Radiophonie".

So, I am going to evoke, bring to the fore the problem that is posed, according to me, as soon as one speaks of clinical practice with the hysteric. In his text "The Signification of the Phallus"¹, Lacan, evoking, in his way, the war between men and women, highlights an essential difference between men and women when he affirms that for women there is a convergence on the same object between love and desire, whereas for men there is a divergence.

* Original French text established by Zoé Verhame-Bouillin and Marie-Hélène Doguet-Dziomba from P. Naveau's intervention at the E.C.F. on 7 February 2002. The original French text was re-read by the author.

1 J. Lacan, "The Signification of the Phallus", *Écrits: A Selection*, Trans. Bruce Fink, Norton, New York, 2002, p. 279-280.

I propose to present two fragments of cases of feminine hysteria that are characterized, on the contrary, by the fact that there is a divergence between love and desire. This divergence can, relative to the masculine partner, be articulated in this way: “I love him but I don’t desire him”. I will show, as Lacan indicates in his “Introduction à l’édition allemande des *Écrits*”², that there is no meaning common [*sens commun*] to hysteria. We are concerned here with feminine subjects who both complain about their husband. They do not desire him, they question themselves about what they themselves call their frigidity and, at the same time, put in question the love they have for him. In this way, these two women both have the feeling of being enclosed in an impasse from which there is no way out. They live this disagreeable situation, one in war, and the other in betrayal.

I

The war between love and desire

The first patient goes as far as saying that this absence of desire for her husband constitutes, for her, a veritable torture both physical and psychic. She does not desire him, but she does not think about anything else. “This point of non-desire that I have come to”, she says, “is at the same time a point of non-return”. “A limit has really been reached”, she insists, “I can’t force myself to make love to him if I don’t feel like it”. She emphasizes this expression that carries a negation: “I don’t feel like it!” Her husband criticizes her for this – she does not desire him. But the criticisms that they address to each other are not situated on the same level. He criticizes her for not desiring him, she criticizes him for not loving her. They had a child together and they would really like to have another. This second child would be, were he to give it to her, the proof of love that she expects from him. It would be thanks to this child that she would be sure, she says, that he loves her. The proof of love is, she pointed out, the condition of love. In this respect, this is her torment, she is not sure that her husband loves her.

A dream comes to tell her that this child that she desires is, in fact, the child that her father didn’t give her. It is the child her father gave to his wife and not to her, his daughter. For in this dream, she takes the place of this other woman to whom her father gave a child. In this way, she usurps the envied place. She comments on this usurpation, affirming that the obstacle is the father, for it is he who, by not giving her what she demands, stands in the way of the satisfaction of her desire. Thus, the important thing for her is not that she wants to take the place of the other woman, but that it is to this other woman that the father gives something precious. It is by means of this shift of emphasis, which allows a kind of lie to be heard that she expresses her wish. The symptom of her life as a woman, that is to say, the bedrock that lies across her path, is the father that satisfies the other woman’s desire. Indeed, she describes her father as having the traits of a powerful man, a man who has had many women in his life and who, she knows this because he has confided in her on this point, is concerned about his virility.

From this, she draws the consequence that, in the eyes of her father, a woman is a woman only in the sexual act. A woman is only worth something for her father, she says, in so far as she is an object of possession, only if she reassures him of his virility, which he is not sure about. This rivalry between her and other women became even stronger from the moment when her father, getting carried away, said to her one day, she was then eighteen, “If you weren’t my daughter, you could’ve been my wife.” So the analyst intervened to make her notice that, having pronounced these surprising words, her father had given her a privileged place. She immediately retorted that these inappropriate words of her father showed that, for him, a woman is necessarily lowered to the rank of a pure sexual object, whether it be accessible or inaccessible.

2 J. Lacan, “Introduction à l’édition l’allemande des *Écrits*”, *Autres écrits*, Seuil, Paris, 2001, p. 557.

One day, however, her father is anxious and calls her on the telephone. He had just learnt that he was suffering from a serious illness and that this illness threatened to make him impotent. She exclaimed to herself that she at last had her revenge. Her father had fallen from high and had bitten the dust. His telephone call bothered her. He was asking her to reassure him. She replied to him that she couldn't do anything for him. This event, her father's illness, gave rise to a radical change for her. When her father was powerful and arrogant she hated him. But now that he was weak and impotent, touched right to the core of his virility, she loves him, as, for her, there is no alternative. It is she who says it like this, "It is either submission or domination." Either one is the master or one is the slave. The war between men and women takes, in this case, the form of a war between love and desire.

To accept to be an object of desire for a man is equivalent, for this patient, to submission. Thus, she refuses to be an object that one throws in the dustbin once one has made use of it. Her hatred of men drives her to refuse her husband. She fights with her body. Her body, she says, is the only weapon she has at her disposal. To refuse is to escape from her husband, to separate herself from him by making herself absolutely inaccessible. She says that she does not admire this man, that she is no longer attracted by him. What he is has no more value for her than what he has. She holds him in contempt. As she notes, his image has been smashed into a thousand pieces.

Thus, she puts her finger on the sore point of the inevitable misunderstanding, "He doesn't understand me, I don't understand him, we don't understand each other." The conflict between them is permanent, and she doesn't hesitate to provoke him. Here the analyst intervenes, "This is going to finish badly." She recognizes that she tries to corner her husband. Being such a coward, will he have the courage to leave her? Her husband, finding himself in this situation with no way out, should leave her. If he doesn't leave her, she says, it is because he loves her, that he is not ready to break the link between them. The paradox of this position of warrior is that she hates men all the more since she would like to have been one of them and have their attributes. She wants to deprive the man's desire for satisfaction because it is impossible for him to satisfy her own desire. She has revenge; it is an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. She does not obtain *jouissance* by means of man's desire, since she refuses to go via this path, for she risks satisfying it. But she obtains *jouissance* from the negation of this desire.

The analyst intervenes, "For you, in fact, it is fundamentally a question of being a man." And between the lines: you want to be a man. The only thing that matters, indeed, for you is to be a warrior, to be the dominant male who seizes women by force like an object, who uses it, and who, after having used it, abandons it, like a piece of rubbish. "I don't want to be a man, I want to be a woman", she protests. She then reveals that the idea that she could write a letter to her father had come to mind, to tell him that she is unhappy because of him, because of what he is, because of what he said to her. The fact of having thought about writing this letter produced an effect on her. She said to her husband, "After all, I make you pay for someone else, you pay for my father, but you're not my father." To which her husband replied, "It's time you noticed, I'm happy to hear you say it."

At this juncture, their son left to go on holiday. She considers this an important point, since until then, her husband had always refused for their son to go on holiday without his parents. Here the analyst intervenes to say to the patient, "You're the father and your husband is the mother, that's why he doesn't manage to separate his son from his mother." This intervention of the analyst led to a violent reaction on the part of the patient. She threatened her husband, "If I happen to come across a man who attracts me, I'll leave you without a moment's hesitation."

Her husband then, in his own way, gets his own back. He says to her, to see what effect it would have, that he would like to have another child. She understood this to be a strategy that her husband had assembled to get around the problem of his impotence. She replied to him that she no longer considered the child he would give her as a gift, a sign of love, and that she had mourned this desired child. But she took her husband's clumsy maneuver as a declaration of love, "He loves me, I no longer doubt it."

However, she can only notice the damage the war between love and desire has provoked. She distanced herself from him, she is far from him, and their desires no longer meet. When he wants to, she doesn't, and when she wants to, he doesn't. She feels guilty for this missed encounter between their desires. Here the analyst intervenes, "If you feel guilty, it's because there is something you're not saying. If you're not happy, why don't you tell him? You speak about yourself like a *belle endormie*. You have to put your cards on the table. What are you waiting for to lay out frankly the problem of desire between you?" The patient replied to the analyst's intervention by saying, "So, what's he waiting for, to catch me?" Doesn't this astonishing reaction of the patient indicate how the jouissance of privation is linked to that drive which consists, for a subject, of slipping away, of making itself the ungraspable object? It would seem that the feminine subject is, hence, divided between two jouissances articulated to two variations of the position of precious object, one that consists in offering oneself and one that amounts to, in fact, refusing oneself. That which one would like to have and doesn't have, the inaccessible object, it is she, the patient.

II

The betrayal or the unpunished fault of the father

I am proposing a second clinical case fragment, this time placed, not under the sign of war, but of betrayal. This other feminine subject cheats on her husband, she has a lover who is younger than she. She thus discovers that she is not frigid, that she is able to obtain jouissance from the sexual act. It took a long time before she accepted to reveal to the analyst the existence of this affair. The analyst had to insist. She wanted to hide it from him.

The analyst had the feeling that the patient was keeping him at a distance, that she was not telling him what she was thinking. He told her, "What's not working is that you keep the analyst at a distance by not telling him what comes to mind." When she makes love with her husband, she says, she does not experience any jouissance and, because of this, she holds a grudge against him. He deprives her of this jouissance. After intercourse, she is obliged to masturbate and, in order to do so, has recourse to masturbatory fantasies. She gives two versions: in some, she is passive, in others she is active.

In the first version, she gives herself over to the caprice of many men, she is thus nothing more than a "piece of flesh." The formula of the fantasy is articulated in this way, "They get off on me, they do what they want to me." In the second version it is she who is active and takes charge.. She is there to give pleasure to men according to their wishes. The common trait between these two versions of the fantasy is that there is a man who orders what is to be done and who watches. The "gaze" plays a central role in her fantasies. The man who watches in this way satisfies the function of being the master of desire. The patient admits that her fantasies, which she cannot manage to do without, disgust her. She would like to be able to do without them, but she cannot. These fantasies, in which she is maltreated, beaten and lowered to the rank of servant of the master of desire, are thus linked to her husband's incapacity to make her orgasm. The

sexual partner's impotence is, henceforth, the condition of fantasmatic jouissance. In fact, she stages fantasies of staging.

The analyst interprets this solitude of jouissance that she wonders about, "In these fantasies, you lend your body to this staging, to the extent that", said the analyst, "the voice of a *Thy will be done* resonates." She loves her husband, she says, but she doesn't desire him. She would like to find peace at last, but she recognizes that she looks for war. She would like him to speak, but, as soon as he speaks, she cuts him off. What he says is not what she would like him to say to her. The misunderstanding is radical, the situation is cruel, they do not speak to each other any longer. She says the link between them is breaking up. So, she cheats on him.

The master of desire

She herself realizes that her lover is a poor young man who gets the satisfaction of stealing from her husband what is most precious to him – his wife. She says that she desires the virility of this young man. But, at the same time, the fact that he is stealing reveals that he cheats in the game played by three players. The fact that the patient herself asks the question of the lie with regard to her betrayal – What does this hide? Is she not lying to herself? Where can all this be leading? – and this has, as a consequence, that the analyst does not encourage her to pursue this path. She feels it and says to him, "In fact, you're asking me not to leave my husband." This "You're asking me not to leave my husband" must be emphasized. It is a demand for a demand, for she adds, "And me, I'm wondering what I have to do, leave him or not." In fact, she would like the analyst to make the decision for her, and that, in so doing, there would be nothing left for her but to submit to this decision.

Here, we find again the mode of jouissance according to which the demand of the Other is questioned in fantasies. Hence, the analyst intervenes, "You're asking the analyst to be the master of desire who occupies a privileged place in these fantasies." She complains about this husband who does not desire her as she is and desires her only in so far as she would be other than she is. For example, he would like her to allow herself to partake in his erotic fantasies, but she does not consent to it. Her husband disgusts her. She notices that they are both unhappy and that they are condemned, each one on his own side, to obtain jouissance from their own fantasies.

All conversation has become impossible between them. Their bond is thus really on the point of rupture. She says it in these terms, "I have the impression that I've already left him and at the same time that I haven't yet left him." The analyst intervenes, "Has she spoken to her husband? Has she questioned him on his desire?" She and her husband no longer have sexual intercourse. She asked him how he could bear this abstinence. He replied to her that he got by without her. She did not want to know what he was alluding to, the misunderstanding seems thus irreversible. She then speaks of her betrayal, saying that to escape this conjugal hell she has decided to take the plunge. She notes that, in spite of this, the sky has not fallen in on her head and that the gods have not punished her for this adultery.

Her father cheated on her mother with numerous women. She thinks that her mother would have wanted him to be punished for this betrayal. Yet, this fault has remained unpunished. The patient then realizes that by means of this hazardous affair, she is identifying with her father. She cheats on her husband with a younger man, just like her father had wanted to cheat on her mother by trying to seduce younger women. The analyst interprets this acting out, the affair in question, by saying to her, "It's as if you wanted to say to your father: *Father, can't you see I'm burning? I too am burning, I burn from this fault that I'm committing like you.*" The patient then added that she had also wanted to challenge her father. Then she

insisted on the fact that she wanted to show her father that she also had the audacity to go to the limits of her desire. Here the analyst intervened, “There is a decision to take. This isn’t the moment to do just anything.”

III

The hysteric’s impasse

It seems to me that these two clinical case fragments of feminine hysteria are similar. And yet, they are very far from each other. To a certain extent, one could say that there is no relation between them, that one has nothing to do with the other. With regards to this, I recall the way in which Lacan approached the question of clinical practice. He affirms that there is clinical practice and from this perspective, he evokes hysteria, saying that precisely there is no meaning common to all clinical practice. In order to support this thesis, he opposes hysteria to obsessional neurosis. In this context of differential clinical diagnosis, Lacan proposes that, when it is a question of hysteria, the emphasis must be placed on identification. These two feminine subjects are both carried and transported, one could say, by the identification with man and, more particularly, with the father. Both denounce the imposture of the father and the impotence of their husband. But, at the same time, they say they refuse him. Here, there is a contradiction.

The two patients identify with the *jouissance* that is excluded from the game that is played between their husbands and themselves. They identify, in fact, with a *jouissance* that consists, as Lacan says in *L’envers de la psychanalyse*³, in being deprived of the use of the partner’s sexual organ and, in the same way, of phallic *jouissance*. The fathers of these two patients are men that have had many women during their lives and who have not hesitated to be unfaithful, to betray. The first feminine subject that I spoke of says that her life changed when she learnt that her father had become impotent and that he was worried about his sexual potency. It had become impossible for him to approach women in the way he had been used to up until then, that is to say, as an object of conquest with the approach of the warrior. The second feminine subject reveals that she no longer saw her father in the same way from the moment that he confessed to her, in a letter that he wrote to her, that it was true that he had tried to seduce young girls. Her father had thus been caught red handed, he had been caught in the wrong.

In both cases, the father is described as a man who abuses, who renders himself guilty of an abuse. But, being that it’s a question of the operation of identification, it is the detail that counts and makes the difference. In the first case, the warrior, carried away by his fault, stumbles. In the second case, the guilty one confesses his fault. In these identifications, it is not a matter of the same type of humiliated and castrated father. The father’s castration is thus relative to the precise moment in which it was unveiled. In one case, the avowal of a concern by telephone. In the other, the avowal of a fault by letter. The father of the first feminine subject is forced to stop seducing women. The father of the second feminine subject did not dare to go as far as he could regarding his attempts at seducing young girls. The important point in the Œdipus is that the stake of identification, in the framework of the structure of the hysteric, is a *jouissance*, but it is a *jouissance* that aims not at a plus, a positivity, but at a minus, a negativity. Not the acquisition of something but rather what Lacan named a *privation*⁴. The two case fragments converge, one and the other, towards this point. We are able, from this point, to explain the impulse behind this divergence between love and desire by the identification with the phallus. But it is this identification with a subtracted *jouissance* that is the impulse behind the divergence between love and desire.

3 J.Lacan, *Le Séminaire Livre XVII, L’envers de la psychanalyse*, Seuil, Paris, 1991, p. 112.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 110.

The differential clinical approach

To clarify things, I therefore propose that we refer to Chapter VI of the Seminar *L'envers de la psychanalyse*, in which we find the expression— *the identification with a jouissance*, a jouissance that is made up of a subtraction and not an addition, of a loss and not a gain. What is enlightening in this chapter that Lacan dedicates to hysteria, is the fact that he says that here there is something structural regarding the position of a hysterical subject. From this point of view, the condition of the hysteric subject and the feminine position cannot be confounded.

The impasse, that characterizes this structure, and which the mathema of the discourse of the hysteric, such as Lacan proposes to write it, is made to render legible, leads one not to be fascinated by the subjective drama. Lacan says that the history of a subject is objectified by means of the signifier and that it's because of this that there is clinical practice. Jacques-Alain Miller has pointed out that making counter transference play a central role leads to the destruction, the negation of the clinical approach, since what counts is the subjectivity of the analyst. What is important is this expression: *There is something objectifiable*. This is the point of view that allows us to say that there is a clinical practice and to pinpoint, in this practice insofar as it is differential, the detail that creates the particularity.

The pivotal sentence of chapter VI, that shows the difference between the clinical approach of a Lacanian psychoanalyst and that of an IPA psychoanalyst, is the following, “The subjective configuration has, through the signifying link, a perfectly traceable objectivity, which founds the very possibility of the aid that we bring in the form of interpretation”⁵. For Lacan, the existence of a clinical approach, which I am qualifying as “differential”, is the condition that allows for the position of the analyst to be determined. This means that he interprets at the same time that he is likely to accomplish an act. In this chapter, Lacan explains that the impasse, which I brought out in these two cases concerning the feminine subject, is structural.

The identification with a subtracted jouissance

Lacan considers that it is only possible to speak of the discourse of the hysteric with reference to the discourse of the master. Lacan's demonstration in chapter VI of *L'envers de la psychanalyse* consists in saying that one cannot speak about the master without speaking of the hysteric and vice versa. The point of impasse, as articulated by Lacan, is that the hysteric subject tends to identify with a position of jouissance consisting in a loss of jouissance, of a privation of jouissance. This is why I propose to write the jouissance of the Other, $J(\bar{A})$, with the barred A, because the jouissance in question is a jouissance whose substance is the minus sign.

Beyond the problem of the divergence or convergence between love and desire, we have this point on the horizon that concerns jouissance. What seems to be enlightening to me in Lacan is that there is a direct relation between hysteria and clinical practice. It is for this reason that I think it is very impoverishing to speak of obsessional neurosis without speaking of hysteria, to speak of men without speaking of women. When Lacan articulates this sentence, he immediately adds, “It is in this point of the link, namely the very first one between S_1 and S_2 , there it is possible for this gap that is called the subject to open”. What is fundamental here is what he calls “the signifying link between S_1 and S_2 ”.

I'm not focusing on the fact that Lacan says, in this chapter, that what is legible in the discourse of the master is the dialectic of the master and the slave according to Hegel. I'm not focusing on this, but one

5 *Ibid.*, p. 101.

cannot understand the way in which he approaches hysteria, if one does not have in mind the Hegelian development on the dialectic of the master and the slave. Lacan reads Hegel with Freud. What he says is that in the discourse of the master an operation is carried out in which a signifier is separated from another. To be able to write this, it is necessary for a subtraction be effected in the discourse of the master. He says it this way, “This activation of discourse (understood as the master’s discourse) is defined by a division”⁶. What does that mean? Lacan takes things to the level of what I am going to call the signifier S_2 . The condition of the dialectic of the master and slave is, in fact, that knowledge [*savoir*] is divided. The departure point is that knowledge, S_2 , is divided relative to the signifier S_1 . The knowledge put into question by the discourse of the master is a repressed knowledge. This has a consequence, that, in fact, the mind and the body separate. The body in question is the body in so far as it is minus. The hysteric is a subject who, in her way, takes this stake under her control.

The body of jouissance is repressed

For Lacan, the Freudian interpretation of the Hegelian dialectic of the master and slave is the following: the slave is the incarnation of the fact that there is someone who has lost his body, in the sense that what counts, from the moment that a separation between signifiers is operated, is to separate one signifier from the others. This is a logical constraint that is introduced by language. Whatever the collection of elements, you distinguish one and, at the same moment, the others are constituted as being separate from this one. For Lacan, the utility of the slave is that he comes to situate himself here, in S_2 , as the support of the other signifiers, by leaving his body to one side, which means that there are two bodies. The slave is the one who comes to render that present. There is a separation that is carried out between the body as a place of inscription of the other signifiers and the body of jouissance⁷. The slave, contrary to what one might think, doesn’t represent the body of jouissance at all. It is the opposite. He is someone who is there to say that from the moment that one separates one element from the others, there must be a surface of inscription that comes to receive the other signifiers. Therefore, from the moment one speaks of the other signifiers the subtraction of a body is implied – the body understood as living, in so far as it is subject to jouissance. For Lacan, there is thus a coincidence between the body, jouissance and knowledge. Here, by the intermediary of Lacan’s Freudian reading of the Hegelian dialectic of the master and slave, S_2 is at once the body, in so far as lost, jouissance, in so far as subtracted, and knowledge, in so far as repressed.

The refusal to give body to the master signifier

This allows us to understand chapter VII where Lacan says that knowledge – knowledge in so far as it is repressed – and jouissance are the same thing. In fact, the body, in so far as it partakes of jouissance is repressed. Repression affects the body in so far as it experiences jouissance, and this here is the knowledge that is repressed. In other words, knowledge is made of this substance, a denied jouissance, prohibited, barred, a subtracted jouissance. One needs to make these detours to make what Lacan is saying, this time, about the position of the hysteric, more legible, “The hysteric subject is the one who refuses to become its body [*celui qui se refuse à s’en faire le corps*]”⁸. This appears clearly: the hysteric is the subject who refuses to become the body of jouissance. The refusal in question is already introduced at this level. It could

6 *Ibid.*, p. 105.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 102.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 110.

be said that there is, in the very nature of the slave, a structural effect, – the fact that the body in so far as repressed is separated from the signifier. From the moment the signifier is brought to light, there is no body that could come to give body to this signifier. It is this refusal that the hysteric takes for herself in the very movement that is hers.

This allows us to understand, retroactively, why, from the start, as soon as Lacan began to speak about the hysteric, he was able to write that another woman is indispensable to her so that she may find a body, for a body to be given to her. We find here another way to write this separation that involves the refusal of the body. This also allows us to understand what the S_2 is. For me, the thread which must not be lost, is that which concerns the enjoyment of a jouissance of privation of jouissance, that is to say of a lost jouissance. One finds it, at the level of S_2 , this barred jouissance, this lost jouissance, this repressed body, this divided body, the knowledge that is carried by the divided body. But it is clear that the difference between the positions of master and hysteric is absolutely essential. One must not conclude from this that the hysteric is the slave. It is quite the contrary, “In following the effect of the master signifier”, Lacan says, “the hysteric is not a slave”. The hysteric is the master.

Lacan speaks of the difference between these two positions, that of the master and that of the slave. At the level of the bar, which is that of repression, it is necessary to read what is explicitly manifest in this disjunction between one signifier and the others: *refusal*. This is what allows Lacan to say that the refusal is structural in the discourse of the hysteric. The refusal plays a central role. I will reread the sentence, “The discourse of the hysteric reveals the relation of the discourse of the master to jouissance, in that knowledge comes here to the place of jouissance”⁹. There is, for the hysteric, a refusal to incarnate the signifier S_1 . We see clearly that there is a correspondence between knowledge, the body and jouissance in so far as they are marked by the sign minus. The hysteric subject is the one who, relative to the master-signifier, refuses to become its body, to give it a body, such that Lacan adds that he is not in agreement with the somatic compliance that is spoken of with respect to the hysteric, even if it is Freud who used this expression. With regards to the hysteric, says Lacan, “it is rather a question of the refusal of the body”¹⁰.

The operator of refusal is absolutely essential. But it is a logical operation, this refusal is implied by the fact that one speaks. This is why hysteria and clinical practice are the same thing. The hysterical position gives an indication to the subject of the position of the subject relative to language. The refusal of the body is implied by the separation between these two terms, $S_1 // S_2$. It is simply that the hysteric stages this in a different way to the master.

The dialectic between the jewel and the jewelry box

Further on, Lacan evokes the case of Dora. He does not agree with Freud regarding the dialectic between the jewel and the jewelry box. He explains this disagreement in terms of structure, saying that, if Freud was right, that would mean that what Dora demands is that the jewel take up its place in the jewelry box. Whereas Lacan affirms the contrary. What Dora wants, above all, is for the jewelry not to take up its place in the jewelry box. She obtains her jouissance from the jewelry box, but empty. This is a fundamental disagreement between Lacan and Freud. Dora, he says, does not want the jouissance that Herr. K wishes to give her. She does not want him to become her lover, but the contrary. What she values is the jewelry box in so far as it is empty. It is here that Lacan says that this position of Dora’s is “the mark of an

9 *Ibid.*

10 *Ibid.*

identification with a jouissance in so far as it is that of the master's"¹¹. This is the first time, in this chapter, that Lacan uses this expression of "identification with a jouissance".

Lacan then specifies that her identification goes by way of this question of the jewel and of the jewelry box and by way of the relation between her father and Frau. K. Freud demonstrates that Dora's father compensates for his impotence by the gift that he gives to his mistress. What is essential is that the gift in question be conditioned by the father's impotence. Freud chose the relation between the jewelry box and the jewel as a metaphor for the sexual act. In other words, Dora identifies with the condition of the gift given by the father. Her father is a generous person who uses his fortune to make gifts, but it is the veil that hides his impotence. What Lacan says on this page is that Dora identifies with this position.

The contingent father

Lacan, with the aid of what he calls the discourse of the hysteric, tries to make legible something indecipherable, – that is to say that here, in S_1 , the father is found, but in so far as his potency is negativised. He is a contingent father. This father is caught just as he is in the process of giving a gift to a woman to mask his impotence. He is thus the father in so far as his potency is denied. But he is an historic father, or, according to Lacan's word *historicised* – relative to the moment in which he turned out to be an impotent father. If we do not locate this moment, which carries the mark of contingency, in the history of a hysteric subject, we get lost. What gives an indication of this is the word "mark", – Lacan evokes "the mark of the identification with a jouissance". It is necessary for the subject to have been marked by an event, that is to say, that something happened at a given moment. Concerning Dora's case, this relation is legible relative to what happens between the jewel and the jewelry box. The father, who gives jewelry to his mistress so that the jewelry becomes the hidden counterpart of his impotence, is placed in opposition to Herr. K. who gives a jewelry box to Dora. What S_2 writes is the non-rapport between the jewel and the jewelry box. The history of the hysteric is written with what I call elements of dramatization. But what is essential is to bring out the impasse that is written here by Lacan.

Lacan makes a further step concerning the hysteric in saying that it is a question of "the jouissance of being deprived"¹². This can only be understood if one has in mind that S_2 is the means by which Lacan writes something that is detached, that is subtracted, that diverges, that is separated – all these terms are equivalent. What Lacan says is that for the hysteric, the signifier S_2 coincides with the lost body. In this identification with a jouissance of privation, it is a matter of putting the body in play in so far as it is lost. This is only graspable if one has understood, beforehand, this history of the body that is lost in the dialectic of the master and the slave.

The hysteric reconstructs the master, she is in the position of the master. She reconstructs a kind of master made of bits and pieces, a master that Lacan qualifies as castrated, a master at once castrated and humiliated, a father who is there to support the stake of the negation of the body of the girl. Lacan concludes by saying that the hysteric tells her story with the father, this is her way of making use of him. The story that she tells is what Freud pinpoints as *Penisneid*¹³. What is very interesting is that there are three dimensions: an imaginary dimension, that of frustration, a symbolic dimension, that of castration and a real dimension which is that of privation. The castration here is that of the father's in so far as he is

11 *Ibid.*, p. 110.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 112.

13 *Ibid.*

marked historically by castration, the castrated and humiliated father. Historically, thus – because it is at a precise moment that this revealed itself. The real privation is found to be designated by the bodyless hysteric. Regarding frustration, Lacan alludes to the relation to the mother, to what he called *ravage*, – that is to say to the reproach that the girl addresses to the mother for not having made her a boy. What unites these two terms is the *ravage*.

The language of the castrated father

The essence of Lacan's demonstration is that there is an identification between the girl and the father, between the girl who is in *Penisneid* and the castrated father. To express her wish the girl makes use of the castrated father, the language she speaks is the language of the castrated father. The vocabulary she uses is the castrated and humiliated father's vocabulary. To tell her story she tells the story of a castrated and humiliated father. She cannot directly bear witness to her own castration. If she could bear witness to it directly, this would mean she had a body, but as she does not have a body, she has to take somebody else as a support to tell her story – precisely to tell that story that implies she does not have a body.

The question that will then be posed, because there is another stage, which is that of the feminine dialectic, will be, for the hysteric subject, to find a body and to know in what way a body is given to her. This is the question of femininity and of its beyond, in such a way that one can understand why, in his "Radiophonie", Lacan can say that the relation between S_1 and S_2 , is Man. It is Man in so far as a Woman asks him to be one – which does not mean, for all that, that he is one. At the same time that she identifies with Man, she asks that he be one. This means that, if he was one, he would recognize what she is, that is to say, the jewel, what is most precious, the most precious jewel, little *a*. What she says is that, unfortunately, concerning the question of knowing what corresponds to her value, her price, well, this knowledge is repressed. She says that the impotence of Man, which is not so much his sexual impotence but rather his incapacity to say to what extent a woman, his partner, is a precious object. As the man fails at this, Lacan interprets this impotence in "Radiophonie", by saying that there is a gap between knowledge and the object little *a*.

A master who handles the negative

At the beginning, there is no knowledge for Man. When the hysteric asks him to be a man, this means, "Be animated by this desire to know, which is going to drive you to make this extraordinary find, that is to say to what extent I'm a precious object". However, he fails. By the same token, the only solution that the man finds is to place himself in the position of the master, to make the slave work – so that he, the slave, might find the knowledge in question. This is the construction that Lacan proposes in "Radiophonie". The phrase which I am referring to is this, "Thus, the discourse of the master finds its reason for being from the discourse of the hysteric (that is to say, that the discourse of the hysteric retroactively enlightens the discourse of the master). By making himself the agent of the all-powerful, he gives up replying as man to what he was called on to be, the hysteric obtaining nothing but knowledge. Henceforth, he relies on the knowledge of the slave to produce the *surplus jouissance*, from which, from his own (his own knowledge), he did not succeed in making the woman the cause of his desire (I did not say object)."¹⁴

This sentence of Lacan's shows that the discourses are articulated to each other. What is fundamental is the dialectic between the master and the hysteric. The identification concerns being. According to Lacan, this

14 J. Lacan, "Radiophonie", *Autres écrits*, Seuil, Paris, 2001, p. 445.

way of following a certain logical path is done to show at the same time that the hysteric is the master and that she is the master in the sense that she is a master who can handle the negative.

This negativity concerns the phallus, jouissance, as well as, according to the way Lacan interprets *Penisneid*, the object little *a*. This leads to re-interpreting ravage by showing that the *Neid* is situated, not only in relation to the phallus, but above all in relation to the object little *a*. Finally, what a girl demands from her mother, is the precious object that her mother contains, the *agalma* that she contains in so far as she is woman. Ravage is structural, due to this process, due to this gap, which clearly shows that the position the hysteric identifies with is a position that condenses frustration, castration and privation. This is to say, a position that is legible in the three dimensions of the imaginary, the symbolic and the real. The discourse of the hysteric writes a particular kind of knot, that of hysterical identification.

Translated by Victoria Woollard and Marc Thomas

Autism: Divergent Positions in Psychoanalysis

For some years now, autism has been the center of a lively debate which goes beyond the framework of psychiatry and of psychoanalysis. Parents' associations and the political set also participate in it, and in the present context, one of renewal and revisionism, we find legislative stakes, more or less clear, appearing.

J.-P. Rouillon thus states that at “the moment when a veritable mutation is sketched concerning the social and the therapeutic, . . . autism appears as the veritable spearhead of a new way of considering mental illness and handicap. . . . In fact, what forms the efficacy of the modern apprehending of autism, is to fit oneself out with information, to be part of the times and above all to throw some fodder to the gaze: an image which has nothing in common with the romanticism of the imaginary, but which is constructed from the starting point of measurement and quantification. All this is counted, broken down and objectified, emphasizing a positivity in the place where speech emphasizes the void, the lack, the nothing and the loss.¹

However, since the first description of early childhood autism by Kanner in 1943, and after the latter turned to the hypothesis of an organic origin, psychoanalytic interpretations continued to represent the most essential of the efforts to introduce a causality for childhood autism.

1. The divergencies of the followers of Melanie Klein

Kleinian analysts did not recoil from autism: they took it as a syndrome, that is, a new clinical entity poorly demarcated in “the open field of the schizophrenias”. Their testimony is very useful for the precision and the richness of their clinical descriptions, but above all because it illustrates very well the distinction between a clinic of phenomena and a differential clinic of structures. In effect, they bring down symbolic phenomena to the interior of imaginary examples, which leads them to emphasize the limit and the contents of the cure, and not the particular traits of the structure.

The normal autism of M. Mahler

For Margaret S. Mahler, a precocious disfunction of the tie of the child to his mother would prevent the child from quitting the stage of “normal autism” which she assumes for each newborn. She supposes in effect a first moment, archaic in the sense of a mythic moment, before birth, where the mother-child tie constitutes the model of a perfect encoupling, of a harmony in the relation of subject to object.

According to her thesis, there is a first trauma – birth –, the starting point for a stage of primary narcissism where the child withdraws to defend itself. In this she distinguishes two early “psychotic” phases: that of normal autism and that of normal symbiosis. The first phase is described as “a state of primary hallucinatory disorientation, in which the satisfaction of needs concern the child’s own all-powerful *autistic*

1 J.-P. Rouillon, “Autisme et éthique” (Autism and ethics), *Bulletin du Groupe Petite Enfance* 10, (special issue on Autism), January 1997, Paris, pp.108 and 110.

sphere”². In the second, symbiotic phase she situates the beginning of object differentiation. The mother thus represents a kind of object for the infant, the “symbiotic object”, which will come to order the process of constitution of the individual.

Mahler considers that the psychotic condition is relative to the preponderance of one of these phases, and that this corresponds to a defect in the function of the mother as “symbiotic operator”. An undifferentiated ego phase follows, undifferentiation between subject and object. That is her schema of the psychoses. On this point she states that “not being able to use the mother in the habitual manner, he (the subject) must take recourse to different ways of maintaining his life”³. She deduces thereby two clinical categories of psychosis: the “autistic syndrome” and the “syndrome of symbiotic psychosis”, both determined by the point of fixation of the subject to one or the other of the primitive psychotic phases of normal libidinal development.

According to Mahler, the “autistic syndrome” translates a mode of “autistic defense” against the danger of a threatening world which the subject has never cathected: “These children seem to have succeeded in constructing, maintaining and solidifying their originary massive barrier, one of a negative and hallucinatory defense against stimuli, in order to protect themselves against the shock of the exterior world”⁴.

The therapeutic access of M. Mahler consists in supporting a “corrective symbiotic experience”. It would mean recreating, under transference, the original mother-child symbiosis in the real, that is with the real presence of the mother. In this situation of controlled mother-child interaction, the therapist interprets in order to help the subject’s ego to constitute itself, along the mode of an “auxiliary ego” which comes to reinforce the undifferentiated ego of the subject.

The depressive experience and the autistic objet of F. Tustin

Frances Tustin considers rather that the “primary autistic phase” is structured in an accidental way by a depressive experience which encounters the persistence of a void, a lack without meaning. This hole necessitates that the child utilise an “autistic object” to suppress the intolerable sensation of absence. Her theory of autism rests on the idea of a primary nucleus of bodily sensations which “engender an auto-sensual image of the mother”⁵, a world where there is no object relation but a continuity between the body of the mother and that of the child. The subject will remain fixed to the primary autistic state, in an attempt to protect himself against the bodily separation from the mother. The child, on the basis of a precociously disturbed primary tie with the mother, has a traumatic encounter with the world under the form of a “psychotic depression”, a concept which Tustin borrows from Winnicott.

Tustin distinguishes between two clinical forms, according to the mode of defense which is set up against the psychotic depression. Her classification thus distinguishes “the tortoise-shell autistic states” and “the confusional autistic states”, corresponding to two principal types of autistic reactions by which the psychotic child may avoid the “non-self” reality: the tortoise shell, a reaction by means of which the “non-self” exterior world finds itself excluded, and confusion, a reaction by which the exterior world is not completely rejected, but fogged up⁶.

2 M. Mahler, *Psychose infantile*, Petite Bibliotheque Payot, Paris, 1996, p. 19.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 58.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

5 F. Tustin, *Les états autistiques chez l’enfant*, Seuil, Paris, 1986, p. 25.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 37.

For Tustin, psychotic children seek to make up for the real hole of the early loss of the mother by means of different types of objects. The usage made by the subject in this matter permits Tustin to isolate these objects that she names “autistic objects”. According to her, “it is the massive and persistent deployment of objects, by way of the tortoise-shell and the confusional mode, almost to the point of exclusion of a transitional and communicative usage, which leads to psychosis”⁷. The therapeutic axis of Tustin reposes on the game organized by the therapist stemming from the spontaneous solution proposed by the little autistic for avoiding the lack.

The dismantling experience and the sticky identification of D. Meltzer

According to Donald Meltzer, the young autistic is the place of a dramatic dismantling which leaves each drive fragment to demand its aim, without an economy being structured which would indicate the existence of an object for the self of a subject. The subject-object fusion perpetuates an open world, undone, without any orifice which could sanction an outside for any inside.

The innovation which he introduces is the idea of an original type of psychosis in which the paranoid and schizoid mechanisms do not intervene: a psychosis without a splitting which he calls autism.

The work of Meltzer on autism and on what he calls the “post-autistic” states, led him to locate early mechanisms which operate in the normal development of the psyche. According to him, a newborn is not “dismantled”, but submitted to “a bombardment of sensations”. The mother, in her role of “parrying excitations” protects the baby from an excess of stimuli. The active participation of the child in its own structuration activates the mechanisms of “sticky identification” and of “dismantling”.

“Dismantling” will be the mechanism operating on the self and on objects, through which the infant manages to suspend his “automatic” behaviors – for example behaviors of automatic grabbing –, that which will permit him to cathect a familiar object – in this case the hand –, prior to its voluntary and ulterior utilization. The “sticky identification” – the clutching behaviors are an example of this – becomes a mechanism destined to prevent any perception of a limit between the self and the object, by maintaining through contact a continuity between the skin of the mother and that of the baby. According to Meltzer, this mechanism of identification will be specific to what he calls “bi-dimensionality”.

For Meltzer, the necessary condition for psychic development is the access of the individual to a “tri-”, then a “quadri-dimensionality”, which he ties to the mechanism of projective identification as well as to a “psychic skin”; this latter makes of the self a content which disposes of an inner space; the resistance of the object to the attempts of penetration by the self initiates the differentiation between them, and favors the discovery of natural “orifices” the mastery of which becomes the stakes for the omnipotence of self.

Autism marks, according to Meltzer, an arrest of this process, because of a genetic dysfunctionment. It results from a group of defense mechanisms and identification, amongst them the “dismantling” and the “sticky identification” to which the child takes recourse in order to avoid the suffering born of an intolerable perception of separation from the object.

Meltzer considers that the transference cannot be produced in autism, where it remains a question without response. The interpretations of the therapists are oriented to collecting the fragments of a dismantled experience for constructing the identification of the fragmented image. This work of interpretation leads the autistic subject to psychosis; then, within an “ordinary” transference experience, this means reconstructing the unconscious fantasy from its conscious derivatives.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

Bettelheim's early existential wound

Bruno Bettelheim's approach to autism is radically based on the repair of an "early existential wound" for which the parents are responsible – the Orthogenic School being the monumental manifestation of this conviction. The lost paradise of the intra-uterine life, the brutal tearing of the mother-child "dyad", the early frustration, will entail a blockage of the development of competencies and of a good usage of self, of other and of language, considered here to be one instrument among others.

Bettelheim emphasizes the extreme reality of the child at grips with the total absence of mastery of time, an unpredictability of events, which would justify being attentive to moderating as far as possible this kind of ordeal. It is at this point where the parents prove dramatically incompetent. The task of the therapist is thus to offer a new stability, from which a development may ensue which would leave the autistic organization behind.

2. Two divergent positions in the Freudian Field

Starting with the Lacanian orientation in the practice of psychoanalysis with autistic psychotic children, divergent positions on autism also appear in the Freudian Field from the 1980s on. There are those who make of autism a transitory state, a phenomenon, or if you will, a revolving turntable of psychosis. There are those who would make of autism a new structure.

Our objective will be, therefore, to clarify the different theoretical positions which coexist within the Freudian Field, in a manner which makes their underlying logic appear.

"there is surely something to say to them"

Lacan does not construct a differential clinic of the psychoses which takes autism into account with schizophrenia and paranoia. When he speaks about autism, and it is not frequently, he often relates it to schizophrenia. Lacan's thesis is that the autistic child is hallucinated: if there are hallucinations, autism, like psychosis, must ensue from the same signifying mechanism, the foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father.

Concerning psychoanalysis applied to the treatment of autism, the question which must be answered, to paraphrase Lacan, is the following: is there a conception to be formed of the maneuver in this treatment and of the transference – possible or impossible? The only explicit reference of Lacan to autism is to be found in the Geneva conference on the symptom, in 1975: "They don't manage to hear what you have to say to them in as much as what you are occupied with ... It's that they don't hear you. But in the end, there is surely something to say to them"⁸. Beyond the effect of enigma, this indication invites us not to recoil when faced with autism.

The five structural points of R. and R. Lefort

Among the pioneers, we must cite Rosine and Robert Lefort. Their thesis on autism as a new structure constitutes today, with its radicalism, one of the two fundamental directions of research on autism. Since the Colloquium of the Freudian Discovery of 1992, they focused on the structural foundations that make of autism a structure distinct from that of the psychoses. In 1996, in a communication entitled "The access

8 J. Lacan, "Conférence à Genève sur le symptôme", *Bloc-notes de la psychanalyse*, no. 5. 1975, p. 17.

of the child to speech, a condition of the social tie”⁹ they refer for the first time to *autistic structure*. They also refer to autistic personalities to indicate that that “there are degrees in autism” and that their “current research, which set out from infantile autism, orients them toward the locating of an adult autism”¹⁰. In January 1997, during the XX Study Days of the CEREDA, entitled *L’enfant prêt à porter*, François Ansermet interviewed them¹¹ on their articles and current research. In the first part of this interview, they state the five points of structure specific to autism which they isolated, and which are declined in the following manner:

— VIOLENCE AND DESTRUCTION

This first point is illustrated by a small clinical vignette concerning the cure of Marie-Francoise, or more precisely the moment of encounter between the little girl and the analyst, Rosine Lefort, where it is a question of five colossal slaps. Their commentary is the following: “the autist faced with the Other finds himself submitted to this drive of destroying since for him, the world – that is, the Other – is to be destroyed or it destroys him”¹².

— *THERE IS NO OTHER*¹³ FOR THE AUTIST

The absence of the Other, the first marking point that R. and R. Lefort had isolated in, during the cure of Marie-Francoise which was related in 1980 in *Naissance de l’Autre* (The Birth of the Other), is now presented in a more complete and absolute manner. They state that there is not “any Other in the transference, neither the Other of the image, nor the Other of the signifier, nor the one which bears the object *a*”, because “what is lacking to this Other in order for it to be one, is that it should have a hole in it”¹⁴.

In 1992, they established the bases for their differential diagnosis of autism from psychosis according to the status of the object *a* in the “coupling *a* / S_1 ”. In 1997, they wish rather to found their diagnostic from the point of view of the status of the Other.

Meanwhile, establishing the difference between the Other of the autist and the Other of the psychotic, while following their logic, is delicate. There is a point where the logic of the structure stops and phenomenology takes over. Why would the psychotic have an Other and the autist not, if both have to deal with a complete Other, without holes? There are only two possible responses: either there is no Other, neither for the autist nor for the psychotic, or there is in both cases “an Other extremely present”¹⁵.

The point which makes the difference, concludes Robert Lefort, is that “the psychotic rushes to give the Other what could fulfill it, safeguard it in order to prevent it in some way from disappearing. Therefore, the psychotic is at the service of the Other. For the autist it is the complete opposite.”¹⁶

9 IXeme Rencontre International du Champ Freudien “Les pouvoirs de la parole”.

10 R. and R. Lefort, “L’accès de l’enfant à la parole, condition du lien social”, *Bulletin du Groupe Petite Enfance*, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

11 Cf. François Ansermet’s interview with Rosine and Robert Lefort, “On autism, articles and research in progress”, *Archives de psychanalyse, L’enfant prêt à porter*, Agalma, Paris, 1997, pp. 33-45.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 36.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 37.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 36.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 37.

In the line of their logic, “of objects which are of the Other, there are none, because there is no Other”¹⁸. Therefore, there is for the autist neither oral object, nor anal object, nor gaze object, nor voice object, “there is no babbling of the autist, that means that from the start there is no S_1 ... no jouissance of babble... no *lalangue*”¹⁹. Robert Lefort considers that “the difference must be made between the none of S_1 of autism and the none of S_1 of psychosis”²⁰. The hypothesis which ensues from the absence of S_1 “sensitive to S_2 ”²¹, is the following: the alienation of the autist in the signifier of the Other is structurally impossible, in contradistinction to the psychotic, while separation, just as with the psychotic, is extremely ravaging. Actually, R. and R. Lefort consider that for the autist “there is neither alienation nor separation in the sense where Lacan understands it, since for want of signifying dialectic, alienation is replaced exactly by the real of the double”²².

Lacan himself held, in the 1970s, that the psychotic, particularly the schizophrenic, has no other Other but *lalangue*. When the S_1 prove to be inapt at sustaining the division of the subject, either they are scattered – the jouissance of *lalangue* is then unchained – that is, they are taken in a lump with the S_1 , the couple S_1 - S_2 holophrases itself²³ – imaginary, symbolic and real are extended into each other, which makes the certainty unshakeable.

According to R. and R. Lefort, the world of the autist is a world where all is real. In order to explain it they make the hypothesis of “a double in the real”²⁴.

In the world of the autist “there is a double everywhere: the double with the object, the double with the Other, and the double does not leave any possibility of hallucination ... Everything is double: the poo is the double, the object is the double... For certain autists the double can, on the other hand, be an animal, a dog. It is a bovine in *My life as an autist* by Temple Grandin”²⁵. This involves a real, non-hallucinatory world, deserted by the imaginary and the symbolic, the one of the *double*. This double, says Rosine Lefort, “is the division of the subject in the real”²⁶.

There the problem is posed of conceiving a real world for the speaking being, which, since it is perceived as real, will not be fundamentally hallucinatory. How to conceive of a real world without the phenomenon of hallucination as “a return in the real of what did not appear in the symbolic”²⁷?

17 *Ibid.*

18 *Ibid.*

19 *Ibid.*

20 *Ibid.*, p. 38.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 37.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 40.

23 J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire Livre XI, Les quatre concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse*, Seuil, Paris, 1973, pp. 215-6.

24 Ansermet interview, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

25 *Ibid.*

26 *Ibid.*, p. 40.

27 J. Lacan, “Réponse au commentaire de Jean Hyppolite”, *Écrits*, Seuil, Paris, 1966.

In this real world of the autistic according to R. and R. Lefort, virtual space does not exist because all is real, the specular image is rendered impossible. “An autistic looking at himself in the mirror”, says Rosine Lefort, “does not see himself, does not see his image, he sees either an other, a small other, or more frequently, the horror of seeing something in the mirror”²⁹.

To conclude this pathway of the thinking of R. and R. Lefort, we may resume their panorama of autism thus: no Other, no object a, no drive circuit, no body, no specular image and therefore, no subject³⁰.

An exit to enter into psychosis

In the second part of the interview of F. Ansermet with R. and R. Lefort, there is a question of the status of the analyst faced with an autistic. For R. and R. Lefort there is a first approach to the autistic which they state in this way: “one can expose oneself to the autistic”³¹, a play on the well-known phrase of Lacan concerning the possible treatment of psychosis: “one does not recoil when faced with psychosis”³². But how does one expose oneself to autistics? And above all what can one say to them? R. and R. Lefort, responding to the remark of Lacan in his Geneva Conference on the symptom: “. . .there is surely something to say to them”, put forth another formula: “there is something that one cannot say to them”³³. Rosine Lefort adds: “One speaks differently to an autistic. I cannot really articulate it”³⁴.

However, they do let it be gathered that if there is a possibility of the birth of the Other, it is thanks to the analyst. There would, therefore, exist possibilities for a way out of autism. The question of the transference with autistics is not decided on, however, the autistic child will not come out of the autism until the transference is installed in the framework of an analytic cure.

If the autistic child, in the course of an analytic cure, emerges from his autism, where does he then enter? Robert Lefort responds that the autistic child exits from autism in order to enter psychosis. It would thus involve a process of *psychotisation* of these children. This remark necessarily puts into question the thesis of R. and R. Lefort who wish to turn autism into a new structure on its own.

In January 1999, on the occasion of the XXII Study Days of the CEREDA, on *The child and his joys*, an advance was sketched in the panorama of the Lefortian concepts: the inscription of autism in a new structure setting out from a new signifying mechanism – the foreclosure of the maternal signifier DM (the desire of the mother). Pierre Naveau launched this formula during the debate. The idea of a redoubling of the foreclosure – foreclosure of Name-of-the-Father and foreclosure of DM – had already appeared on the Lefortian horizon in 1992³⁵. This idea, without doubt revolutionary, of the foreclosure of the DM permits a reformulation of the Lefortian theory of autism.

28 Ansermet interview, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

29 *Ibid.*

30 Why did some end up considering autism as the “degree zero of subjectivity”? Does the immutability underlined by Kanner not sufficiently testify to a subject at work? See the article by J.-C. Maleval: “Une sorte d’hypertrophie compensatoire ou la construction autistique d’un Autre de suppléance”, *Du changement dans l’autisme?*, Minutes of the Study Day organized by the Maryse group, Nouveau réseau CEREDA, Champ Freudien, March 27, 1999 in Rennes, France.

31 Ansermet interview, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

32 J. Lacan, “Ouverture de la discussion clinique: questions et réponses”, *Ornicar?* 9, Navarin, Paris, 1977, p. 12.

33 Ansermet interview, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

34 *Ibid.*

35 E. Laurent, “Colloque de la Découverte freudienne. L’autisme et la psychanalyse”, *Séries de la Découverte freudienne*, Presses universitaires du Mirail, 1992, p. 143.

Let us set out from the formula of the metaphor of the Name-of-the-Father that Lacan proposes in his article, “A question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis”³⁶, published in 1958.

Name-of-the-Father	Desire of the Mother	→	Name-of-the-Father (A)
Desire of the Mother	Signified of the subject		phallus

In psychosis, foreclosure of the signifier Name-of-the-Father leaves the Desire of the Mother without a signified, that is to say that the signifier of the absence of the mother remains enigmatic for the child, or rather, worrying. The psychotic has no recourse to the law which the father incarnates to give a meaning to the all-powerful desire of the mother, and the question of the DM is posed incessantly. He is panicked by the immense place which the DM occupies and he never manages to be capable of giving a sense to the fact that the mother absents herself, busy at her occupations³⁷.

But how is it when the DM itself is not symbolized, as R. and R. Lefort claim for the autistic? If it is foreclosed, there will be no absence but a real omnipresence of the mother, without interruption and out of temporality. The autistic child is nevertheless a real object of the mother and as a real object, he will not be animated except by what is imposed on him by the will of the real other, the “double”. Thus the autistic child alternates between the excitation due to the invasive presence of the real little other, his “double”, which he encounters all around, and the annihilation, or even the inexistence which the disconnection with the “double” provokes. The unbridled jouissance returns from no place since it never quitted the body of the autistic child – because of the lack of a body, of the Other and of the object *a*. The autistic situates it, according to R. and R. Lefort, in the field of the “double”, that is to say, everywhere in the real world that they depict to us as being that which the autistic inhabits.

Let us conclude with this last formula of R. and R. Lefort, which is that “the autistic is out of language more than out of the discourse”³⁸, a phrase which is pending on the statement of Lacan in 1973 in “L’Étourdit” about the schizophrenic: “the schizophrenic speech is out of any discourse”³⁹.

Rosine and Robert Lefort were the pioneers, the first to apply the Lacanian topology to the clinic of psychoses of the child and to autism. Let us see what has been elaborated following this.

S₁, S₂, S (barred S), a: a compass of orientation

In 1992, during the Colloquium of the Freudian Discovery, Eric Laurent was invited to participate in the elaboration of a critique of the testimonies of the clinical research in progress on autism. First of all he analyses each of the clinical cases presented, in an effort to grasp the clinical richness with the mathemas given by Lacan as “a compass of orientation”: S₁, S₂, S (barred S), *a*. Then he presented his own elaborations, setting out from all the clinical material of the colloquium and of that proceeding from the literature – Bettelheim, Tustin, Meltzer, Lefort –, while systematizing them by applying the four mathemas.

36 J. Lacan, “D’une question préliminaire à tout traitement possible de la psychose”, *Écrits*, Seuil, Paris, 1966, p. 557.

37 J.-A. Miller, Seminar at the Department of Psychoanalysis of the University of Paris VIII, “Du symptôme au fantasme, et retour”, 81-82. Course on the paternal metaphor (unpublished).

38 Notes taken by the author during the debate with R. and R. Lefort, XXII Study Days of the CEREDA, 9 January 1999.

39 J. Lacan, “L’Étourdit”, *Autres écrits*, Seuil, Paris, 2001, p. 474.

— S_1

As to the master signifier S_1 , he remarks that in all the cases of autism, as also in psychoses, there are phenomena of stickiness of surfaces and edges, of circuits to be traveled in the city or inside an institution, and the so-called bad auditory and visual perceptions which implicate a space, not constructed with an inside and an outside, but rather structured as a torus. These phenomena lead him to suppose that for these children “the symbolic is real”⁴⁰ and that this real, we cannot understand it except with the help of the Lacanian topology⁴¹ as the work of the Leforts had already indicated in 1980.

— S_2

As to the knowledge of the Other S_2 , observations of cases of autism, beginning with those of Kanner in 1943, demonstrate another essential phenomenon, always present: the imperial will of maintaining the stability of markers that are manifested by diverse verifications, by the fact that the child always isolates himself in the same corner, always looks for the same object. Any initiative on the part of the other to introduce a modification of this space can unleash reactions of anxiety or crumbling states. These clinical phenomena testify, according to E. Laurent, that for autists there exists “a relation of knowledge perfectly constituted”⁴² based on the persecutor-persecuted model, in the choice of the subject to oppose himself in an absolute manner to the knowledge of the Other.

— $\$$ (*barred S*)

Eric Laurent took up, in all these cases, the manifestations proper to the subject. Being spoken by the Other gives the subject a first status, that of the infant identified to a master signifier – become real in psychosis and autism - of a saying of the mother or from the paternal line: “there is an $\$$ (*barred S*), the subject (in autism). He is the one we are speaking about”⁴³. Following this he distinguishes other manifestations of the subject in the psychotic stabilization – delusional metaphor and even feminization – or in the phenomena of a real absence, which are presented during epileptic crises.

— a

Finally he recognized, in the different sorts of objects to which these children are often attached, the category of the object a , “of which they all testify that it is out of the body, and that their own body is in a relation of incessant re-adhesion, of an attempt to situate itself in rapport to it”⁴⁴. He proposes an illustration of these phenomena of re-adhesion of subject-object with the myth of the “lamella”⁴⁵ which Lacan comments on at the end of Seminar XI. This out-of-the-body object a acts as a “supplementary organ” for these children, that is to say “that the child tries, at the price of his own life if needs be, to introduce (these exterior objects) as an organ which would suit the language in his body”⁴⁶.

40 E. Laurent, “Colloque de la Découverte freudienne...”, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

41 J.-A. Miller, “Supplément topologique à la Question préliminaire”, *Lettre de l'École Freudienne de Paris*, September 27, 1979.

42 E. Laurent, “Colloque de la Découverte freudienne...”, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

43 *Ibid.*

44 *Ibid.*, p. 145.

45 J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire Livre XI, Les quatre concepts de la psychanalyse*, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-180.

46 E. Laurent, “Colloque de la Découverte freudienne...”, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

The organ which creates a problem and the return of jouissance on the rim

Eric Laurent concludes in favor of a return to Lacan concerning autism. He reminds us that the indications given by Lacan “spring from the fact that the child is hallucinated. This is the constant thesis which Lacan maintains, that there is a hallucination, that is to say submersion in the real. It is precisely because the child is hallucinated that he cannot hear a call because there is already a response. In this sense, it seems to me that autism, in every case, concerns a foreclosure”⁴⁷. Thus there would be no interest “in detaching the autistic child from schizophrenia, in the definition which Lacan gives to it, being: schizophrenia as an attempt to add an organ to one’s own body, distinct in this matter from paranoia which assigns the return of jouissance to the Other. Centering schizophrenia on “the organ which makes a problem, since language never could make an organ, is what seems to me to be what can be deduced from these cases”⁴⁸.

Eric Laurent sets out from the fact that there is something of an Other in autism, “the Other of the law, this Other master, with a declination of the modalities of the Other with which the psychotic subject has to deal”⁴⁹, in order to reach the point which he considers fundamental to any clinical research on autism: the modes of stabilization in psychosis, the distinction of different arrangements of the psychotic subject at grips with jouissance in order to try to find a localization for this jouissance. On this point Eric Laurent distances himself from R. and R. Lefort for whom the exit from autism is possible when there is an entry into psychosis: “I have never seen an autistic child quitting the autism. On the other hand, I have seen stabilizations . . . in all the cases, when they were taken into analysis, we have an exit from the autism which appears as a state, a transitory state, a phenomenon, and not a structure. There we have a *psychotisation* of these children, with stabilization, in a certain number of cases, around the essential mechanism of the localization of jouissance, and even, in certain of these cases, of feminization”⁵⁰.

Eric Laurent inscribes autism in a new clinical perspective. By basing it on the indications given by Lacan in Seminar XI, it indicates the construction of a differential clinic of psychoses based on the distinct modes of the return of jouissance, and of reorganizing the field of psychoses in terms of continuous processes up until “sinthomal”⁵¹ structures: this reorganization draws the conclusions from Lacan’s proposition in *Television* according to which “. . . if ever this weakness, as reject of the unconscious, ends in psychosis, there follows a return to the real of that which is rejected, that is, language”⁵². In this perspective, Eric Laurent’s thesis on autism is the following: “if paranoia is the return of jouissance in the Other, if schizophrenia is the return of jouissance on the body, . . . autism is the return of jouissance on the rim”⁵³.

Making oneself the new partner of this subject

In 1997, on the occasion of a publication entitled. “Réflexions sur l’autisme”⁵⁴, Eric Laurent conducts a revision of what was said in the Freudian Field about autism. In this article, he remarks that there has not been any true advance since the Colloquium of Toulouse in 1992. He confirms what he had sustained there.

47 *Ibid.*, p. 147.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 145.

49 *Ibid.*, p. 147.

50 *Ibid.*

51 Eric Laurent is referring to the new perspectives of Lacan on psychosis beginning in the 1970s with the Seminar on Joyce, *The sinthome*.

52 J. Lacan, *Television*, Norton, New York, 1990, p. 22.

53 E. Laurent, “Colloque de la Découverte freudienne...”, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

54 E. Laurent, “Réflexions sur l’autisme”, *Bulletin du Groupe Petite Enfance* 10, *op. cit.*

He devotes some lines to the psychoanalytic treatment of autism, in which he gives some indications as to the management of the transference and of interpretation. According to him “what is involved is making oneself the new partner of this subject, out of all imaginary reciprocity and without the function of interlocution”⁵⁵.

What type of transference is possible with these subjects? For Eric Laurent “transference installs the analyst as at the place from which one can tear out the object”⁵⁶. The clinical approach under transference of the autistic demonstrates “how the child leaves a stabilization in order to slide into a metonymy, a destabilization of the homeostatic state in which he is autistically enshelled, as a result of a stabilization. His body can then be animated, not without a phenomenon of manic excitation which accompanies this . . .(in) his efforts to glue himself to that which for the subject forms the center of language, as supplementary object”⁵⁷. That which permits the subject, in the same movement, to conduct an alleviation of the Other and a small return to his persecutory relation to knowledge, in a manner to render it more livable. The agent of the change in the state of the subject would thus be the interpretation as “no to jouissance”⁵⁸.

Translated by Rivka Warshawsky

55 *Ibid.*, p. 44.

56 *Ibid.*, p. 45.

57 *Ibid.*, p. 41.

58 *Ibid.*, p. 44.

Janis Gailis

Forcing Autism

I intend to examine the extent to which autism can act as a paradigm in bringing certain transclinical structural phenomena into relief, which concern both psychosis and neurosis.¹

I will begin with a surprising statement by Jacques-Alain Miller: “In Lacan’s late teaching psychoanalysis is a forcing of autism, owing to *lalangue*, a forcing of the One, the One of jouissance owing to the Other of *lalangue*”². He adds, “This is the meaning that has to be given to the term ‘autism’”. Why does Jacques-Alain Miller employ this signifier, “autism”?

Freudian loss of reality

We know Freud’s mistrust of this invention of Paul-Eugen Bleuler’s. Bleuler wrote in 1911 in Aschaffenburg’s *Manual of Psychiatry*, “We call *autism* this detachment from reality combined with the relative or absolute predominance of internal life. . . . The schizophrenic does not totally lack a ‘sense of reality’. . . this fails only for the things that are not opposed to his complexes”³. It is no accident that in his 1924 text, “The loss of reality in neurosis and psychosis”, Freud carefully avoids talking of autism. He stresses the fact “. . . that in neurosis, too, there is no lack of attempts to replace a disagreeable reality by one which is more in keeping with the subject’s wishes. This is made possible by the existence of a *world of phantasy*, of a domain which became separated from the real external world at the time of the introduction of the reality principle. This domain has since been kept free from the demands of the exigencies of life, like a kind of ‘reservation’; it is not inaccessible to the ego, but is only loosely attached to it. It is from this world of phantasy that the neurosis draws the material for its new wishful constructions, and it usually finds that material along the path of regression to a more satisfying real past.

“It can hardly be doubted that the world of phantasy plays the same part in psychosis and that there, too, it is the storehouse from which the materials or the pattern for building the new reality are derived. But whereas the new, imaginary external world of a psychosis attempts to put itself in the place of external reality, that of a neurosis, on the contrary, is apt, like the play of children, to attach itself to a piece of reality – a different piece from the one against which it has to defend itself – and to lend that piece a special importance and a secret meaning which we (not always quite appropriately) call a *symbolic* one. Thus we see that both in neurosis and psychosis there comes into consideration the question not only of a *loss of reality* but also of a *substitute for reality*”⁴.

The Freudian concept of “loss of reality”, or even of “substitute for reality”, the construction of a new reality that strives to put itself in the place of a supposed external reality – in neurosis by fantasy, in

1 Presentation made December 12 and 19, 2001 at Pierre-Gilles Guéguen’s seminar, “Sexuation from Freud to Lacan”, at the Department of Psychoanalysis, University of Paris VIII.

2 J.-A Miller, “L’orientation lacanienne”, lecture given at the Department of Psychoanalysis, University of Paris VIII, “Le lieu et le lien”, June 6; 2001 (unpublished).

3 P.-E. Bleuler, *Dementia Praecox and the Group of Schizophrenias*, 1911 (trans. 1950).

4 S. Freud, “The Loss of Reality in Neurosis and Psychosis”, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works*, Hogarth Press, London, 1959, XIX: 187.

psychosis by the delusion – is discredited today. As Lacan demonstrates, what is in question, both in psychosis and in neurosis, is a “construction of reality” as such. A “reality”, to be sure, but one that is particular to each. As Jacques-Alain Miller emphasizes in the aforementioned lecture, Jacques Lacan, “in his last teaching . . . moves, as if to the opposite of his first, and centers himself on what is particular to each, that is to say, singular. “Singular” means that it does not yield to the universal. And this is why . . . Lacan’s last teaching is haunted by the problem of autism. Autism means that in his last teaching it is the One that dominates and not the Other.”

Bleuler’s invention

In order to understand the difference between autism and narcissism, it will help if we situate these two concepts in their historical context. At the end of March 1907 Carl Gustav Jung wrote to Freud saying that he recognized “autoerotism as the essence of *Dementia praecox*”.⁵ However, he stresses that during his discussions with Paul Eugen Bleuler “it has become quite clear to me that the expression “libido” and, in general, all the terms (no doubt justified in themselves) that have been carried over into the broadened conception of sexuality are open to misunderstanding, or at least are not of didactic value”⁶, “provoking such affective inhibitions that make the lesson impossible”⁷. Jung proposes to Freud that “the sexual terminology should be reserved only for the most extreme forms of your “libido”, and that a less offensive collective term should be established for *all* the libidinal manifestations.”⁸ Freud replies, “Even if we call the *ucs.* “psychoid”, it will still be the *ucs.*, and even if we do not call the driving force in the broadened conception of sexuality “libido”, it will still be libido, and in every inference we draw from it we shall come back to the very thing from which we were trying to divert attention with our nomenclature”⁹. Several weeks later Jung writes to Freud that “Bleuler still misses a clear definition of autoerotism and its specifically psychological effects. He has, however, accepted the concept for his Dem[entia] pr[ae]cox] contribution to Aschaffenburg’s Handbook. He doesn’t want to say autoerotism . . . but prefers “autism” or “ipsism”.¹⁰

Thus it is that in May 1907 the signifier “autism” appears for the first time. In 1911 autism is designated as one of the “fundamental symptoms” of schizophrenia.¹¹ Bleuler returns to the same question in this article: “Autism is more or less the same as what Freud calls autoerotism. But as libido and autoerotism are much more extensive for this author than they are for other schools, this term can scarcely be used here without giving rise to numerous misunderstandings.”¹² He stresses that autism is “a tendency to place one’s own fantasy above reality and to cut oneself off from the latter.”¹³ He adds, “We call autism this detachment from reality combined with the relative or absolute predominance of internal life. . . . The term “autism” essentially says, in positive form, that same thing as what P. Janet describes, negatively, as “loss of the

5 Letter 17, 31 March 1907. *The Freud-Jung Letters*, The Hogarth Press and Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1974, p. 25.

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Ibid.*

9 Letter 18, 7 April 1907. *The Freud-Jung Letters*, The Hogarth Press and Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1974, p. 28.

10 Letter 24, 13 May 1907, pp. 43-4. Cf also Letter 110 F, 15 October 1908, 173, in which Freud describes a discussion in the course of which Bleuler “came out in defense of infantile sexuality . . . then . . . pounced on me, insisting that I should replace the word “sexuality” with another (on the model of autism); this, they claimed, would put an end to all resistance and misunderstanding.”

11 P.-E. Bleuler, *Dementia Praecox...*, *op. cit.*

12 *Ibid.*

13 *Ibid.*

sense of reality”. . . . The schizophrenic does not totally lack a “sense of reality”; this fails only for the things that have been opposed to his complexes.”¹⁴ He goes on, “For the ill the autistic world is every bit as much a reality as the real world, even though sometimes another kind of reality. . . . The reality value of the autistic world can also be greater than actual reality. . . . To the greatest extent reality is transformed by illusions and replaced for a significant part by hallucinations. This can be seen in a state of stupor; alternatively autism itself can attain such a high degree that even activity has lost its relations with reality which has been barred from the mind, and the ill make as little effort as does a person dreaming to act upon the real world.”¹⁵ Immediately after having read this publication S. Freud laconically writes to C. G. Jung that “Bleuler is a genius at misunderstanding”.¹⁶

Freudian narcissisms

This article does have one advantage for psychoanalysis, however. It recommences the discussion between Freud and Jung over the application of the concept of libido in *dementia praecox*.¹⁷ Thus, “by the pressure of facts or by the influence of someone else’s ideas”,¹⁸ Sigmund Freud is led to write his article “On Narcissism”, published in 1914. For Freud, “when the attempt was made to subsume what we know of dementia praecox (Kraepelin) or schizophrenia (Bleuler) under the hypothesis of the libido theory”,¹⁹ “A pressing motive for occupying ourselves with the conception of a primary and normal narcissism”²⁰ – “an allocation of the libido . . . that . . . might claim a place in the regular course of human sexual development”²¹, being “the libidinal complement to the egoism of the instinct of self-preservation”.²² He stresses that paraphrenics “display two fundamental characteristics: megalomania and diversion of their interest from the external world – from people and things. In consequence of the latter change, they become inaccessible to the influence of psychoanalysis and cannot be cured by our efforts.”²³ Freud adds that “a patient suffering from hysteria or obsessional neurosis has also, as far as his illness extends, given up his relation to reality. But analysis shows that he has by no means broken off his erotic relations to people and things. He still retains them in phantasy It is otherwise with the paraphrenic. He seems really to have withdrawn his libido from people and things in the external world, without replacing them by others in phantasy.”²⁴ This libido is therefore “directed to the ego and thus gives rise to an attitude which may be called narcissism. But the megalomania itself is no new creation; on the contrary, it is . . . a magnification and plainer manifestation of a condition which had already existed previously.”²⁵

Freud thus distinguishes two narcissisms: “primary narcissism”²⁶ which results from a operation over the course of which “a new psychical action”²⁷ is “added to auto-erotism”²⁸, which would constitute a

14 *Ibid.*

15 *Ibid.*

16 *The Freud-Jung Letters, op. cit.*, p. 273.

17 Cf. the letters 282 J, 287 F. Also see C. G. Jung’s article, “Metamorphoses and symbols of the libido” (1912), where he declares that the libido theory fails to account for schizophrenia, and also Freud’s article, “On narcissism” (1914).

18 Letter 288 F, 17 December 1911, p. 472.

19 *Ibid.*, 14:75.

21 *Ibid.*, 14:73.

22 *Ibid.*, 14: 73-4.

23 *Ibid.*, 14:74.

24 *Ibid.*

25 *Ibid.*, 14:75.

26 *Ibid.*

27 *Ibid.*, 14:77.

28 *Ibid.*

“classical” stage of development; secondary narcissism, equivalent to the delusions of grandeur of the paraphrenics. Freud thus rejects Paul Eugen Bleuler’s proposition that autism is analogous to autoerotism. For him, it is a question of secondary narcissism, This paradox is due to the fact that in 1908 Freud had at his disposal the concept of autoerotism, but the concept of narcissism was not yet developed. Thus in the letter to Jung of 23 May 1907 Freud elaborates his concept of psychosis: “I believe . . . that the libido departs from the object-image, which is thereby divested of the cathexis that has characterized it as internal and can now be projected outward . . . Successful repression would accomplish this much; the liberated libido would somehow manifest itself autoerotically as in childhood. . . .

We can now construct three cases: 1) Repression by the above-described process is permanently successful, then the case takes the course that seems characteristic of *dementia praecox*. The projected object-image may appear only briefly in the “delusional idea”, the libido turns definitively to autoerotism. . . .

2) Or there is a return of libido (failure of the projection), only a part of which is guided into autoerotism; another part goes back to the object which is now to be found at the perception end and is treated as a perception. Then the delusional idea becomes more intense and resistance to it more and more violent, the entire defensive battle is fought all over again as rejection of reality (repression is transformed into rejection). This can go on for some time; in the end the newly arriving libido is diverted to autoerotism or a part of it is fixated permanently in a delusion directed against the projected object-wish. In varying mixtures this is what happens in paranoid *dementia praecox*. . . .

3) Or the repression fails completely, after succeeding for a time to the point of projecting the object-wish. The newly arriving libido now seeks out the object which has turned into a perception and develops the most intense delusional ideas, the libido is converted into belief, and secondary modification of the ego sets in; the result is pure paranoia, in which autoerotism is not developed; its mechanism, however, can be explained only on the basis of the series extending to total *dementia praecox*.”²⁹

In a letter of 5 July 1907 to another assistant of Bleuler’s, Karl Abraham, Freud adds, “I am pleased that the point of view of autoerotism applied to *dementia praecox* seems promising to you. However, it is necessary to contrast it with the normal autoerotism of childhood and to postulate . . . for, dementia, the return to autoerotism.”³⁰

The Lacanian mirror stage

While Freud did not assign the two concepts, autoerotism and narcissism, to a particular phase of “development” in 1907, he did not do it after 1915 either. In “Instincts and their vicissitudes” narcissism is considered as being “the early phase of the development of the ego, during which its sexual instincts find auto-erotic satisfaction”³¹ Note that, according to the conception developed in the *Introductory lectures*, “primary narcissism” extends up to “the picture of the blissful isolation of intra-uterine life”.³² The distinction between primary and secondary narcissism is however maintained.

Bleuler’s concept of autism attempts to explain, in the psychiatric domain, what Freud calls secondary narcissism. However, we cannot be satisfied with this response. It is no accident that Jacques Lacan,

29 Letter 25 F, May 23, 1905, pp. 46-7.

30 “A Psycho-Analytic Dialogue”. *The Letters of Sigmund Freud and Karl Abraham* (ed. H. C; Abraham and E. L. Freud), London and New York, 1965.

31 S. Freud, “On Narcissism”, *op. cit.*, 14:131-2.

32 S. Freud, *Introductory Lectures, Standard Edition*, 17:417.

rejecting any idea of primary narcissism, is categorical: “Any person who remains attached to primary narcissism in any way can put as many Lacanian carnations in their buttonhole as they wish, they will be a long way from anything of what I am teaching”.³³ For Lacan there is only one narcissism. “The entire explanation [Freud] gives of [Schreber’s] delusion links up with the notion of narcissism, which is certainly not elucidated for Freud, at least not at the time he writes on Schreber.

People today act as if narcissism were something that was self-explanatory – before extending to external objects, there is a stage at which the subject takes his own body as object.³⁴ Lacan adds, “We regard narcissism as the central imaginary relation of inter-human relationships. . . . It is in fact an erotic relationship – all erotic identification, all seizing of the other in an image in a relationship of erotic captivation, occurs by way of the narcissistic relation – and it is also the basis of aggressive tension... This is precisely where the mirror stage is useful”.³⁵

Becoming the mother’s object

One can read Freud’s theorization in “On narcissism” alongside the mirror stage. “A unity comparable to the ego cannot exist in the individual from the start; the ego has to be developed. The auto-erotic instincts, however, are there from the very first; so there must be something added to auto-erotism – a new psychical action – in order to bring about narcissism.”³⁶ The “new psychical action” that Freud speaks of is nothing other than the mirror stage that Lacan conceptualises in 1949. On the basis of this observation, one can easily conclude that children suffering from Kanner’s syndrome of early childhood autism would have “missed their mirror stage”, would not have “entered narcissism” and would remain “in autoerotism”. One could thus locate the questions raised by the mirror stage at the heart of the reflection on early childhood autism. What “has not functioned” during the mirror stage? Was it the big Other that was not there when it was required? Is there an Other for the autistic child? And so on. This would be not paying sufficient attention to the concepts of foreclosure and alienation.

In other words, by placing the debate at the purely imaginary level there is a risk of confusing the symbolic other, the imaginary other and the analyst’s position as semblant of object *a*. One could thus deduce from it a strategy of managing the transference in order to “engender” or “give birth to” a big Other that would enable the subject to redo the “missed steps” of the mirror stage.

Lacan’s position is quite different. As he declares in his Seminar on 16 November 1966, “the child’s subjective structure is going to depend on the mother’s imaginary. Surely, what, here, needs to be indicated is how this relation articulates in properly logical terms, that is to say, arising radically from the function of the signifier.” According to the manner in which the mother elaborated her own lack. Lacan emphasizes that it is “the relationship of little *a* to the Other [that] is . . . begin in [this] indication that it is on the mother’s imaginary that the subjective structure of the child will depend”.³⁷ In other words, in cases of psychosis in general and of early childhood autism in particular, when the signifier “Name-of-the-Father” is foreclosed the subject finds himself to be assigned to the place of the mother’s “object”. “The child *realizes* the presence of what Jacques Lacan designates as the *objet a* in fantasy”³⁸ of the maternal Other, not separated from the other.

33 J. Lacan, “La logique du fantasme”, seminar of 19 April 1967 (unpublished).

34 J. Lacan, *The Seminar Book III, The Psychoses*, Norton, New York, 1993, p. 89.

35 J. Lacan, *The Seminar Book III, op. cit.*, pp. 92-3.

36 S. Freud, “On Narcissism”, *op. cit.*, 14:77.

37 J. Lacan, “La logique du fantasme”, seminar of November 16, 1966 (unpublished).

38 “Note on the Child”, *Analysis* 2 (1990), 7.

As J.-A. Miller emphasizes in his presentation “Supplément topologique à la question préliminaire [à tout traitement possible de la psychose]” 22 March 1979, one can say that “psychosis does . . . not exclude the sexual relation as impossible . . . Foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father is articulated with the inclusion of the sexual relation in so far as it is what language brings that is impossible. . . . Perhaps this is what Freud called autoerotism, a word invented by Havelock Ellis and Paul Nack from which Bleuler, out of concern for respectability, made this ‘bluelette’ of autism?”³⁹ J.-A. Miller continues, saying that from a topological point of view, and contrary to what a number of authors who would like “make autism the pinnacle of spherical imagery, . . . autism is to be situated . . . in relation to the a-sphere”.⁴⁰ Thus, it is “the schema . . . of the projective plane that seems [to me] . . . to best suit the structure of psychosis . . . in its two heterogeneous components of the Moebius strip and the spherical morsel . . . In this respect it is the other structures that are to be obtained by a cut . . . starting with the a-sphere, rather than the contrary.”⁴¹ He adds, “This is not something that is explicitly formulated by Lacan. It’s only . . . what I was led to after several attempts to transform this surface, that is, it seems to me simpler to consider this surface as the very surface on which the words of psychosis appear and by a cut to obtain the famous torus of neurosis that Lacan mentions as well as the figures he declares are destined to make the end of analysis graspable.”⁴²

From this perspective we can say with J.-A. Miller that “psychoanalysis is a forcing of autism”, the autism of the a-sphere, “owing to language, a forcing of the One, the One of jouissance owing to the Other of language”,⁴³ for the a-sphere, as J.-A. Miller stresses, is also the topological figure of fantasy.⁴⁴

Translated by Russell Grigg

39 J.-A. Miller, “Supplément topologique à la ‘Question préliminaire’”, *Lettre de L’École Freudienne de Paris*, September 27, 1979, p. 137.

40 *Ibid.*

41 *Ibid.*, p. 136.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 138.

43 J.-A. Miller, “L’orientation lacanienne”, lecture given at the Department of Psychoanalysis, University of Paris VIII, “Le lieu et le lien”, June 6, 2001 (unpublished).

44 Cf. J. Lacan, Seminar of January 19, 1962, “L’Identification”, and the Seminar of November 16, 1966, “La logique du fantasme”.

Vilma Coccoz

A Place in the World

Space and time

In *New Introductory Lectures On Psychoanalysis*, Freud maintains that one of the consequences of the discovery of the psychic agency of the Id, inferred from the agency of the death drive in subjectivity, would be the quaking of the rational pillars of the Kantian categories of space and time. Given the conceptual conquest of Lacan's lessons concerning the speaking being's two dimensions of existence, Freud's intuition is impressive. The action of the signifier and its structuring within discourse make possible the symbolization of space, as is shown by the fact that every language makes the distinction between here and there, near and far, etc., distinctions of zones, of *topoi*, of places that are essential to the structuring of subjectivity in that they render the functioning of the reality principle and the regulation of the body possible.

This construction of the psychic apparatus (in Freudian terms), or the structuring of subjectivity (according to Lacan), depends on the institution of the place of the Other, without which the dimension of otherness, constitutive of existence, would not exist. The intimate and that which is proper to the other, interior and exterior, is thus instituted, even though this bears the paradox, essential to the speaking being, of perceiving that one inhabits a singular world, in which what is most intimate can appear to be most foreign, since this is how one perceives the manifestations of the unconscious. Dreams that unfold on an Other scene, "Freudian" slips – things that are usually followed by denial: "That is not what I meant to say" testify to this, making it obvious that the ego is not the master in its own house.

And what can be said about time? We would have no notion of temporality if the action of verbs was not accompanied by a temporal conjugation through which the facts of the past, present and future are ordered, even though the signification of events also depends on the subjectivization of time. But the facts of the unconscious also transform this order, as is demonstrated by symptoms, which manifest a systematic feature, characterized by the expression that accompanies its repetition: "The same thing always happens to me."

The reality of the unconscious assumes that the spatio-temporal coordinates that function in the field of the Other¹ call for a subtle and complex process of subjectivization, and demands that one take into account more elaborated notions of time and space than those offered to us by consciousness.

From a psychoanalytic point of view, these two notions are linked to the doctrine of the subject elaborated by Jacques Lacan, based on the study of the effect of the action of the signifier in the facts of the unconscious, postulated by Freud. Thanks to Lacan, we can see that language produces, within the facts of discourse, effects of meaning or of signification and libidinal effects or satisfaction. Psychoanalytic experience with the neuroses has contributed to the deepening of these two realities (meaning and satisfaction) in the structure of the symptom: first what does the symptom mean? And then, what purpose does it serve?

1 Over the course of Lacan's teaching the function of the Other is enumerated under different forms.

Within the domain of meaning, the subject finds the temporal logic which orders his or her symptom in relationship with the line of his or her history, which has been woven with the thread of desire, giving place to the inscription of a repetitive matrix of unconscious representations. The traces of *what has been seen and heard*² leave their mark, and through the action of repression, reorganize themselves into different chapters; they are the pages of subjective history, written without the consent of consciousness, from encounters and fundamental losses. Its ordering into a diachronic system supposes that the unconscious is constituted as an Other place, as an Other psychic scene whose functioning responds to a retroactive temporality (of differed action), as is illustrated by the very structure of the sentence: we must wait for a punctuation to gain access to meaning. Certain events can change the course of an existence, but only in relation to value; the meaning they acquire in the unconscious and their effect on identifications which, linked to desire, give a consistency to being, an illusion of permanence, as when one says things like, “That’s how I am.”

On the other hand, the libidinal field of the symptom seems to escape time, taking over life with a paradoxical satisfaction that Freud described with the metaphor of an immortal germ. This germ, the signifier, inserts itself in our passage between life and death, revealing the effect of an agency beyond the pleasure principle that contravenes the principles of adaptation and well-being, often working against them, but without whose taking into consideration we could not understand what we call life (which takes place in space and in time), nor neurotic subjectivity, nor the experience of delirious subject.

In psychoses

Because of a symbolic lack in the ordering of subjectivity, in psychoses the two dimensions of space and time are closely related to serious disturbances in the order of meaning and in the dimension of satisfaction. President Schreber shows this in his *Memoirs of my Nervous Illness* when he describes his psychotic breakdown as the “catastrophe that has befallen the Order of the Universe” and the “moment when the clocks of the world stopped”; he discovers nothing “that could confirm the idea that a great hole in time was dug into the history of humanity,” nor can he refuse to recognize that, “from the outside, everything seems to continue to be, as in the past.” He is thus able to designate the explosion of the spatio-temporal coordinates of the subject, while still admitting that these coordinates continue to organize the world that surrounds him. This exceptional paranoiac also teaches us about his imperious need to restore spatio-temporal order in his delirium. In it, he distinguishes the configuration of the “antechambers of the sky”, the place of a superior god and an inferior one and an interconnection of the “divine rays” with his brain, thus drawing a neo-space in which to live with a body whose functioning had exploded, and a new temporality from the certitude, he claimed, of having read the news of his own death in the papers.

It is more difficult to situate outbursts in the clinical practice with infantile psychoses, and this is why we must be attentive to discontinuities, to ruptures that are recounted to us by those who speak of their patients. Ordinarily, we find events that mark a before and an after, even though there are also reports describing a strange continuity in the life of the child: “it was always like this, he was always different”, they say. All accounts, from that of Melanie Klein, who, in 1925, was the first to treat a psychotic child, to those of today, reflect the effect in the behavior of these children of disorders in the two dimensions and its correlation with the absence of the constitution of the ego and the body, which requires the tracing of limits, a “cartography of the body”, to use Monique Kusnierek’s expression, in order to be able to function in reality.

2 According to Freud’s terms.

From the point of view of psychoanalysis, the psychotic phenomena indicating disturbances of space and time are not considered as functional deficits, but as the effect, in both cases, of a symbolic lack in the structure that affects the order of meaning and also of satisfaction. This generally produces disorders within the entourage, which finds itself confronted with enigmatic manifestations of language or with extravagant behavior that implies strange or deadly pleasures. We must begin from the consideration that we are brothers; they too are the sons of *logos*. Our existence as speakers imposes on us the obligation to govern our life in harmony with a structure, that of language, where temporal signification and the distinction between places is necessary in order to inhabit our house, the house of being, which is that of discourse. We recognize that these subjects are outside of discourse, but also that they are constantly working to find accommodation in the structure from which they seem exiled, and we propose to accompany them in their effort to find a place in the world.

The introduction to Juan

Juan started coming to see me three years ago, oriented by the psychologist responsible for his stimulation therapy, underscoring his language difficulties, the absence of personal pronouns and a series of stereotypical repetitions.

His parents informed me of the difficult conditions of his birth: during the sixth month of pregnancy, they were told that the fetus was not growing because of an excess of amniotic fluid and, while during the seventh month the danger of dwarfism was ruled out, the mother's anxiety did not diminish. Due to fetal suffering, Juan was born through caesarian section, at thirty-five weeks. He spent the first hours of his life in ICU and the first two months in an incubator. During exams doctors found a left parieto-occipitale parenchymatic hemorrhage, and although the clot was absorbed, they predicted lesional aftereffects. At five months he underwent surgery for an inguinal hernia. Very quickly doctors detected a bilateral Babinski reflex and a spastic activity for which he was prescribed stimulation therapy. At eight years old he was prescribed glasses to correct his cross-eyes. Because of a psychomotor slowness, the clubfoot and excess muscle tension, he underwent physical therapy during which he began to walk. When he was one year old, he was administered a toxin in the framework of an experimental treatment program for correcting his convergent strabismus.

In the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, Freud proposes that the sudden appearance of thought in a child takes place under the stimulant of a threat to his or her conditions of existence. The child begins to work out his or her first theories from the question "where do children come from?" in the urgency represented by the possible appearance of another who will take his or her place. This question is only the translation of another question: "What desire led to my birth?" Thanks to the responses fabricated by the child, he achieves the symbolization of his origin in a non-anonymous desire, which enables the child to find a place in the chain of generations, a symbolic filiation. But what happens when a tiny body newly born, after having been subjected to a fetal suffering, is assailed by an organic sensation, a pain or a real trauma that prevents the functioning of a limit, of a psychic defense or a sphincter with which to battle the constant presence of that which never ceases? What ravages can be produced by the fact that the child is unable to find a compass in "the semantic atmosphere of his entourage, made of desire and meaning, as vital as air", to use Antonio Di Ciaccia's expression? The primary symbolic alternation, which regulates presence and absence, the foundation of the pleasure principle and the germ of the psychic apparatus, does not always take place: the mother, the breast, night, day "at one moment is there, and at the next is no longer there." The symbolic space-time embryo will then be seriously compromised, leaving the child in a singular atemporality, in a kind of eternal present without a subject, preventing the distribution of his experience on symbolic, imaginary and real registers, making the act of speech and the subjectivization of the body impossible.

The symbolization of places and the constitution of the Other

Juan's first task was to try to produce this symbolic alternation from his choices of foam-rubber numbers that were there for him during our first meeting; books, letters and toys did not interest him. For a time, the only link between us was a game where Juan took the numbers out of a sack one by one while naming them and waiting for my approval. Apart from this, like a puppet on a string, he would run frenetically through the corridor over and over again while hitting tokens or a yellow car to the point of hurting himself. The blows were accompanied by rhythmic sounds rising in a crescendo and ending, sometimes, in cries and screams. I remained in the frame of mind defined by Virginia Baio as "attentively distracted" because I had detected the potentially persecuting character of a direct look or a question addressed to him, and I intervened only to prevent him from hurting himself.

Little by little, the spaces of my house became an outline in which certain places would be distinguished. With effort, Juan began to design a topology: first, the discovery of a yellow curtain that symbolized the final limit of his trajectory enabled him to situate the outside space. Upon his return, after having left all of the doors he crossed open and all of the lights lit up, he exclaimed, "I saw the yellow curtains!" During these feverish journeys, a prolonged stay in one of the toilets was discernible, attracting my attention to what had stopped his *ritornello*. The contrast between different spaces began to be drawn: there were moments of silence in the spaces of the toilet and my office. During vacation, his parents started to teach him how to control his sphincter

The creation of the void is essential to the production of thought and of culture, as François Cheng has shown, following on Lacan, in his analysis of Taoist thought. For Juan, the creation of the void had important consequences: the functioning of the sphincter made possible the use of the personal pronoun, a correct verbal conjugation and the introduction of absence in the set of numbers. Juan began to take them away with him so that, when he asked for them, he might joyfully receive the response that they were not there. The game was thus enriched with a new alternative: to the "is-is not" of the beginning was added the "is there-is not there". He also undertook a curious transfer of the numbers to the corridor area, from where one could hear bits of songs in which the numbers appeared. During this period, not only did he leave me closed in my office, but in darkness, coming in from time to time to verify that I had not moved.

In this way, his little world began to take on an order, distinguishing his house, mine, his grand-parents', his school, by referring to the number on the door; later he would do the same with license plate numbers, telephone numbers, showing a capacity for memory such that he could cite the numbers backwards. This step was accompanied by demonstrations of his exploits: he would jump, climb, get down, lift a leg placing his arm on the ground: "Look at what I am doing!" he exclaimed proudly. The effect of the partial incorporation of the structure was the constitution of a rudimentary ego and a beginning of subjectivization of the body. Juan, who up until recently had shown himself to be fragile, frightened and not very adventurous, was showing physical prowess, which he accompanied with threats like "I am going to punch you! I am going to kick you!", while his face lit up with joy.

The consistency of ego identifications presumes a subjectivization of the sex which requires a complicated process because there is first an anatomical determination of the sexes; second, the representations of the masculine and the feminine in the speech of the Other, from which certain imitations come to the subject; third, the unconscious identification that operates in a specific way for each of us, the subjective choice of sex. The psychotic, who does not have at his or her disposal the symbol that writes the sexual difference, the phallus, has great difficulty with this psychic process and therefore must find a solution, an artifice, a suppletory device in order to cover for this symbolic lack. Juan first tried to apprehend it in an imaginary, transitive identification with me. One day he went to the bathroom and came back with his pants down and

one of my necklaces on his head, and exclaimed, “Vilma, I put it on my head”, then coming close to me and touching the necklace that I was wearing, he said, “This is my necklace”. The aggressive tension of the specular identification made itself felt in the moments that he threw about and trampled whatever he found in my office, hitting objects with the necklace that little by little lost its beads before, one day, disappearing. During this period, his work with numbers was peopled with zeros to which he added letters that present the hole in front and the hole behind (the p and the q, the b and the d).

The strident humming in the hallway was little by little replaced with long murmured speeches. One day, he delivered a tirade clearly meant for me to which I responded that I hadn’t understood anything, which pleased him and this became a game. We know the benefits brought about by the fact of not being transparent to the Other, because this situates a very precious place, the place of intimacy.

His chatty constructions began with “I had . . . (whisper) five, it’s wonderful . . . (whisper) they were happy and they ate partridge” or “A turn of the key and I am through”. This made evident the broken chain³ and, at the same time, in the structure of the sentence and in the function of punctuation, one distinguished the requirement of an order to bring out the meaning. The dimension of meaning showed itself to be affected by the lack of a symbolic element enabling the attachment of the significations, which, as a result, seemed to be suspended. The neurotic is equipped with a “standard” attachment, to use Eric Laurent’s term, the Oedipus complex, which makes up the symbolic thread of the humanization of desire. But the psychotic, not equipped with the signifier of the Name-of-the-Father, which orders the chain instituting a place within generations, works at making a name for himself in order to create an ego: the function of the ego that fixes the field of meaning with stable and ordered significations, which enable him or her to situate his or her place in the symbolic ensemble, that is, obtain a reunification of the elements that seem dispersed.

Once he came looking for me, took me by the hand so I would follow the same path he had been following alone, and he closed himself up in one of the rooms where there were signs of an infantile presence, leaving me outside. It was the prelude to an important step. Step by step he was indicating to me what I should do with his very precise orders using an imperious tone that rejoiced him: “come in”, “go out”, “sit down”, “go this way”, etc., all the while naming things that drew his attention. Sometimes he left me standing and came back just as quickly with a new order, principally that I should go to the room at the back where he was practicing alternating one after the other while closing the door, “now you”, “me next”. The tissue of the fragile link he was forging, little by little, was broken when he was faced with his powerlessness to fill the symbolic lack, or with events that threw it into relief.

Then, although in an attenuated form, he would return to his frenetic behavior of turning the lights on and off, of opening and closing doors, or of noisily clapping his hands. One day he had an accident at school and had to have stitches, which provoked a marked disconnection. He spent a long time in the bathroom with the faucet open, while digging in his nose in order to make it bleed. The symbolic lack of castration for the psychotic sometimes determines an attempt at mutilation in the real of the body, like an attempt to separate oneself from something excessive and mortifying that torments him, to create a fundamental loss in order to support subjectivity. Desire is lack, profound lack, according to Spinoza it is the very essence of man and for that reason lack takes on a vital importance for subjective balance. The suffering of this child was patent when he would throw himself on the couch, moaning, “Help, help!”.

3 This is how Lacan conceptualizes the disturbance of signification in psychosis: the chain does not function according to retroaction and meaning appears to be suspended.

The first page of his story

I then decided to make a construction for Juan in the back room where he had established a game: he pretended to scare me as I entered, asked me to cover myself with a blanket and then made me disappear by pulling on the edges. When he tried to fold himself under me, as if simulating childbirth, I spoke to him about the difficult conditions of his birth, his illness, the traumatic separation with his parents, his stay in the incubator, where he would have liked to have cried “Help, help!” without being able to because he was a baby, and of his wish to ask that the light be turned off. From that moment on, at each session, he would ask me to speak to him about when he was a tiny baby, asking for details while, like a baby, he would whirl around, jump on the bed, lie on his stomach and on his back, kick into the air, while playing. After a time, he turned his interest elsewhere, toward the windows of the house that look onto an interior courtyard where there is an elevator. After this came a long period during which nothing distracted him from the “elevators”, the use of the plural explained by the lack of the signifier that unites the two movements. For Juan, there were effectively two elevators, one that went up and one that went down, although he had once specified that the third (the one in my office) was one.

This research went along with a long round of questions about the possibility of falling into the hole of the elevator. The lack of the phallic signifier, which gives the most intimate feeling of life according to Lacan, precipitated Juan toward the hole, where the action of the death drive attracted him like a magnet. “And if I fall and kill myself?” he would ask me. Thanks to transference, he maintained a dialogue with me about all of the possibilities offered by this hole. Thus, he had the occasion to introduce significations of life, and I was able to show my trenchant refusal of his possible death. For example, if he asked if he could go down that way, I responded that he had to be careful because it was dangerous; he came up with solutions: jumping from window to window, using a rope. The exchange was sometimes interrupted by strong blows on the window, or exclamations like “Open Sesame!”, or by insults addressed to a real, hallucinatory presence.

But this exercise was enriched each time with new hypotheses like, “And if I fall when being careful and not being careful?”; “And if I fall up and down?”; “And if I fall without danger?” This was a difficult dialectical attempt, and I was not always capable of responding, opting to affirm the possibility of its being said, “Hmm, fall up”. This was such a success that he began to haphazardly evoke the possible falling of all the objects he could see, and even had a presentiment of mine. So, he classed the floors by numbering them, from first to zero, supposing that the series of negatives continued from the floor (where he placed the limit from which he situated the -1). “You want to fall here” he told me, in a testing of desire. “No” I responded to him. “And me?” “Neither do you”, which was followed by a loving expression, throwing me kisses, signs of love with which he is not usually generous. After, he told me, radiant: “Listen to what I am going to tell you” and he told me a fantasy in which he had climbed from floor 0 to the sixth with a ladder. This phase ended with an incorporation of the meanings of life, death and danger, but without sexual signification, as was shown by his avowal that he was obliged to touch himself. “I have to do it!” he said desperately “because my willy makes noise.” After having asked me several times to lift him so he could see the elevator hole and verify the order of the floors and of the ground, he made a sign that I should put him down and returned to his research. This is how his fascination for the windows diminished, until one day he said, “Can we play something?”.

Places and relations

There were toys in his bag that he had been totally indifferent to up until then. The discovery of a group of Dalmatians, which he called the father, the mother, the middle one and the very small one, conveyed

another aspect of his symbolic work: by pushing these figures around he displaced his interest for falling in the hole to sliding on the left hand side of my armchair, where he had placed an imaginary toboggan with which, one by one, the Dalmatians fell happily. Sometimes the sessions were commotion between the window, the Dalmatians, the numbers and letters, interspersed with cries of powerlessness where he threw everything about, and pinching me. Once, he sat down in front of me and said, “Vilma, I want to be here.”

The group of Dalmatians, whose tails he soon removed, appeared as a primary symbolic chain of relationships. First, the very small one threw the others around with great pleasure, next he went to write his name with Vilma, and upon his return, he threw the others around; he had to throw the others out in order to get a place for himself, then, exhausted, he rested. During a period that followed, he took care of the father and mother; while the youngsters slept they went for walks, they fought, one trampled on the other, they fell, etc. Sometimes he put them all in a line, “watching a birth”. We can see the passage from visual hallucination – which he tried to stop by hitting against the window, sometimes with his glasses – to the action of looking, which is linked to a chain of characters. He crowned this operation with the formation of the word *Lucky* and with the story of what he found in the books at his disposal, calling for my attention with “Listen!”. A few days later, he proudly showed me his clothes, soliciting my gaze. The work with the Dalmatians continued until one day sexual difference intervened in the following way: the mother went into the father’s bathroom and vice versa. “What are you doing in my bathroom?” he asked me to repeat, “And what are you doing in mine?” and vice versa. “What confusion! This cannot be!” he declared. But the solution did not come and he ended by throwing the Dalmatians on the ground. At this point, he formulated the problem that was bothering him; first he formed the letters *se*, then *es*, and then *deseo*.

The desire to desire

Later, he sat down in front of me and asked me to speak to him about his birth, about when he was sick. He listened attentively and added that what had happened was that he had been wounded. This is fundamental if we take into account that his mother had told me that he was touching his willy in order to wound himself. Another time, after having asked me to tell the story of his birth, he told me that sometimes the nurses turned off the light, and since I heard him stammer, “the ceiling”, I told him that when he was in the incubator, he would look at the ceiling while waiting for the light to turn off. The conclusion to this problem came the day that he asked me what the chain hanging from the lamp was for. I responded “to turn it on” and he added, “and to turn it off”. At this point, the repetitive turning off and turning on, and opening and closing stopped. Turning his back to me, he placed letters, forming the word *sonic*, then *aseos*.⁴ He sang to himself, “The road to liberty with a true friend.” That he was seeking a solution for his sexed being became evident in the following conversation: “Do you have a willy?”, “No”, “Why not?”, “Because I am a girl”. “Are you wearing a skirt?”, “Yes”, “Me, I have pants on”, “Of course, because you are a boy”, “Yes, a mister.” Between whispers he told the tale of Alladin and exclaimed, “You see what it is like to feel like a boy! I am getting what I want.” After, he revealed that the middle Dalmatian, which evidently represents me, was sitting down and is a girl. But this unrelenting work was becoming fruitless. He suspended it for a time, taking up the numbers again, as if this enabled him to find a very necessary calm and order. Let us not forget that his work on the construction of the Other had unfolded this way, from numbers that established an order in the real. The day that he asked for the Dalmatians again, he found a fifth, even smaller one by digging in the sack. Thrilled: “He’s been born!” he told me, as well as his father. With these five elements he tried out all the possible combinations, places, but was unable to come to a conclusion...

Much later he asked me: “Vilma, make a million wishes!” I did and he replied, “no it can’t be, that doesn’t

work!”. “You cannot have a million wishes, but a few, yes” I told him, to which he responded, “Yes, some yes, and others, no.” He placed the letters *a*, *b*, *c*, *d* in order and told me that the *a* was *Visionlab*, the second, *I want*, the third, *Australia*, and the fourth *Italy*. He therefore established a game: “Which one do you want?” “The *d*” or “the *c*”. Although he responded, “Okay”, he complained that I always made the same choice (*c* and *d*), while he chose *b*, as if he was trying to engrave the function of desire into his soul.

He formed the word *sonic*, bending himself over like a Muslim in front of this signifier, putting it in contact with his head, then he got up and read a tale from the beginning to the end with excellent intonation and punctuation.

The seriousness with which this child undertook this work is admirable. Juan was able to incorporate a topological dimension, witnessed to by the fact that he no longer had to go to the bathroom in order to reunite with his anal sphincter. This is also borne out by the fact that his life was ordered by a weekly routine of sessions, school, visits, and that the time of the Other was recognized and allowed for in the structure of his tales. As was his acceptance of the symbolization of anatomical sexual difference in the field of discourse by consenting to the semblance of boyhood and to the urinary distribution that governs life in society. What remains unclear is why the construction of his birth was not sufficient. He has only written one page of his subjective history and the others are waiting to be stapled together, for a symbolic solution for his sexual identity in which space and time join together. Juan expresses this difficulty in a sentence with Heideggerian undertones: “I am a real mess” – he told me – “there where nothing is something”.

Translated by Vivian Rehberg

4 Personal care products.

Jean-Robert Rabanel

The Paths of Interpretation

Aurélien was thirteen years old when he was admitted to the institution where I work ; he already had a long pathological and institutional case history. Aurélien's ten-year-long treatment took place in two parts with an interruption of two years.

At the junction of the hysteric's discourse and the discourse of science

The first assessment, after a three-month observation period, can be summed up as follows: violence is at the forefront. There are many clastic crises, real rage attacks where Aurélien rolls on the floor, tears his clothes, throws and breaks objects within his reach. Aurélien bites his arms and hands. He scratches himself and tears his hair out. He hits himself violently. At other times, violence is directed against others in the same way, and it is rare that he physically approaches others without a barrage of blows. Turbulence is constant. He runs and gesticulates in a disorganized way. The absence of words is complete. Only shouts and growls can be heard.

A few taps on my back, that I felt were more signs of recognition than aggressive gestures, made me decide to see Aurélien in my office in order to undertake work with him; work that took place, to begin with, during the first two years of his stay.

Aurélien immediately had to do with the Other of science for whom the subject is foreclosed. Rejected from maternal desire, Aurélien is no longer in the place of lack, but becomes a reject in the reality of his organic troubles. Considered by his father as an object of science, he is only represented by him by the signifiers of this discourse. This is how Aurélien finds himself located where the subjective positions of his father and mother are articulated, at the junction of the two discourses that Lacan situates as being close: the hysteric's discourse and the discourse of science. This conjunction of circumstances is the most favorable for a child to be taken in to the maternal fantasy.

The curtain as subjectivating instrument

Right away, Aurélien comes in protecting his head behind his folded arm, as if I was going to beat him. I tell him that is not at all what this is about between us, and I turn my back to him in order to sit down at the other end of the room, thus respecting the distance he imposes on me and refusing him, silently, my gaze which he has difficulty sustaining.

This subtraction pacifies him. This is the mode we have found, for the moment, that fits our relationship.

Aurélien systematically sits on the couch. He puts a pillow on his head, plays with it, laughs, extends a hand in my direction. When I hide my gaze behind a magazine, in order to follow the scene, he comes close to me and puts his fingers in his eyes, all the while disengaging my face from behind this screen.

The sessions are calm now and Aurélien does not hide his pleasure in coming, he shows impatience. He appears by surprise in my office, sometimes pushing a comrade in first.

He reduces the distance that he modulates, vaguely with his hand.

During a session, he crouches behind my chair and covers his head with the curtain, laughs and makes babbling sounds while his hand seems to be telling me what I am supposed to do.

Curtain on his head, hand held out keeping me at a distance, I will translate this by the matheme: S_1a looking for an $S_2 \text{ } \S$ (barred S).

This mathema will be the model of our relations. He will export this to the institution where he is staying. Then comes a long apprenticeship of social rapports. Aurélien does not hit anymore, or very rarely so. This positively impresses his family circle, mainly his parents. He walks around draped. His gaze becomes expressive. He does not break windows anymore. Moreover he lets others go by. One even forgets about him. He is better accepted.

During one session, he puts me in my chair and, while he is lying on the couch, he pulls me towards him to look into my eyes, for the first time, nicely; then suddenly he gets up, and wipes a tear from Freud's face on the cover of an issue of *L'Âne*.

His mother then tells me that Aurélien has been playing a game of hiding behind a curtain for quite a while. He once even said a few words.

His visits with his family are going better and better. Aurélien is affectionate with his mother, who, radiant, can accept – with caution – investing in this child, who she now finds touching.

Aurélien has become a presentable subject. How could it be otherwise, he who now walks around during the session with a book on his head to show that he is a cultivated being. Better yet, he regularly lets his turn go by in sessions and becomes second in a series, just like in a family.

This sequence raises a question. There is a difference between the subject identified to a Real Other who agrees to a kind of law, accepting the order of series. His language is not as closed as it had been. The rapport of the subject to the signifier has been modified. A certain unfreezing of the holophrased signifier has been obtained. His relationship to his own body has changed. It is to the subtraction of jouissance (gaze and voice) in the real, that I attribute these effects, as well as to a new dialectical rapport with the parents, thanks to the discussions I had with them which permitted me to give him back parts of his reconstituted story.

The signifier curtain, as a signifier alone, is an insignia of the subject. Aurélien takes hold of this S_1 , as insignia, in order to make it function like a screen in order to negate the object gaze in the real. Yet the screen is not a signifier. The process stops there. Aurélien is not represented by a signifier. The identification is at an impasse here and the subject ends up in the place of the object of fantasy.

For instance, during a vacation, a telephone call from his father suffices to trigger, as a response, a comital crisis, without electric translation. A kind of imitation of the aphanisis of the subject where he is sent, not under the bar, but in the real of an absence.

This kind of response, as an indication of a specific modality of this subject's jouissance, is to be linked with other crises that the parents told me about afterwards. Aurélien, at two years old, during his insomniac periods, at home, would scream in his father's arms, his body in opistotonos, his eyes rolling upwards, his mother next to him trying to silence his screams so as not to disturb the neighbors, his father waiting anxiously for the return of his child's absent gaze.

Aurélien's stay was interrupted because of a reduction in the institution's activity. It was taken up again two years later.

In the meantime, Aurélien had been in other institutions in which neuroleptics were given. When he came back, he was 17 years old. The interruption of treatment had worsened the troubles. Whereas the first part of his treatment showed an attempt to construct an Other a little less real, from the S_1 – the curtain, like a subjectivating instrument; the second phase indicated a questioning of this direction.

The blanket as an added organ

This stay was marked by a four-year stabilizing period, on another mode, before two *passages à l'acte* on the analyst, with a year between them. When he came back, Aurélien settled into a sort of ritualization of his behavior. He imposed his habits. His rapport to speech is always colored by the fact that there is only one word he pronounces clearly: no.

On the other hand, we have made a little progress ourselves, in considering some of his ways of acting. For instance, the very particular use he makes of the blanket that he has substituted for the curtain, as if it were facts of writing. We have learned to recognize certain ways he uses the blanket, not so much as a signifier, insignia of the subject, but more like a letter. Not as a signifier coming in place of something else, but as an object in the place of nothing. We got interested in the drape.

We considered the blanket, following Eric Laurent's indication, as a supplementary organ.

The blanket that we so respected would become the crystallization point of a conflict between the mother and the institution.

Aurélien's mother, as "the only person" able to take that blanket from her son without provoking a clastic crisis, would not admit that it was impossible for us, in the institution, to do the same.

Dirty blanket, unshaven chin, uncombed hair – now it is the way Aurélien looks that, far from satisfying her maternal demands, disquiets her. In particular, the reports on his sexual activity.

The master-dog

It is in this context that a second identification, canine, devastating, that – contrary to the first (curtain) pacifying behavior – would lead to the end of the psychiatric treatment, Aurélien then refusing to cooperate.

An educator found himself placed in the position of a master-dog that Aurélien obeyed to the letter, like a dog trained to attack.

During that period, Aurélien posed some problems when it was time to go to a session. Sometimes he would go to his room to masturbate. Other times he would be half-prone on the window-sill, accross the street from the analytic center dominating the scene with his gaze.

What is the status of these hesitations, belonging less to the indetermination of desire than to the choice of the position of the subject as object of the Other's jouissance?

Going in to a session marked, for this subject, a break from his normal habits. The action of the accompanist has the meaning of bringing the subject towards the ordeal of separation, which is not without risking a *passage à l'acte*.

The two *passages à l'acte* on the analyst (the first, a bite on the right wrist; the second, a bite on the left cheek) were very instructive.

Following the first *passage à l'acte*, it was obvious, like a real discovery concerning the subject, taking into account expressions that make one think of mentism activity, attesting to the fact that the subject is prey to language, certainly, without being directed by the phallic function. He is not without language, in his defense, from *jouissance*.

In addition to phenomena of rudimentary mentism, there are also some bursts of voice sounds, sighs, intonations of exasperation.

The strict symmetry of the teethmarks on the right, in relation to the watch on the left, but inverted in terms of relief, underlines how, in his encounter with the Thing, Aurélien only has at his disposition the signifier alone and that he operates from the image (the watch), that he tries to negate in the real on the other.

The *passage à l'acte*, if it is aimed at *jouissance*, is not the demonstration of a *jouissance* in biting that is to be forbidden. In the *passage à l'acte*, the subject mobilizes what he has in relation to the signifier. It is a defense against the eruption of *jouissance* that we are working with.

We could thus deduct that the rapport of the subject to the signifier, his operation from the image and the signifier alone, for trying to construct a signifier that would permit solving the problem of separation, on the one hand. And on the other, a rapport to the image of the specular body, meaning, in the case of this subject, to the same.

Following the two *passages à l'acte*, I learned that the mother, very irritated by the institution, was looking for an institution that could take her son “for life”, and thought she had found one in Morlaix. Signifier alone that bursts onto the scene, support for a new super ego [sur moiïque] identification, ravaging.

It is in the usage of what there is left of control, in order to ward off attacks, telling him to “lie down” accompanied by a gesture of the hand, index pointing towards the floor, that we can localize *jouissance*, and he stops.

Subjective transpositions

What we are confronted with in analytical practice is not so much raw irruptions of *jouissance*, as the defenses the subject uses faced with *jouissance*. That is why, in our effort to renew the differential clinic of psychosis, from the signifier alone, we propose to consider three subjective positions, as means of defense in relation to *jouissance*, to characterize three solutions for the symptoms.

THE AUTISTIC SOLUTION would be to protect oneself from *jouissance* by redoubling the S_1 alone. Not an S_1 that splits in two, like a signifier, but like an imaginary that redoubles, without separation (S_1S_1).

THE SCHIZOPHRENIC SOLUTION would be to protect oneself from *jouissance* by the repetition of the signifier alone. The difference between redoubling and repetition here opens the question of the temporality proper to these two solutions ($S_1S_1S_1\dots$).

THE PARANOIAC SOLUTION would be to protect oneself from *jouissance* by the articulation of the S_1 to the imaginary signifier of delirium (S_1-S_1).

As a contribution to this psychoanalytic clinical treatment of psychoses, constructed from the signifier alone, in an article in *La Petite Girafe* n°8, I used two clinical cases to point out the distinction between

two choices in psychosis: one for the articulation to S_2 and one that can do without S_2 for treating jouissance.

In the course of his two periods of treatment, Aurélien took both paths in succession.

The statute of interpretation was thus modified.

1) saying no, subtraction of jouissance, and giving reconstructed elements of his history, during the first period marked by the attempt to install an Other a little less real.

2) construction by manipulating the letter, during the second period, still without this treatment protecting him sufficiently against the sudden appearance of the S_1 Morlaix, that he can only duplicate in the real, during the two *passages à l'acte*.

It is only if this is taken as an invention of the subject that the analyst can be inspired in his interpretation and give him the order “lie down”, with the index finger of the hand pointing to the floor, that stops him.

The interpretation, beginning with jouissance, in so far as it aims at dissolving the symptom in the real, proposes to go in the opposite direction from that of the symptom. It introduces, through the psychoanalytical act, a tension between sense and real. In this case the direction of the arrow, the signifier alone as signal.

This point alone would allow opening a debate between tenants of the Teach method (training) and ourselves, with the handling of S_1 as a signal.

Aurélien, when he left our institution, was admitted to an Autisme–France establishment that applies the Teach method. He left three months later. The analytic discourse would have permitted him to live outside the framework of isolation, perhaps not definitively, but for eight years.

Let us underline, to conclude, the importance of the consideration of non-metric space for taking into account phenomena of reversal, out of sense, if I may say so, so constantly present in this case.

Each parent had their say. For the father, at the end of the first period: Aurélien is epileptic. For the mother, at the end of the second period: Aurélien is autistic.

Translated by Francesca Pollock and Sylvia Winter

Case Studies:
Psychosis with Transference

The Error of the Other

In the field of applied psychoanalysis in an institutional setting, one essential problem is the establishment of transference for the psychotic patient whereas, in the modern world, institutionalization is more and more generalized, creating growing discomfort. Several conditions are necessary to achieve this: that there be no programmed or pre-established response in ordinary discourse; that what makes the radical difference is supported and heard, that the subject not be pushed towards exclusion if segregation is not available; and that the subject be given the possibility to transmit the determinants – out of the ordinary, outside sense – that are fundamental to him. That is what gives access to well-assessed diagnosis and treatment; above all, this offers the subject the possibility of constructing what he needs to connect or re-connect with the Other, the social tie. The institution is a part of the master-discourse. To succeed in applying psychoanalysis there, the institution must be put in question incessantly; its constraints, and its participants – including its beneficiaries – so as to manage to “erase the institution from inside” (as Eric Laurent said in the session preparatory to the E.C.F. Study Days last September 14), and thus to be able to accept what is always a symptom there. The same afternoon, Marie-Hélène Brousse stated the three conditions needed for applied psychoanalysis: taking into account the nonexistence of the Other, the need for transference, and preferring the use of textual rather than referential knowledge. This implies that, in the institution, the analytical discourse can insert itself into other discourses that preside there and thus can allow for diversified practice— whether psychoanalysis is introduced into an existing institution or whether an institution is created from the analytical discourse itself.

A diagnostic requirement

Many clinical cases can present symptoms that are impressive in their expressivity, their gravity, or their break with so-called normality. Still, it is not always easy to bring out the pathognomonic signs of psychosis, in any case according to the demands of Lacan’s teachings. The case in question here does not include hallucinatory phenomena properly speaking, and there are no obvious language problems. It is hard to demonstrate psychosis from what the patient transmits to us in words, unless one is satisfied with the phenomenological diagnosis that other orientations would not hesitate to make. The question of delirium – in the sense of a delirious metaphorical elaboration – is not clear either. On the other hand, what is obvious is this subject’s determination to change his body, to make it change sex, or – in depressive crises – to try and make it disappear altogether in suicide attempts. The subject presents an unshakeable conviction, nearly a certainty, as to his sexual identity. He says he is neither a man, nor a homosexual, nor even a transsexual, and that all he wants to do is to reconstruct a body that will be as close as possible to the ideal of the feminine body. Unlike Schreber, he is not at all satisfied with a narcissistic transsexual jouissance, on the contrary he explicitly refuses the “transsexual type”, something now perfectly accepted by psychiatry and social discourse alike.

What is the status of the real body transformations? Do they take the place of an impossible delirium? What other kind of symptomatic construction, besides the delirious metaphor, does the subject use? To take up

what Lacan wrote in “Présentation des mémoires d’un névropathe”¹, it seems impossible for this subject to localize jouissance in a stable way in the locus of the Other, and thus to “pacify his being” through the work of the signifier. What is the status, for him, of that real “castration” that aims at avoiding the “being dropped” that the subject encounters continually? It is beginning with a body that realizes “this torn text”² where jouissance dismembers the body for not being outside it, that the subject tries to construct a symptom apparatus, to create a quilting point. But his perspective is ideal – and therefore impossible –, it introduces a constant fragility into all systems of this kind. It is precisely this unusual solution, essential, that engenders the unbearable of the symptom in the classic institution. We will see that this subject still calls on the institution as a last resort.

Neither man nor transsexual

When I met Miss B. she had made three attempts at suicide using medication over the previous weeks. Each time, she rapidly left the place she was hospitalized. This time, it was she who asked to be hospitalized because she felt depressed. This state followed her breakup with a friend several months before, but it also had to do with the fact that her sister had interrupted the project they had of living together. Miss B. lived alone at her parents’, inactive, feeling empty, an unbearable solitude, without any social connection. In fact she had intended to go back to the place she had just left, since she had acquired a privileged position there thanks to certain fascinating effects she exercised. But this is precisely the reason, the problems those effects created in the institution, that she was refused readmission. We, as a branch service, accepted her.

Miss B. is a transsexual. She was operated five years ago; since then, she has undergone thirty general anesthetics, forty different kinds of plastic surgery operations. She still has three to go before she is perfect. For her, it is just a matter of re-finding simple normality.

When I met her, she only admitted to the symptom of depression. She said she often felt an interior pain that prevented her from feeling real physical pain. That had made it possible for her to reduce the cost of much of her plastic surgery by doing without anesthesia. She presented herself as “too sensitive” a woman, and tried that way to integrate many of her symptoms into her feminine aspirations. Her studies led her to being an accountant, she was very interested in psychoanalysis, and she loved playing the piano. Since she had quickly understood the orientation of our service, Miss B. let us know that she did not wish to undertake psychotherapy for the moment, too difficult for her because she did not want to “shake things up”. We didn’t force her, and that made it possible for her to tell us a lot of her story. To begin with, she said she could not stand solitude, particularly the absence of her sister whom, as she put it, led her to “regressive states of her infantile solitude”. Sometimes she felt a little persecuted, even vindictive and sthenic, like when she once left the hospital against medical advice. Another patient accused her, rightly, of giving other patients benzodiazepines.

As to her story, she said she had always been an “object of humiliation” because of her feminine features. It was mostly her father, “great defender of virility”, who could not stand her femininity and insulted her repeatedly. When she was about five years old, she began to see the anatomical difference between herself and her sister, and from that time on she could never stand to see her own genitals in the mirror. She consulted a psychiatrist when she was 13 and having a problem with anorexia, but didn’t say anything to him about her sexuation problem, believing then that transsexualism was a serious fault, even a crime,

1 J. Lacan, “Présentation des mémoires d’un névropathe”, *Autres écrits*, Seuil, Paris, 2001, p. 214.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 215.

according to her interpretation of her father's reactions. Ever since she was small she had played with her sister at "acting as ladies" with a doll that she named. But she was 17 when she learned from her aunt that she had had a half-sister with that same first name, a half-sister from her mother's previous marriage and who had died in a fire at the family home. The mother herself had been seriously burned. Miss B. insisted that she had never heard anything about that before.

Already as an infant, she often loved her sisters' boyfriends, but most of the time she was jealous because she wanted the position they had with her sister.

When she was 20 she went to university, in economics. Since she couldn't stand solitude, she got some relief from a girlfriend who was not in very good shape herself. Soon afterwards, she decided on her corporal transformation. She went back to see the same psychiatrist, who responded to her request, told her what had to be done, and was supportive. Her parent sold their goods so as to help; she had a sex change at the age of 23.

Of the operation, which went very well, she said it was "just a formality". She was delighted, relieved, having become a normal, extraverted woman. Finally, she was not a transsexual anymore, she said, and she recognized herself in the mirror. The only problem left is legal, sometimes one has to recognize oneself legally as transsexual, but she manages with camouflage, even in the relations with men that she occasionally has with some success.

The mother's object of desire

After her many operations, having become, in fact, very feminine, very close to her ideal, her equilibrium was still very unstable. The slightest bodily imperfection, just like solitude, provoked impasse moments when she tended to make herself disappear. She did not manage to be the complete replacement of her dead sister for her mother. She did not manage to really reconstitute her mother's lost object of desire. The desire of the mother remained attached to the dead object embodied by her first daughter. Miss B. vacillated between trying to replace her and risking identifying with her, in death. The father had not diverted this mother-desire at all; his words had no effect.

In this context, one has to note in particular the importance of her living sister "her model always", her absolute model. Pretty, seductive, a fashion designer "creative assistant", she influenced Miss B., captured her through image and in thought. This sister has nothing extra, which permits her not to act as the lost object of desire. Moreover, she is not set on imperatively identifying with this object. She is, for Miss B. "what gives support . . . to the image . . . that attracts and captivates a certain libido of the subject"³ to constitute the sketch of her ego". Miss B. cannot stand being far from her. Each time, it is like an insurmountable abandonment, a letdown. I quote her: "I don't know how to live without my sister, all at once that triggers my death drive".

Her mother has been depressive for years, since Miss B.'s earliest childhood. She is very close to her, she says, she can read her thoughts, she "knows" her, Miss B. cannot get away from her. Yet this mother never makes a decision, she does nothing. Almost always lying down, she gets up to eat what her husband cooks for her. The father is very active. He does everything. He works, he keeps his wife alive, has saved Miss B. at least twice from her attempted suicides. Of course he loses his temper, he cannot stand his son's destiny but he agrees to everything these women ask of him. He is a hyperactive father, but shaky.

3 J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire Livre V, Les formations de l'inconscient*, Seuil, Paris, 1998, p. 225.

As we have seen, this subject does not decompensate in the classic sense, discontinuously. There is no delusion, no hallucinations. The set goal is the bodily sex change. This attempt at rigging [*appareillage*] is essential and necessary, but unstable. Miss B. is trying in this way to construct something that will protect her from the risks she runs due to foreclosure, but she does not manage to make a solid quilting point.

A conviction without intention

The question of applied psychoanalysis as therapy in institutions leads directly back to the problem of connecting, re-connecting with the Other, the social Other, that is to say to the question of the “symptom that is the social tie”⁴. We can see this in the cases developed at the *Conversation d’Arcachon*. I think it is judicious to compare the case of Miss B. with Hervé Castanet’s “A subject in the fog” but also with cases that show the logic of self-mutilation in psychosis.

The “Subject in the fog” has “an intention of signification”⁵ that he does not manage to utter. He does not have delusions, but he repeatedly disconnects from all social ties. Jacques-Alain Miller shows that there is a problem on the level of the Other; he shows that the guarantee is missing, or “the very foundation of the place of the Other”⁶, since the Name-of-the-Father is foreclosed. Above all, he indicates the unexpected character of the solution this subject tests for “getting around the void in the Other”⁷. He manages to avoid the void, but there are bothersome consequences at the level of the signified. He does not manage to produce a message, a signified, he cannot pad the intention of signification and this leaves the subject “in a fog”. Jacques-Alain Miller specifies that “that doesn’t become a part of his memory”, and that the patient remains in an “eternal present . . . with no vital project”⁸, because he has not been mortified by the signifier. So the Other has not been constituted, this excludes the social tie, that is to say the symptom Jacques-Alain Miller equates with the social tie as partner-symptom⁹.

What about Miss B. in relation to this case? She is not in a fog, she has certitude about the error of the Other, a body error – or, better, a body-image error faced with her first ego identifications. Yes, she does speak, but without an intention of signification. Rather, she has a conviction without intention, and she inscribes her signification directly in the body in order to short-circuit the Other of the signifier, the Other of the social tie, but linked directly with the intention of the primordial maternal Other. That is what makes possible the realization of this twisting of the relation signifier-real. The signification of the dead sister as the mother’s object of desire is a signification of the mother that nothing in the Other has managed to disturb. The mother is always “the first subject”, as she was in Oedipus’ time, when “the child began to take shape as *assujeter*”¹⁰. So that Other came to be in a way that allowed for a minimum of social relationship with her sister, her model – the rectifying surgeons of the Other, then the hospital staff, and finally myself, because I consented to hearing the effects of her certainty. That is what had the effect of reconnecting her to social projects and to leaving the hospital without repeating her attempts at suicide. The risk of suicide increased seriously when she was very near the end of her course of surgical transformation, when she was altogether alienated from it, and that offered her occasional social ties. This is when the separation mechanism that pushed her to suicide came to light, like the sudden appearance of jouissance

4 J.-A. Miller, *La conversation d’Arcachon*, Le Paon, Agalma, Paris, 1997, p. 193.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 190.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 191.

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Ibid.*, p. 192.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 193.

10 J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire Livre V, Les formations de l’inconscient, op. cit.*, p. 189.

when the subject loses his alienation to the incessant reiteration of the sharp inscription in the real of the body. Thus, in this case, we manage to restore the alienation phase in order to give separation phenomena their place as Jacques-Alain Miller stipulates¹¹.

An impossible separation

We are now getting to the question of the body and separation from an object. Jacques-Alain Miller has reminded us of the metaphor $a/-\phi$ “which, in neurosis, substitutes the object for $(-\phi)$ ”¹². In psychosis, the problem is precisely that inclusion of $(-\phi)$ in the object, because castration is not part of the symbolic and, consequently, repeats itself in the real. There is no memory. In psychosis, there is an appeal to castration in the form of real subtraction. The subject tries to separate from this persecuting object, an elementary phenomenon as it happens – the gaze, for example –, but that never works because castration does not follow. As Jacques-Alain Miller says: “the Freudian drive is represented by psychotic self-mutilation”¹³. It is not just any object that Miss B. separates from; it is the male genital, the penis. It is not an object whose function is inessential. But for her, that is “the error of the Other”, she shouldn’t have one. How can one avoid thinking of the third Oedipus moment and the coming to terms with one’s sex when Lacan says that to have or not to have, it has to have lacked, in one and the other sex¹⁴?

Of course this is all about the phallus and not the penis. But one can see how, in this case of psychosis, the subject cannot take or include $(-\phi)$ in the separation, and how, from that point on, he alienates himself into reiterating this separation from an organ that is not symbolic for him.

For this subject, resorting to castration, to the impossible quilting, goes by way of reaching out to the Other, to others, and in any case to those who are unwilling to silence what makes the symptom. This is all the more important in a world in which the nonexistence of the Other is without recourse and reinforces the fictitious, artificial character of a Name-of-the-Father that, among symptoms, quilts less and less. Still, it has to be endured, without claiming to have the answer, like that first psychiatrist who pushes the subject towards a reiterated realization. It is the same in an institution, everything has to happen in discourse, teaching, case presentations, and even guarded silence, in order to erase, even temporarily, the determinants of the master-discourse.

Translated by Sylvia Winter

11 J.-A. Miller, *La conversation d’Arcachon*, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 225.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 231.

14 J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire Livre V, Les formations de l’inconscient*, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

Marilyn: Sexuation and Delirious Suture

Freud, in the third chapter of his study of President Schreber's *Memorabilia of a Nerve Patient*, proposes the theory that delirium is the successful culmination of a patient's analytical work, whose finality is nothing less than reconstructing the subject's world, or repairing the loss of reality caused by the illness. According to Freud, it is through delirium that we confront the "creation of a new reality". In delirium there is, in fact, invention – in the sense of construction – and for the psychotic subject this includes a kind of healing.

We will present a case of applied psychoanalysis that illustrates the point where the inventive delirium of a sexuated identity will make it possible for a female subject to construct a suppletory device for the forclusive fault of sexuation brought up to date by psychosis.

A non-dupe of authority

I received this young woman several years ago at an institution where I was working. She came to denounce injustices of which she was a victim at her work. She wanted the whole world to know that the managerial people in the business where she worked were imposters – and even thieves. Consequently she was denouncing the semblant in the power position. She took me as witness to this denunciation. Lacan has said that every utterance of authority has enunciation as its sole guarantee. So our patient came to denounce the structural fault caused by the inconsistency of the Other; in this sense, she suffered from being a non-dupe of authority.

F. had just been fired when she came to us. She had come to France from a foreign country some years before and had the statute of political refugee. In Paris, she lived with her younger brother and her husband, twenty years her senior. Being a foreign woman in France had been, she said, a source of injustice and humiliation. In terms of work, she had not found a position in keeping with her acquired competencies and sanctioned by the many degrees in higher education she purported to have. She adamantly refused to express herself in French because she did not want to "alienate her identity", which would happen if she expressed herself correctly in a language not her own. For that reason, she found only manual work, jobs she considered degrading for an intellectual: she was confronted with this "unbearable humiliation of manual work" in her last job, from which she had just been fired. Finally her husband – probably because of the fatigue he felt, faced with the many problems she represented for him – had spoken to her of divorce. For F. divorce represented a threat, a threat of eventual loss of identity.

F.'s feeling of being the victim of injustices and humiliations gave her discourse a characteristically demanding tone. The vague feeling of identity loss was at the heart of what she was going through. A wall of reticence loomed around this question each time we asked her to talk about it.

Still, we were able to reconstruct, over the course of succeeding meetings, the details of the onset of F.'s paranoid psychosis, and to witness the delirious invention's construction of a name. We will see how the

name Marilyn, produced by inventive delirium, is logically allied with the name of *The Woman* that does not exist. In that sense, this name served to repair the forclusive rift of the phallic function, thus taking on the function of a suppletory device that served to stabilize the position of the subject.

The ideal self of a twin . . .

Through F's story it was easy to find out when the problem began, when the psychosis came to light; she was twenty-three years old. There we found the details of the dramatic circumstance around the outbreak of the psychosis: when a third party intervened in the couple made up of herself and her brother, the identificatory homeostasis that served as reference was destabilized.

In fact her brother, two years her junior, occupied a fundamental position in the subjective economy of the patient. Raised as twins, they were inseparable: they were together in grade school, high school, and, later, at university. We can see how the couple she formed with her brother functioned, giving her a subjective support through a stabilizing imaginary identification. One can suppose that their mirror relationship gave each partner a certain consistency as a semblant, making possible – up to a point – a social bond. Our supposition was to consider as valid for our patient – up to then – the ex-sistence of the unifying *One* assured by the function of the ideal ego, that is to say the value of m(i) in the place of the brother. Twinship with the brother gave the young woman an imaginary consistency from which she got an assurance of identity as a female, in the place of the “sister”.

. . .and “the not-to-be-ignored truth of incest”

According to the patient, she and her brother had no secrets because each of them could “guess” the other's thoughts. She also told us she knew she was “the only woman who could satisfy absolutely the sexual jouissance” of her brother. Without having committed incest with her brother, she said she knew, through revelation in her dreams, that she was *The Woman* for him. She was certain that this knowledge was based on “the not-to-be-ignored truth of incest”, and crystallized “the insoluble impasse” of her life.

We found in our patient's statements a formula that brought into existence, vis-a-vis her brother, “*The Woman* who does not exist”, and, in consequence, the impossible sexual rapport. So we can then conceive that the foreclosure of the phallic function imposed on this female subject an equivalence between the condition of “sister” to her brother and that of *The Woman* who does not exist. The impasse for her was in her difficulty being *a* woman for a man, independent of her being a sister. Outside her brother, or the imaginary envelope she conferred on him, she found no referent to give her sexuated being significance. Everything seemed to indicate that the difficulties for this brother-sister couple appeared as soon as a third party came between them, in the place of “A-father” [*Un-père*]. The third here came to separate them, calling on each of them to take a specific place with a sexual difference and the subjective assumption of sexuation in terms of *man* and *woman*.

As we have already said, they went through school together. It was at university that F. apparently met a boy who was interested in her. She flirted with him; a little later, her brother began talking about a being the target of a plot among professors and secret services. F. went along with her brother's delirium: they would change schools to escape their persecutors.

According to what we were able to reconstruct, F. later married a foreign professor, a reputedly brilliant intellectual, an older man teaching at the university. This marriage did not constitute a psychic menace for the brother-sister couple because the future husband, who was more attracted to libraries than to sexuality,

agreed to the condition demanded by his fiancée to make their conjugal home with her brother. So the professor, in “marrying” both of them, did not represent a third party, *A-father*.

“Mister Clean”

Later, for political reasons related to their country of origin, all three arrived in France. Not long afterward, F. found a job where she was hired with her brother to do manual chores. Since it didn't take them long to show the sharpest resistance to this work, arguing that they were intellectuals and political exiles, their boss had the sly idea of separating them, putting each in a different workspace.

From the moment F. was separated from her brother, everything started “happening” to her at her place of work: her boss's gestures had, for her, unquestionable and certain sexually significant intentions. For example, she asked herself why her boss, at lunchtime, got up from the table before the coffee came to go to the toilet. She was sure this move was addressed to her because in going to the toilet he was signaling a sexual invitation; consequently she had to take this gesture as a sign evidently concerning her.

One day her boss passed next to her. She heard him say to her: “Mister Clean”. She was sure that this insult meant he wanted to say to her that she was not a woman, that she was a muscular man. In answer to one of our questions, she confided that a moment before hearing that insult, seeing her boss coming towards her, she was struck by how muscular and athletic he was. This detail that she managed to tell us showed she had felt some desire for this man. But since she was unable to come to terms with the significance of her desire as a woman, in place of the lack that specifies the desire, the voice shouting the insult: “Mister Clean”, came as a return in the real.

The elementary phenomenon marks the foreclosure of the phallic function (ϕ of x) in our subject. Because of the foreclosure, the non-inscription of the phallic symbol leaves the subject without a symbolic reference – without reference to the semblant – in order to inscribe her sexuated position. For this reason, the subject cannot fit herself in to that place in the argument of the phallic function that would give sense to her feminine position. The entrenchment of the phallic function, due to its forclusive nature, includes the return of the real of her feminine being, closed in, in the form of the hallucinatory insult.

At the same time as F. was feeling like the target of her boss's gestures, she noted that the boss's secretary, a woman named Evelyne, described as a ravishing blonde, was getting more and more hostile towards her. Yet they had been close friends before, and several times F. had had to move away from this woman who she found a little intrusive. Now all the signs of hostility she saw led her to conclude that this woman detested her because she was her boss's mistress.

We were able to see that what happened in F.'s relation with her boss and his secretary was that series of grammatical transformations Freud described in characterizing paranoia. The first step corresponds to the libidinal bond and the admiration F. had with and for the secretary; it could be stated as follows: “I love her, the ravishing blonde Evelyne”. This proposition, with its libidinal bond to a woman, calls for defense, and under that influence will be denied and will become, after a first transformation: “I don't like her, I hate her”. Only to come back later to the following: “I don't hate her, she hates me because he, the boss, loves me”.

Once she has arrived at this erotomaniacal conviction, F. goes to her boss one day and demands money from him as proof of his love: “so that he accepts his sentiments once and for all”. Disappointed by her boss's flat refusal, she starts to try pretty serious acts of revenge on his secretary. That is when she gets fired.

In addition, her husband decides to divorce her. She interprets his decision as a proposition: given his age, he must have concluded that he could not satisfy her sexually, so he was giving her the freedom to go with other men.

This is where we see the sudden appearance of the “push-to-the-woman” attributed to the will of the Other, in this case the husband. It was also at that moment the brother found a companion and left to live with her.

Evelyne’s voice

Immediately F., a beautiful woman, found a companion with the same first name and the same age as her brother. They lived together. Everything went well until the idea of having a child with this man came up. That is when the hallucinatory phenomena came to light, violently. It was the voice of Evelyne who, jealous of F.’s happiness, came to disrupt it. To disguise her voice, Evelyne is able to take on the voice of an old lady to suggest that F. is too old to have a child. Sometimes Evelyne speaks like a man, to tell F. she is a man and not a woman. Evelyne makes F. hear a voice that resonates in deadly silence, to say F. is already dead . . .

We were able to identify three registers in which the voice imposed a delirious significance to the subject. First, her sexuated condition, declined in two different ways – “being woman”, and “being mother”. Then the voices that intimate the silence in which her living being would be wiped out. The voice shouts this feminine subject’s absolute impossibility to accede to the possible of femininity, of maternity, of life.

During this period in F.’s life looked like the twilight of the world. She neglected her household, hardly ever went out, and lost interest in everything. She “let herself go” and her body showed it.

The father’s “woman’s name”

Not long afterwards, she told us of new meanings intimated by the voices. The voices ordered her to take French courses, to make herself up, to bleach her hair so as to be blonde like a Frenchwoman. That is when we were witnesses to a transformation of the name of the place from which the voices came. When the voices were tracing the path of a transformation into a seductive woman, blonde and libertine, the place they came from as ex-sistence was not Evelyne anymore but became Marilyn. This change in the name of the place from which the voices came coincided with the moment of her own transformation into “*The woman who doesn’t exist*”.

The name Marilyn, a woman’s name, is a logical response in this construction. In fact, the name Marilyn reminds F. of her doll, the only doll her mother ever gave her and that she called Marie-Lou. She also remembered that during those childhood years she lived on a street called “Père Olmedo”. She also told us that “Olmedo” was her paternal grandfather’s family name. But since her father was not recognized by *his* father, he took his mother’s family name. So he transmitted to his children the name he received from his own mother, always complaining that he had a “woman’s name”.

One can now see how rigorous the construction of a name can be. The name Marilyn, pure delirious invention, has a metonymic connection with her doll Marie-Lou, a doll her mother gave her, just as the father’s family name came from his mother. From this came F.’s evoking, for us, a “fault in name transmission”. It is because of this “fault in name transmission” that her father, never having admitted being an illegitimate child with a woman’s name, had always lived in shame and humiliation. We should remember here the value of humiliation, a factor constantly stigmatizing, for our patient, all intentions

originating with others. She would also tell us that the illegitimacy of her father was a “stain” for the family, and that her father transmitted “the stain of shame” to his two children.

We find this “stain” at work in another dramatic episode of her life. In fact, the relation with her partner finished in extreme violence. One day F. wandered around the house in her robe. Her companion’s mother arrived and remarked on the fact that F. was wearing her robe and that there was a grease stain on it. This remark was the spark that lit the fire. Our patient took a bottle of oil and splashed it on the furniture, the carpet, and the walls of the house, shouting insults. She was thrown out and left denouncing the injustice she had been subjected to.

We can see that the “stain” on the robe, pointed out by her companion’s mother, took on the value of an insult for F. – like an accusation – as soon as that “stain” on the robe represented a return to the real of the “stain” of the symbolic fault in name transmission in her family history.

Marilyn, the delirious invention of a name of exception

After breaking up with her partner, F. stopped coming to see us for awhile.

We saw her several months later when she came back to the institution, transformed. During that time she had become an Other. Blonde, pretty, elegant, nicely dressed, she came to tell us about her changed life.

F. told us she had understood she had a very important mission on earth: to make men happy. To fulfill this mission she had joined a club for sexual encounters, where she was listed under the heading “exotic woman”. And she was called Marilyn.

By becoming Marilyn this subject consented to a project prescribed by the voices. As Marilyn, she gave consistence to a place – a place characterized by the impossible inscription of an existence, that of *The woman*, one haunted by voices. Once that transformation of the subject had been made, we were able to see that the voice phenomena had stopped. The disappearance of the voices seemed correlative to the inscription of a suppletory device, that of the name Marilyn, in the place of the exception. From that place, the name comes to stand for the fault in the inscription of the father function. The name of “*The woman who does not exist*”, by becoming the equivalent of the Name-of-the-Father, gives consistency to a suture of the real brought up-to-date by foreclosure. Marilyn is the name of the exception that, as *The woman*, holds together the *One* of the set *All men*.

As *The woman* of *All men*, F. was a great hit. Her success also brought her satisfaction, because she not only got money but also gifts and jewelry that flattered her.

For that reason, shored up by her success and the new bond that came from her delirious semblant, she came to tell us she did not feel the need to come and see us anymore.

We could note, through this three-year-long experience, the realization of a delirious project in which F. invented a name for herself as a suppletory device for a foreclosure fault of the phallic function correlated with the failure of the father function. As a consequence, the name Marilyn, a substitute name, gave F. a delirious feminine identification – and a way of managing sexuation in the reconstructed framework of a patched reality.

Translated by Sylvia Winter