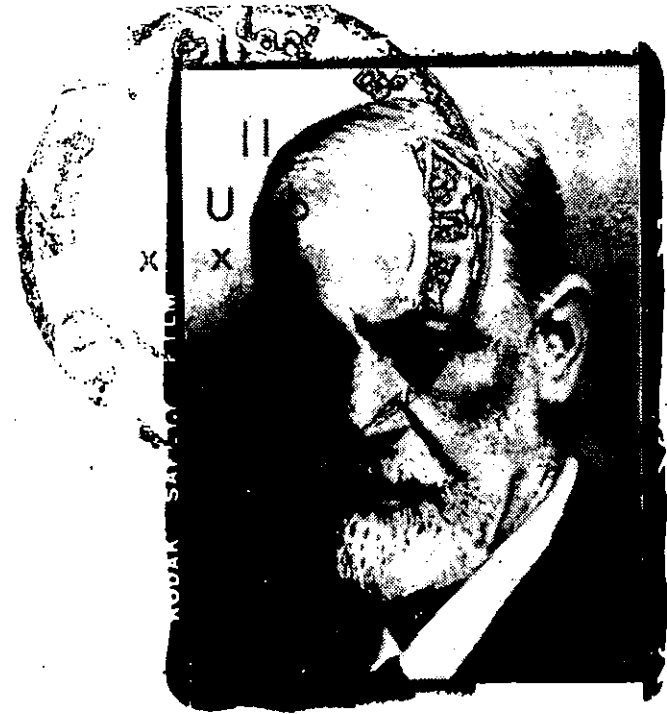


PAPERS OF THE FREUDIAN
SCHOOL OF MELBOURNE



Homage to Freud

On Angst

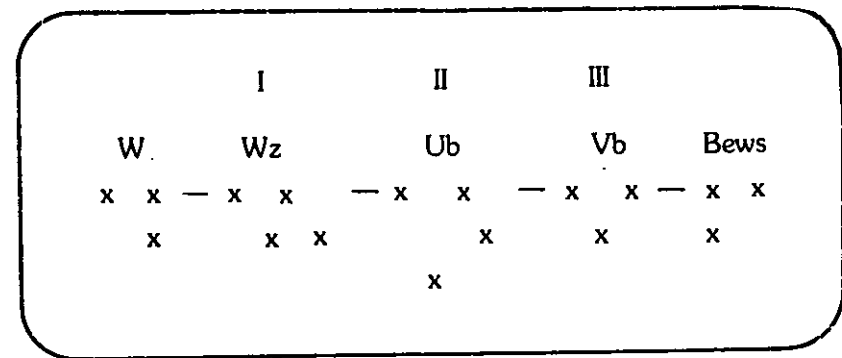
**PAPERS OF THE
FREUDIAN SCHOOL OF MELBOURNE**

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Oscar Zentner**

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
LOGOS	1
 PART I	
HOMAGE TO FREUD	
<i>The Death of Lacan.</i>	Oscar Zentner 9
Non-Libidinization and its Return.	Oscar Zentner 15
The Secret Cause.	Laurence Bataille 27
Lautréamont and the Uncanny.	María Inés Rotmiler de Zentner 33
<i>Angst</i> , The Null Set Series and the ($-\varphi$).	Gayle Paull 65
Beyond the Pleasure of the Text.	John Dingle 55
Psychoanalysis or Psychoanalyst.	Gustavo Ezequiel Etkin 67
 PART II	
SEMINARS OF THE FREUDIAN SCHOOL OF MELBOURNE	
Seminar I — On Symbolism.	Moustapha Safouan 83
Seminar II — On Jokes.	Moustapha Safouan 103
 PART III	
THE FREUDIAN DISCOURSE	
The Rhetoric of <i>Angst</i> .	Gustavo Ezequiel Etkin 119
<i>Angst</i> and the Theatre of the Absurd.	Frances M. Moran 123
Interview with Juan David Nasio.	Miguel Kohan 129
Conversation in Paris Between Alain Grosrichard, Gloria Autino, Gustavo Etkin and Oscar Zentner	139

LOGOS

"... I once heard a child who thought people were laughing at him and began to cry, because when he asked where eggs come from he was told 'from hens' and when he went on to ask where hens come from he was told 'from eggs'. But they were not playing with words; on the contrary, they were telling him the truth... I knew very well of course that anyone may take to flight at his first approach to the unwelcome truths of analysis; I had always myself maintained that everyone's understanding of it is limited by his own repressions (or rather by the resistances which sustain them) so that he cannot go beyond a particular point in his relation to analysis. But I had not expected that anyone who had reached a certain depth in his understanding of analysis could renounce that understanding and lose it... I had to learn that the very same thing can happen with psychoanalysts as with patients in analysis."

Freud
On the History of the
Psychoanalytic Movement

This book continues the series of the first Australian psychoanalytic publication. The works included in the book are the result of the investigation within the school of what for us is psychoanalysis. The publication of some of the internal seminars of the school are part of the sustained effort to give the reader the possibilities of being 'exposed' to this specific line of psychoanalytic thought.

Anyone who pretends in this field to hold the total right and truth is wrong and forgets the principal teaching of Freud, that the psychoanalytic task is no man's land.

In this regard the Freudian School of Melbourne, acquainted with other psychoanalytic currents, neither denies nor accepts that which does not pertain to its field.

PAPERS OF THE FREUDIAN SCHOOL OF MELBOURNE

What psychoanalysis means for the school can be found in its written production; it is here that the transmission occurs. The 'transference' with the text, the original source, is an indispensable compass. None are alien to the Freudian discovery, however everyone can live a life without knowing anything of it.

Oscar Zentner
Director
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AT L'ALLIANCE FRANCAISE DE VICTORIA
267 CHURCH ST. RICHMOND SATURDAY
19TH SEPTEMBER 1981 10AM TO 4 PM

PART I

HOMAGE TO FREUD

All the papers presented in this book have been written by members of the Freudian School of Melbourne residing in Melbourne except where indicated.

"No doubt that such a concept (of the Uncanny) is related to what is dreadful, horrifying, to what produces *Angst*, but it is not less sure that this concept is applied very often in an indeterminate manner, in such a way that nearly always the Uncanny coincides with what produces *Angst* generally speaking. We can however hope that the use of a special term—Uncanny—to denote a definite concept, will be justified by finding in it a particular nucleus. In short: we would like to know which is that nucleus, that essential and proper meaning that allows to discern, in *Angst*, something that is also Uncanny."

Freud

"Just as I have entered upon the Unconscious through the joke, this year I will enter upon the matter of *Angst* through the Uncanny."

Lacan

THE DEATH OF LACAN

Oscar Zentner

"Introite et hic dii sunt."

Sigmund Freud¹

The death of Lacan cannot be reduced to his physical disappearance. Through its transformation forever into a signifier, his death is for us, the School, the abundance of his discourse.

For we who had the honour, the destiny and the chance to meet him, there will remain the memory of his distinctive Freudian word. For we who listened to him and saw him in Venezuela, there remains too the memory of shaking his hand and the lump in our throat — a lump which not necessarily implies inhibition before the master. We did not go to Venezuela to speak to him but to listen to him. Lacan is dead and when a true analyst dies the School does not produce silence. On the contrary, the School produces work, for we are in the work of the unconscious and there, there is no silence, only noise. Lacan drew his discourse to a close, by giving as the hallmark of psychoanalysis, that "Man is born misunderstood, this is the only trauma". There is only misunderstan-

ding. What is believed to be well understood as well as what is repeated is always under suspicion in this arena.

The analyst is neither husband nor fiancée of the truth. Why then the search for the truth² if it is known as impossible? The Lacanian teaching is like a rebuff in the face of the academic intelligentsia whose question will always be: "To be or not to be".³ Another teacher, Enrique Pichon Rivière, many years ago, drawing near death, told us that according to him, the only word which Shakespeare had omitted in the text was: "*Finish-ela*, Hamlet".⁴ Ill supported or not the question is not so much to be or not to be but that *It is* (the unconscious). That is to say, the question is whether one wants what one desires.⁵

Lacan introduced into psychoanalysis a rhetoric which, if fastidious, is his way of teaching that there is no possible friendship with the unconscious. The point is that psychoanalysis is the science of the unconscious and not of man. Here we will find the clue to the Lacanian word. That word will tell us that in psychoanalysis it is not the search for sense which must be taken into account. From the beginning sense is found inseparable from the concept of man. What is at play when we work with the unconscious is an abolition of sense. It is only by the abolition of sense that the signification will appear. Man is born misunderstood, no doubt, since he will swim in the waters of sense to find in them the waves of his refusal — his wanting to know nothing about his unconscious. The unconscious is not the kingdom of darkness nor of depth, but the kingdom of *being* and if, as Freud took great care to explain, in the unconscious everything *is*, how can we expect to find there the sense-able-being? The scandal that Freudian psychoanalysis produces has little to do with sexuality for sexuality pertains to the arena of sense. It is here that we find the resistance. It is the unconscious itself which produces the scandal.

These psychoanalytic truths were outlined by Lacan in almost half a century of work. He gave us in his teachings his favourite aphorism, one which is fundamental to psychoanalysis — no one lies, truth can only be 'half' spoken and if someone lies, does this not affirm the truth of his unconscious? It is costly to learn that the unconscious always speaks, even in silence. Psychoanalysis made Freud and Lacan repeat a truth which caused everybody to tremble; a truth which is only half

known. When both Freud and Lacan were at the point of grasping the truth, death came to meet them.

Lacan told us in Caracas: "I am Freudian, it is your turn if you want to be Lacanian". With this he signified his indebtedness to Freud.

"So it is to the structures of language so manifestly recognizable in the earliest discovered mechanisms of the unconscious that we will return in taking up once more our analysis of the modes in which speech is able to recover the debt that it engenders."

"One has only to turn the pages of his works for it to become abundantly clear that Freud regarded a study of languages and institutions, of the resonances, whether attested or not in memory, of literature and of the significations involved in works of art as necessary to an understanding of the text of our experience. Indeed, Freud himself is a striking instance of his own belief: he derived his inspiration, his ways of thinking and his technical weapons from just such a study. But he also regarded it as a necessary condition in any teaching of psychoanalysis . . ." "It is with an initiation into the methods of the linguist, the historian and, I would say, the mathematician that we should now be concerned if a new generation of practitioners and researchers is to recover the meaning and the motive force of the Freudian experience. . ."

"For truth proves to be complex in essence, humble in its offices and alien to reality, stubborn to the choice of sex, akin to death and, all in all, rather inhuman, Diana perhaps. . . Acteon, too guilty to hunt the goddess, the prey in which is caught, O huntsman, the shadow that you become, let the pack pass by without hastening

your step, Diana will recognise the hounds for what they are. . .”⁶

Lacan also told us in Caracas that he encouraged himself with the memory that at his age Freud was not dead. If Lacan knew that death was biting at his heel, why did he dissolve his School? This only showed what he condensed in the letter of the dissolution of *L'Ecole Freudienne de Paris* by saying: “I persevere”. In what? In knowing that truth cannot be said in totality. What then is the relationship between truth and death? Lacan wrote this in a bewildering manner. When Freud in *The Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defence* was at the point of discovering the truth, death came to put in its place the word “nothing”.

Lacan gave his farewell in his seminar of January 15th 1980, *The Other Lacks*,⁷ and if in most instances the best attempt at fidelity will result in betrayal then, there is nothing else but to draw a distinction between his own discourse and what we understood to be his discourse. To be clear, we accompany the Lacanian teaching. We do not repeat because we have learned that from repetition there never is born an equal saying. We listened to his teachings through the transference and if there was a lump in the throat it was not because of the inhibition but because the transference was already established in particular ways. Did we not know that Lacan was dying? It is true we did not speak about that, not because we were accomplices of silence but because we started to understand why Lacan, like Freud before him, forged his task in the indeterminate.

The Lacanian system is neither closed nor complete. Lacan was the opening. In *The Freudian School* the exit is the entry. Lacan taught as well that it is discourse which sustains the subject. This means that the subject has no other support. The only recognition sustainable in psychoanalysis is that of unconscious desire. This recognition is called ethics.

NOTES

- ¹ FREUD, S. Letter to Fliess, 4.12.1896, not published in the Standard Edition. Published in Editorial Rueda, Vol.XXII Buenos Aires, 1956. “Enter and here you will meet the gods.”
- ² LACAN, J. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. Hogarth Press, London, 1977. “The truth is perhaps simply one thing, namely, the *desire* of Freud himself, the fact that something in Freud, was never analysed. . .” “. . . what I have to say on the Name-of-the-Father had no other purpose. . .” “. . . in fact, that to put in question the origin, to discover by what privilege Freud's *desire* was able to find the entrance into the field he designates as the unconscious.”
- ³ LACAN, J. *Desire and the Interpretation of Desire in Hamlet*. Yale French Studies, 1977. Vol.55-56,11-52.
- ⁴ Finish in Italian. See also the letter to Fliess, 15.10.1897 where Freud quotes Shakespeare; “Thus conscience does make cowards of us all.” Stand. Ed. Vol.I.
- ⁵ LACAN, J. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. “Freud's *desire* . . . I have said that the Freudian field of analytic practise remained dependent on a certain *original desire* which always plays an ambiguous, but dominant role in the transmission of Psychoanalysis. . .” “Freud, too, is concerned with desire as an object.”
- ⁶ LACAN, J. *The Freudian Thing*. *Ecrits*, Tavistock, 144-145, 1975.
- ⁷ LACAN, J. *Ornicar?* No.24.

NON-LIBIDINIZATION AND ITS RETURN

Oscar Zentner

"There is no *Angst* without object"
"He (the subject) is not without
having it (the phallus)"

Lacan
Seminar on *L'Angoisse*¹

IMPRESSIONS

In 1980 I had the good luck to be invited by Jorge Luis Borges to his house for a second time. During our conversation and while he was making his usual ironic remarks the discussion suddenly took on an intimate quality as we were alone. Then, mistakenly, I said something which somehow denounced some truth. I told him, as we talked of different matters, that time had dimension. Borges answered me in that peculiar manner —sharp and without concessions— of we Argentinians, "Time is a mistake, the only important thing to know now is if I am dreaming you or if you are dreaming me". The same Borges who states "*Le monde, malheureusement, est réel, moi, malheureusement, je suis Borges*" (The world, unfortunately, is real, I, unfortunately, I am

Borges).² My statement was one of those clumsy remarks that we are likely to make when we face someone like Teiresias. I assumed he was making the point that I was trying to avoid my *Angst* by deceiving myself with time and so avoiding the appointment with what is not specular. Because he did not possess that lure, his eternal question was and will remain whether he dreams his fantasm or whether his fantasm dreams him.

TRANSMISSION/TRANSFERENCE

It may be seen as an exaggeration to state that Freud's *Angst* was shown in the case of Dora where, as Lacan explains, Freud could not help but find himself very much identified with the place of Mr. K. The question is, and everybody agrees, a question of transference. We know, since Lacan's seminar on *L'Angoisse*, that the only object to propose in the analysis of the transference is the *objet a*, in other words, the remainder. To make us understand, Freud's resistance originated from his desire and its rejection. There is no object of desire because desire is the desire of the Other. If Freud overlooked the transference it was because he was not ready yet to be a remainder.

It is not within the reach of this paper to go into the vicissitudes of Dora's case. Besides, for us, Lacan's explanations do not leave too much room for further analysis. My intention is a rather different one. We analysts are subject to a relation of transference, which the institutions call transmission, to the *objet a* which for each analyst is Freud. This is our starting point. Freud, the *objet a*, is the object of *Angst* for each analyst and not the super ego figure (that is repressive) as has been claimed traditionally. Instead, Tausk's transmission of psychoanalysis—we ought to say—occurred through his death, while the transmission of Freud, the cause, occurred through his desire.

I (ICH). THE DOUBLE

The Wolf Man showed Freud, through the mechanism of foreclosure (*Verwerfung*), the return from the real under the form of an hallucination of the non-symbolised castration. The Wolf Man hallucinates castration. It seems then that *Angst* gives place to that 'little' of reality

from where the subject takes his place in the world. *Angst* is the return of that which will appear in the place of what has to be lacking. *Angst* is the result of the return of what has not been libidinalized in the specular image. It is from the specular image that something will fail to be libidinalized and will fall in a space. This something which is not of the incarnated signifier turns the destiny of such an object into a problem. This object which is not libidinalized in the specular image remains a constant which teaches us that not everything of the libidinal body can be captured in the image. It is the return of 'something' remaining, fallen and not libidinalized of the subject appearing in the place of the lack, which will produce *Angst*. This re-entry produces *Angst* insofar as it becomes independent of the subject. This is similar to the figure of 'the double', that messenger of death as we learn from Freud who, quoting from Heine, gives us his legacy.

"The double has become a thing of *Angst* just as after the collapse of their religion the gods turned into demons."

Let us go close to Freud for a while to the time when he asked of psychoanalysts to study their own neurosis. Let us then take Freud's most interesting patient—Freud himself.

"I was sitting alone in my wagon-lit compartment when a more than usually violent jolt of the train swung back the door of the adjoining washing-cabinet and an elderly gentleman in a dressing-gown and a travelling cap came in. I assumed that in leaving the washing-cabinet which lay between the two compartments, he had taken the wrong direction and had come into my compartment by mistake. Jumping up with the intention of putting him right I at once realized to my dismay that the intruder was nothing but my own reflection in the looking-glass on the open door. I can still recollect that I thoroughly disliked his appearance. . ."

Even though Freud tells us that *Angst* was not felt in this situation we must recall his experience of the uncanny. We can see in the light of Freud's article on The Uncanny why it is possible to describe the object

of *Angst* since there is no *Angst* that has not been familiar. That 'little' of reality that an image gives when it takes an independent form from the subject produces *Angst*. Therefore, the double is the example of what has not been libidinalized and returns to produce *Angst*.

I (ICH), OBJET *a*

When Lacan describes the primordial jealousy and aggressivity he will turn to us to say that the command "Thou shalt love thy neighbour" is no more than our protection from our death *Trieb* (drive) — the "I" (*Ich*), like the double, is the neighbour. We then emerge from our narcissism in order not to die. The 'talking-being' or 'being-for-death' cannot disguise the real meaning of the Aesthetics, that is to say, the space of death,⁶ the space of the fallen object.

Continuing with Freud's example we would like to point out that hate, unlike the death *Trieb*, is a consequence of the birth of the libidinalized object and it is not by chance that this 'feeling'⁷ is a quality of the I (*Ich*). Hate is not an 'unconscious feeling' but coextensive with the I (*Ich*). A proximity between an object and the I (*Ich*) will always produce hate.

The birth of the object cannot be anything other than the captivation of one's own image⁸ whose identificatory function is shown by Lacan in the human-cub when it emerges from the desire of the Other. This is called the mirror stage where the specular image and the subject will remain alienated and split. This is the formation of the I (*Ich*) which in the mirror stage is not only ideal and as such an aspiration to be but also a repressive agency by psychoanalytic definition. The independence of Freud's image in the train, which many would call a depersonalization is rather a repetition — the return of the mask of the *personne* (nobody) — which carries on the non-symbolised element of the real in its re-entry into the symbolic. In the primordial moment of the captivation of the subject by the image something will have already fallen by its own weight. The Lacanian teaching will call the special object which has fallen *objet a*. This object maintains a special quality, namely, the impossibility of mirror reflection, while the I (*Ich*) is captivated by the mirror reflection. Then, the ultimate cause,⁹ we ought to say, of the desire that will sustain

the living subject, will become detached from him.

It is important to insist that the *objet a*, which has no reflection, is the cause of all cause and is not the object of desire. It is also important to understand that this object is not born out of hate. This object is born in the unfolding of what has fallen within the split between the subject and his image. Something will be missing and it is that lack, *a*, which will work as the cause. A clarificatory statement in regard to the status of the object is imperative to any object relations theory in psychoanalysis since until now this has been dealt with empirically and insufficiently. Without these precautions we will cover over once more the Freudian truth: namely, the discovery of the unconscious.

LOVE

Love is enmeshed with identification and identification is the most ancient way of relating to the other. It is in his long seminar on *L'Angoisse* that Lacan says that it is in love that one gives what one does not have to somebody who is not. Love is not of a genital object but is of another object which is at the heart of the disjunction of *being* or *having*. This peculiar disjunction makes psychoanalysis point to the phallus.

The phallus (*being* or *having*) will only appear through a positive negativization, as (- Φ). This minus phi (- Φ) shows why the phallus is not the penis. In other words, the phallus is not an organ but a function. Love never is, as Abraham wanted, the genital love. Instead, it will always be courteous love with the connotation of drama as well as comedy. Love is where man will sacrifice the prerogatives of his virility for his dame and this will be the very condition of her love. It is in love that one gives oneself, says the *doxa*. This definition with which almost everyone finds it easy to identify, sums up what Lacan calls the collective stupidity, that which the good souls call common sense; namely, the point around which the majority turns. This 'giving of oneself' has as a model the only thing that the subject actually gives in his experience — and this is taken literally from Freud's works — the faeces. The only way in which the subject gives himself unselfishly is anal, not genital. Thereafter, it is not excessive to say that when the theory of the so-called sexual maturation arrives at the ideal of a mature genitality it

describes in fact what happens in the so-called anal stage. There the subject demands or is under demand. Demand of what, if not to produce something, to give something or to renounce something which is his own? Then love is not resolved in psychoanalytic theory by putting it at the end of some kind of maturity scale called genital love. The true subject of love in psychoanalysis is the subject of the *transference*.¹⁰

Love, as a passion, will make the I (*Ich*) become attached to objects, showing that there is no *Angst* without object. Freud will say so explicitly. *Angst* is introduced by the I (*Ich*) due to the loss of perception which will be taken as the loss of the object. A demarcation has to be made here between the object of Inhibitions, Symptoms and *Angst*¹¹ and the object of The Uncanny (*Das Unheimliche*).¹² In the first case, the object which Freud spoke to us was the mother, insofar as being present or absent, marking for the subject the rhythm of his desire and giving the illusion of an inside and an outside. Secondly, in The Uncanny, although an earlier article, Freud showed that *Angst* is produced only when something which has to stay in the realm of the real makes its re-entry for the subject in the place which is absolutely privileged — the place of the lack — for example, in the perception of one's own image as being that of another. There, the uncanny is not only the image of our double, but some attribute which in the constitution of the I (*Ich*) was lacking and now appears independent of the subject, with an inertia of its own. This is the signification of the insistence of Lacan that there is no *Angst* without object.

These phenomena of independent reduplications are the ones which Lacan, like Freud, had assimilated in a no less enigmatic way with his allusion to the herald of death. Lacan will illustrate this with the subject Maupassant who, at the end of his life, being unable to see his image in the mirror, walked around his room knowing that something walked along behind him — his fantasm, incapable of reflection in the mirror. Its apparition then under the form of the uncanny brings *Angst*, which corresponds with that previous moment of the constitution of the I (*Ich*) called auto-erotism by Freud. Auto-erotism emphasizes the erotogenicity of the subject whereas autism (Bleuler) hides it, by emphasizing only individual processes without contact with the sexuality discovered by Freud. Sexuality in psychoanalysis is erotogenicity.

ARTICULATIONS

The phallus, the concept that has been confused in post Freudian theory with the penis, will never be the presence of reproduction but the signifier of castration. To return to the origin of *Angst* we will see that it appears where the lack is attempted to be fulfilled. This is why there is no *Angst* without object and that object is the *objet a*, a remainder of the function which shows that not all libidinal investment passes through the mirror, the specular image. The phallus is positive negativization ($-\varphi$) and from that point of view, the phallus is the libidinal reservoir which is not represented except by ($-\varphi$).

To clarify the distinction between the concept of the phallus and the concept of *objet a* we can say that the *objet a* is the absence of a rapport with the subject and ($-\varphi$) is the libidinal reservoir which cannot be projected and constitutes auto-erotism. The presence of ($-\varphi$) denotes *Angst*, castration *Angst* in its relation to the Other. *Angst* appears in the place of what has to be lacking. . . "The places are the *Heim* — the house of man — the *loci* of the Other".¹³

THE REAL

The manifestation of the *objet a* is revealed through *Angst*. It is between the specular image and the double which escapes from the subject that an object has fallen. The return of this object to the world from the real can sometimes be seen in hallucinations eg. in the Wolf Man, or in creative work as exemplified in the work of Hieronymus Bosch. These returns cannot but be other than the return of a fragmented childhood, which crystalizes into a precarious unity through narcissism. This unity will always be ready to fall in love with its image as a way of avoiding the appearance of the *objet a*. The appearance of the *objet a* will produce *Angst* because it puts into question that unstable unity. This object is the result of the remainder of "the mathematical operation with the Other".¹⁴

Some clinical examples that range from the psychopathology of everyday life to the psychoses show that *Angst* is revealed as uncanny in the former, while in the latter it is revealed as the effect of the end of the

world. The effect of the end of the world occurs when there is no longer *reconnaissance* in the mirror because the unity of narcissism, given by erotogenicity, is de-constructed. This is why in the psychoses we must think of auto-erotism. Here, without knowing it, the subject will be a being-for-death. The double of the subject which arises from auto-erotism comes in its independence to announce the unfastening of the imago from him.

Through the mechanism of primary repression (*Urverdrängung*) Freud distinguished in the psychic apparatus the unconscious from the preconscious. In the psychoses this difference, established by repression, is destroyed giving place to the loss of meaning in the subject's particular history. This loss of signification (*Bedeutung*) involves loss of investment (*Besetzung*). Instead of objective events, psychoanalysis shows how erotogenicity is the 'enfleshing' of the word, if we may use such an expression.

What is at play here is the withdrawal of the libido and its investment. The consequent de-construction goes beyond the topographical regression. This withdrawal brings along *Angst* and with it the intrusion of the pure real — where "nothing lacks and not because it is full, since even in the real there are holes. . ."¹⁵

THE SYMBOLIC

The difference within the psychic apparatus is made in order to perform a subtraction which, by definition, is the order of the symbolic — there where something should lack. The symbolic is the world of the lack where everything is potentially lost. It is for this reason and not for any mystery that there is no castration in the real. Castration implies the negativization of the phallus ($-\Phi$). Nothing lacks in the real. Moreover, the real is what always returns to its place, and the symbolic is the installation of the lack. Then, when the lack itself makes its re-entry, *Angst* will not miss the appointment. The subject is constituted insofar as there is a lack. In our experience this lack is referred to by the concept *objet a*, the cause of desire. In this case there will be no teleology and this being-of-language is what Freud gave us in Beyond the Pleasure Principle.

CORRELATIONS

In his seminar of the 22nd May 1963, Lacan told us that the object relations in all levels show the correlation between desire and *Angst*. By virtue of the signifier, the oral, the anal and the phallic object, the eye and the ear, are different levels of the foundation of the subject in the Other. When these functions are established there will be a remainder, *objet a*, around which desire circulates. Where desire circulates *Angst* will appear.

Lacan assimilates *Angst* with orgasm and fulfillment of orgasm could be identified with the place of *jouissance*. Desire, which is not *jouissance*, is in women equal to any other hysteric somatization. Desire in the man is not hysteric somatization.

"It can be said that the *jouissance* of men and women have no rapport organically."¹⁶

Insofar as the man's desire is not at the height of his pretension of having, the woman is normally directed to the idea of having to fulfill both her desire and the desire of the man. Here the appointment for desire gives place to *Angst*. The idea of *having* or *being* is what the psychoanalytic theory knows as the phallus, which cannot be produced except in 'fading'.

"What the woman demands from us analysts in an analysis carried out according to Freud is no doubt a penis, but in order to function better than the man."¹⁷

The woman offers to the desire of the man the object of a phallic vindication which will sustain his desire and make her feminine attributes the sign of his omnipotence. Castration is constituted where the phallus is at play articulating the relation of the subject to the Other. The woman cannot take the phallus except for what it is not. The phallus is the *objet a* of her too little (Φ) which only gives her a potency close to what she imagines to be the *jouissance* of the other in a kind of aberrant mental fantasm. In other words, she can only have a *jouissance* by being in the place of the phallus. The fact that the phallus is not where it is expected to be explains that *Angst* is the truth of sexuality and castration its price.

CAUSE

Because man fails in *having* the phallus he sublimates and as a consequence, establishes the links of society. This may be understood if we consider that in women rivalry is more intense because they propose themselves as *being* and therefore cannot afford a failure in *being*. As a consequence there will be less possibility for sublimation in women than in men. This is so because men propose themselves as *having* and as such are able to face failure since failure would not question their *being* but yes their *having*. Hence we can say that it is men's failure that produces the foundations of society because the links of society require a libidinal homosexual sublimation.

Angst dwells in the fundamental relationships where the subject is constituted in the desire of the Other. Where the *objet a* appears, *Angst* is preserved. What then, is the desire of the subject? It is the symptom. The latter is the conjunction of the *objet a*, *Angst* and desire. According to this the *objet a* is the only object to propose in the analysis of the transference and is what Lacan called the desire of the analyst. It was at this point that Freud failed with Dora and the woman in the case of homosexuality. If what is at play is the analyst's desire then it means that the analyst will be that "partial object", *objet a*, the remainder. It is this *objet a* which causes everything in an analysis.

"When the demand occupies the place of what has disappeared (*objet a*) the fantasm will appear in relation to *objet a*, acquiring here the signifying value of the entry of the subject into that which will lead him to the indefinite chain of signifiers called fate".¹⁸

The cause implied in the question of the symptom remains open. The symptom is a result, not the effect. This can only be understood as follows. The desire establishes a gap between the cause and the effect, because it breaks any linearity between the two. However, the gap between the cause and the effect insofar as it is fulfilled will make the function of the cause as desire disappear. This is what is called scientific progress.

I cannot help but remember at this point the conversation held in 1980 with Jorge Luis Borges when he asked me "...and why not put the

cause after the effect?" I replied by saying that I did not have any objection to this since for us this was directly related to the teachings of Lacan who delineated the problem of the cause beyond the principle of empirical reality. The original cause presented itself as coming from the Other.

NOTES

- ¹ *L'ANGOISSE* was the subject of Lacan's seminar given in the years 1962—1963. This seminar has no English translation and has not yet been published. Throughout this paper we will maintain the original German concept of *Angst* since the translations of anxiety and/or anguish appear to be insufficient to convey its signification. The passages quoted in this paper are my translations.
- ² In *The Freudian Thing or the Meaning of the Return to Freud in Psychoanalysis*, *Ecrits*, Tavistock, Lacan says: "*Moi, la vérité, je parle*". I have explained this in our seminars as follows "Freud, the truth of the Freudian unconscious, speaks through I", p.114.
- ³ HEINE quoted by Freud in *The Uncanny (Das Unheimliche)* (1919), *Stand. Ed.* Vol.XVII, 219.
- ⁴ FREUD, S. *Extracts from the Fliess Papers (1892—1899). The Origins of Psychoanalysis* (1950), *Stand. Ed.*, Vol.I, 177.
- ⁵ FREUD, S. *The Uncanny, (Das Unheimliche)*, (1919), *Stand. Ed.*, Vol.XVII, 219.
- ⁶ The concept of Aesthetics has changed with time. From being a theory of beauty and ugliness the concept of Aesthetics has evolved to being opposed to Art in the sense of a general Metaphysics. In Kant the Aesthetics is given by the apriori forms of sensitivity: Time and Space. Time and Space are for us, however, the coordinates where we allocate libido and death. Since death has no psychic representation in the apparatus it will remain as such, as death, with no transformation. Aesthetics in Psychoanalysis will be the space for death (*Tod*). In Aesthetics the subject returns to the real from where he was released only *for the time being*.
- ⁷ FREUD stated that feelings are conscious.

PAPERS OF THE FREUDIAN SCHOOL OF MELBOURNE

- ⁸ LACAN, J. The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience, (1949). *Ecrits*. Tavistock, 1975.
- ⁹ The cause (*Ursache*) is the truth and since this is so, nobody cannot but be implicated in it. For a subject, the condition to be implicated in a history is not to know it, this is to say, not to know the relation with his unconscious: the truth.
- ¹⁰ LACAN, J. Seminar on *L'Angoisse*.
- ¹¹ FREUD, S. Inhibitions, Symptoms and *Angst*, (1926). Stand. Ed. Vol.XX.
- ¹² FREUD, S. The Uncanny, (1919). Stand. Ed., Vol.XVII.
- ¹³ LACAN, J. Seminar on *L'Angoisse*.
- ¹⁴ Idem.
- ¹⁵ Idem.
- ¹⁶ Idem.
- ¹⁷ Idem.
- ¹⁸ Idem.

THE SECRET CAUSE

Laurence Bataille*

If we admit with Lacan that we can refer to passing through the (fundamental) fantasm and to the fall of the *objet a* as the end of the analysis,¹ the first thing we have to do is to spot this fantasm and this object in our manifold experience. But that is not so easy.

So I thought it could be fruitful to start from clinical material known by everybody, and about which you all have the same amount of information as I have myself. I chose A Case of Obsessional Neurosis, that is to say the cure of the Rat Man.² The record of this cure, written daily by Freud during four months, has been found again and published.³ I will refer to two sections of these notes.

*

During the first session, the young man (Professor Lehrs) recounts a memory from his fourth or fifth year

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"We had a very pretty young governess called Fräulein Robert. One evening she was lying on the sofa lightly dressed and reading. I was lying beside her, and begged her to let me creep under her skirt. She told me I might so long as I said nothing to any one about it. She had very little on, and I fingered her genitals and the lower part of her body, which struck me as very curious" and he added "After this I was left with a burning and tormenting curiosity to see the female body".

Is this not telling that this sketch backs up, after more than twenty years, the Rat Man's desire? Therefore this sketch holds the function of a fantasm. It has the same structure too. It could even be used for illustrating the Lacanian formula of the fantasm: $\$ \diamond a. \$$, the vanished subject, how could it find a better representation than the small boy who crept under the woman's skirt? Don't forget that under a skirt of the end of the last century a boy of three or four years could easily disappear.

The *objet a* seems to be condensed in the word 'curious'. Why curious indeed? Freud notes that the young man, speaking of his governess, uses the family name although that was quite unusual, he says, in the Viennese middle class. He infers therefore that this was so because the family name happened to be a masculine first name.¹ If the little boy perceives the genitals of the young Robert as curious, it is because he feels there is no penis — or no genitals at all, the phallus being the only genital organ at the phallic phase. This 'curious' is the sign of the negative mark, part of the fascination of the *objet a* derives from its connection with (- φ). So we have on one side the vanished subject and on the other the absent object. And the clip between the subject and the object? Lacan tells us that we have to read this clip in many ways. I will propose some. The little boy is bound to this object by the fingering, this blind quest into the dark continent under the skirt, by the desire for seeing that absent thing he caught the idea of by the fingering. But how can I have said: the subject on one side, the object on the other? They obviously are on the same side, under the skirt and withdrawn from the reality, the *Umwelt*, the living room. Can't we say that they are identified one with the other? For what is he doing against the lower part of the governess'

body, this small curious boy? What is he doing, the Rat Man, under the woman's skirt, in the middle of the living room of his middle class family? What is he doing, so veiled from view?

Two months later, Lehrs tells Freud another 'early memory'.

"He had a very early recollection of his mother lying on the sofa; she sat up, took something yellow (*etwas gelbes*) out from under her skirt and put it on a chair. At the time he wanted to touch it; but, as he recollected it, it was horrible."

One can't but be struck by the likeness of these two memories: the women's position and the importance of what is going on under the skirt. Behind the lovely governess the mother appears, shaded with horror. Our subject, the little boy, is but a spectator reduced to 'the look' on the object, which is this time given to see and the desire put into words is to finger. May we not think that it is from this second memory that the first one draws out its strength of "tormenting curiosity to see the female body"?

Let us go on reading this session. Lehrs explains that later he thought that this something yellow (*etwas gelbes*) was a secretion — *ein Sekret* — perhaps not without connections with the 'secret' required from the little boy by the French named governess' to let him creep under her skirt — a secretion he ascribed to the illness which gnawed the genitals of his mother. Can we help establishing a connection with the torturing rat? Is not the rat the substitute for the lost secretion, *der verloren Sekret*, to which the little boy is identifying himself?

Am I venturing too far? I think on the contrary that I am close to the text; all at once Lehrs gives up the evocation of his mother's illness to tell:

"two charming stories of children". Which ones? The first one tells that a little girl said "There is no Santa Claus. Daddy and mummy do it. Now I don't believe in anything at all any more, not even in the stork. Daddy and Mummy do that too."

i.e., children are not secretions of the maternal belly. The father — what a relief! — plays his part. In the second story, a little boy frightened by

dogs says:

"I'm not afraid of two (dogs). They'd smell each others bottoms so long that I'd have time to run away."⁹

Charming story? Perhaps not so charming.

For the Rat Man had just told that, owing to her illness, his mother "had a bad smell from her genitals". What was the Rat Man's father attracted by? Would not this *etwas gelbes* have something to do with *das Geld*, the money (which is called 'gold' in German, strengthening his assonance with *gelb* by being yellow coloured)? You remember of course that the mother had money, *Geld*, and that was the reason why the father married her though he was in love with a poor girl. He married her because of her money, and this treachery ascribes to the mother's money a bad smell. Owing to this unfair cause of his father's desire, the Rat Man as a small boy was fixed in his neurotic position. Contrary to the little boy he related in the story, time gave him no escape.

Therefore I put forward the hypothesis that this *etwas gelbes* represents the Rat Man's *objet a*.

But what about the fundamental fantasm?

The Rat Man here recounts memories and not fantasms. However very early memories are generally screen memories, built afterwards. This is beyond doubt for the scene with the governess, as the Rat Man tells himself "this thing came into my mind quite distinctly, years later"¹⁰.

Is a screen memory a fundamental fantasm? I think this can be held. First, Freud tells us that:

"Not only *some* but *all* of what is essential from childhood has been retained in those (screen) memories. It is simply a question of knowing how to extract it out of them in analysis. They represent the forgotten years of childhood as adequately as the manifest content of a dream represents the dream-thought."

Secondly, if we admit in this peculiar example that the screen memory

has as its function to back up the desire —to see the female body— it can be linked to a fantasm. Freud states that our present patient's obsessive fear, therefore, when restored to its original meaning, would run as follows:

"If I have this wish to see a woman naked, my father will be bound to die."

If the neurosis is built upon the fundamental fantasm, I can't foresee any objection to my hypotheses, but, if one of my readers can find one and sustain it by a counter example this would be, I think, the most fruitful part of my paper.

NOTES

- ¹ LACAN, J. *Proposition du 9 Octobre 67 sur le psychanalyste de l'Ecole*, Scilicet 1, Le Seuil, 1968.
- ² FREUD, S. Notes Upon a Case of Obsessional Neurosis. Stand. Ed., Vol.X, 155.
- ³ FREUD, S. Original Record of the Case. Stand. Ed., Vol.X, 259. The Standard Edition gives the record only from the eighth session, but the French publication, with the German text in front, (*L'Homme aux rats*, Journal d'une Analyse, PUF 1974) narrates every session.
- ⁴ Stand. Ed., Vol.X, 160. I restored the original name of the governess, and preferred a more literal translation for the German word *Kurios* because it is necessary for my demonstration.
- ⁵ Stand. Ed., Vol.X, 160, n.2.
- ⁶ Stand. Ed., Vol.X, 297: I translated skirt instead of dress as in the German text the word is the same in the two memories: *Rock*.
- ⁷ The French word *secret* has the same meaning as in English.
- ⁸ Stand. Ed., Vol.X, 297.
- ⁹ id.
- ¹⁰ Stand. Ed., Vol.X, 760.
- ¹¹ Stand. Ed., Vol.XII, 148.

LAUTREAMONT AND THE UNCANNY

María Inés Rotmiller de Zentner

"Just as I have entered upon the unconscious through the joke, this year I will enter upon the matter of *Angst* through the uncanny."

Lacan

"Upheavals, anxieties, deprivation, death, exceptions in the physical and moral order, the spirit of negation, brutishness, hallucinations willfully induced, torture, destruction, sudden reversals of fortune, tears, insatiability, servitude, wildly burrowing imaginations, novels, the unexpected, the forbidden, the mysterious, vulture-like chemical peculiarities which watch over the carrion of some dead illusion, precocious and abortive experiments, bug-like obscurities, the terrible monomania of pride, the inoculation of profound stupors, funeral orations, jealousies, betrayals, tyrannies, impieties, irritations, acrimonies, ag-

gressive outbursts, dementia, spleen, reasoned terrors, strange anxieties which the reader would prefer to be spared, grimaces, neuroses, the bloody screw-plates by which logic is forced to retreat, exaggerations, lack of sincerity, catch-words, platitudes, the sombre, the lugubrious, creations worse than murders, passions, the clan of assize-court novelists, tragedies, odes, melodramas, extremes perpetually present, reason howled down with impunity, odours of milksops, mawkishness, frogs, octopi, sharks, the simoun of the deserts, all that is sonambulou, shady, nocturnal, somniferous, noctambulou, viscous, speaking seals, the ambiguous, the consumptive, the spasmodic, the aphrodisiac, the anaemic, the one-eyed, hermaphrodite, bastard, albino, pederast, abortions from the aquarium, bearded women, the drunken hours of silent depression, fantasies, sourness, monsters, demoralizing syllogisms, excrement, those who do not think with the innocence of a child, desolation, that intellectual manicheel, perfumed chancres, thighs covered with camellias, the culpability of the writer who rolls down the slope of the abyss, despising himself with cries of joy, remorse, hypocrisy, vague perspectives which crush you in their imperceptible works, spitting on sacred axioms, vermin and their insinuating titillations, extravagant prefaces, such as those to Cromwell, those by Mlle. Daupin and Dumas the younger, decay, impotence, blasphemy, asphyxia, suffocation, fits of rage —it is time to react against these charnel— houses which I blush to name, to react against everything which is supremely shocking and oppressive.”

This enumeration, finite on paper and infinite in Ducasse's fantasm, is an associative chain that attempts to exhaust the themes in the order of

the symbolic and while attempting to maintain the lack tries to exclude, in an obsessional manner, the phantasmagoric and repetitive re-appearance of the real. However, Ducasse can only in this order give evidence of that quality of *Angst* that inhabited him.

Isidore Ducasse, better known by his pseudonym le Comte de Lautréamont, died at 24 and his life will remain forever elusive. His sudden death has left more than one biographer² with a blank. His works, *Les Chants de Maldoror* and *Poésies*, are the only written work accessible to psychoanalytic reconstruction. Perhaps less of a labyrinth for psychoanalysis, it was, undoubtedly, an interrogation for classic romanticism.

Lautréamont's work is an excessive, sceptic, sarcastic, hypocritical, and passionate discourse that dwells between the limits of the grotesque and the uncanny (*Unheimliche*).³ A harmonic style accompanies the unexpected and excessive utterances of *Angst* in both *Maldoror* and the *Poems*. Evil, ocean, death, umbra and cruelty combine in a forever elusive, non-exhaustive description of successive though superimposed images that allow the absurd to find a place. Thus, the blasphemous, incestuous truths of the unconscious⁴ can be pronounced. All these utterances and the uneasiness they awake are born from 'It' (*Id*).⁵ Psychoanalysis itself has become *Unheimlich* by the very fact of what it discovers, since a truth, when accepted, is very hard to recognize. Bernard Shaw said "My way of joking is to tell the truth; that is the funniest joke in the world". We can see Shaw's joke here since the truth cannot be more than half-said.

If the question of the joke allows us to enter upon the unconscious it is surely because the joke is one of the formations of the unconscious. This is to say:

- * a joke is only that which the subject accepts as such,
- * for a joke to be a joke, the subjects have to belong to the same 'parish',
- * the joke shows the Other as the incommensurable source of the treasure of language. This is to say that there where the language 'fails' in conventional communication a new signification will break in producing a joke.

Humour, strange thing, is not one of the formations of the unconscious like the dream, the joke, lapsus-linguae, forgetfulness, the symptom, etc. Humour, which is different from the comic, resorts to a technique that engages the subject in an omnipotent and narcissistic manner.

"The pleasure in jokes has seemed to us to arise from an economy in expenditure upon inhibition, the pleasure in the comic from an economy in expenditure upon ideation (upon investment) and the pleasure in humour from an economy in expenditure upon affect. In all three modes of working of our mental apparatus the pleasure is derived from an economy. All three are agreed in representing methods of regaining from mental activity a pleasure which has in fact been lost through the development of that activity. For the euphoria which we endeavour to reach by these means is nothing other than the mood of a period of life in which we were accustomed to deal with our psychical work in general with a small expenditure of energy — the mood of our childhood, when we were ignorant of the comic, when we were incapable of jokes and when we had no need of humour to make us feel happy in our life."⁶

Neither the joke nor the comic appear like humour to counteract *Angst*. It is now clear for me why Lacan criticizes the close relation between perception and consciousness when telling us that from the first scheme of the psychic apparatus, where from perception to consciousness there was a gap, to the second, in which perception and consciousness close up, there was something elided. What is elided is that there is no perception that becomes exhausted in the consciousness. Lacan, therefore, opens again the question separating perception from consciousness and explaining not only why the subject drags with him what has been libidinated, but also why he drags with him that which always returns to its own place, the real, and that which has not been libidinated, appearing thus as *Unheimlich*. For there to be humour, there

must be libidination and since *Angst* is related to what is not libidinated humour finds here a frame.

Humour is a narcissistic position that finds in its formulation the suffering of the limit of what cannot be avoided. So, as Lacan teaches us in Hamlet,⁷ if Hamlet is always either too early or too late for the appointment it is because he cannot deceive himself, although he can deceive the others, with the possibility of taming the *Unheimliche*. This is why the ghost of the father is treated all the time as the 'father of a debt' but never completely as a 'dead father', that is to say, as a symbolic father. The delusional ghost of Hamlet does not allow him to resort to humour. Hamlet jokes or is ironical now and then as in the representation of the representation of the homicide of the father. But there, there is not even black humour. Hamlet does not deceive himself, the ghost in Hamlet is the avoided *Angst*.

Isidore Ducasse proposes himself in the fiction. Truth inhabits fiction.⁸ Lautréamont is the pure *Angst* of Isidore Ducasse.

"It is now time to acquaint ourselves with a few of the characteristics of humour. Like jokes and the comic, humour has something liberating about it; but it also has something of grandeur and elevation, which is lacking in the other two ways of obtaining pleasure from intellectual activity. The grandeur in it clearly lies in the triumph of narcissism, the victorious assertion of the ego's invulnerability. The ego refuses to be distressed by the provocations of reality, to let itself be compelled to suffer. It insists that it cannot be affected by the traumas of the external world; it shows, in fact, that such traumas are not more than occasions for it to gain pleasure. This last feature is a quite essential element of humour."⁹

The uncanny appears to the subject insofar as the subject has not been able to include something of himself in the springs of his narcissism; this is to say, because there was no libidination. The non-libidination comes to meet the subject in that which Freud specified as

the death *Trieb* in its function of being mute. The humour that tries to avoid the *Angst* of the uncanny (*Unheimliche*) will make an effort in the line of the dimension of the omnipotence trying to break the antithetic meaning of primitive words by converting the *Unheimliche* into *Heimliche*. This effort to convert the *Unheimliche* into *Heimliche* reveals the maximum point of *Angst*, where that which is most proper to the subject is his dependency upon the Other. The Other, stripped bare from its nature of good or bad shows its true umbilicus. The Other is what originates the subject in the signifying chain called desire. The Other par excellence is the truth of the unconscious, that truth that can only be half-said, unfamiliar, *Unheimlich*, where only one part will be familiar, *Heimlich*. Here, avoidance is impossible. This is why humour always fails as soon as it is unable to take the ego from its narcissistic place of knowing. The problem is, as Lacan clearly pointed out, that if the ego has a function, it is a function of unknowingness.

Freud tells us that humour awakes a sensation close to admiration due to the narcissistic investment that it bears. This investment is, of course, the manifest intent to invest in the first place what the ego wants to have and does not have, that which in the Lacanian practice is called an object fallen in the real, *objet petit a*. What the ego invests is therefore not the *Unheimliche* but the *Heimliche* functioning however as a signal, a signal of *Angst* as Freud showed in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Angst*.

Freud debates with himself in that text moving from the *Angst* of birth to the *Angst* as corresponding to a dangerous external reality. *Angst* appears as beyond physiology and is not explicable in terms of an objective danger. The concept of *Angst* remains unresolved from the beginning of the text to the end. In fact *Angst* in this paper is not found in any place because it is everywhere.

Is there anything more *Unheimlich* than being written by the characters that the ego believes to write?

"I have often observed that the subject matter of works of art has a stronger attraction for me than their formal and technical qualities, though to the artist their value lies first and foremost in these latter. I am unable rightly to appreciate

many of the methods used and the effects obtained in art. . . Nevertheless, works of art do exercise a powerful effect upon me. . . This has occasioned me, when I have been contemplating such things, to spend a long time before them trying to apprehend them in my own way, i.e. to explain to myself what their effect is due to. Wherever I cannot do this, as for instance with music, I am almost incapable of obtaining any pleasure. Some rationalistic, or perhaps analytic turn of mind in me rebels against being moved by a thing without knowing why I am thus affected and what is it that affects me."¹⁰

Freud needed in this way to re-cognize, to signify, in order to avoid the effect of *Unheimlich*. Ducasse's comparisons between incongruent and dissimilar terms — "the beetle, lovely as the alcoholic's trembling hands" or "... human face, sad as the universe, beautiful as suicide", appear like the blind search in the realm of the symbolic of an element in the real beyond his control, namely *Angst*. It seems that Ducasse multiplies the universe of the *Unheimliche*, his unconscious images palpitating on paper and producing also in the reader the effect of *Angst*. This conveyance of dissimilar similes, this humour which in fact is the expression of an "infinite despair"¹¹ appeared like the damned literature produced by creative writers, poets and aesthetes. Everything was comparable to something, the high and the low, the light and the dark, life and death, co-existed in the grotesque and absurd of an exuberant indiscretion.

Repulsion and distress. *Angst, das Unheimliche*. It is the fantasm that relates dissimilar elements. For, as we know, there are no categories to organize space and time in the unconscious. The structure of *Angst* is that of the fantasm.

Maldoror, through Lautréamont, faces not only the repudiation of Isidore Ducasse but the presence of *Angst*. Another pseudonym¹² to repudiate the subject. The subject is not.¹³

"If I exist, I am not another. I do not acknowledge this ambiguous plurality of myself."¹⁴

Marcel Jean and Arpad Mezei have looked into the etymology of the names:

"*Maldoror* is *Mald* (damned) *oror* (dawn): the wicked light, that is to say Lucifer, the true 'one who brings light', the initiator who veils his mysteries of horror (*oror*). In the same way *Lautréamont*; *l'autre Amon* (Amon-Râ, god of the sun for the Egyptians), it is the other sun, the hermetic sun."

Lautréamont recommends his reader to either put his writings aside or to prepare himself for the crudest of atrocities. He begged for company in the lonely path of the *Unheimliche* for, as Freud said, the prefix *un* is the token of repression. Everything described is but a repetition, at least a second thought for Ducasse, that which allowed him to speak through the mouth of Maldoror inspired by Lautréamont. He does not appear in the role of the spectator, since Maldoror is Ducasse, Alice is Dodgson¹⁵ and Olympia is Nathaniel.¹⁶ Thus one is what one looks at, namely, that which catches one's own gaze.

By means of his literary work Lautréamont created a world where good and evil were no longer meaningful as a pair of opposites. He is himself the god of penumbra and tenebrae, the damned god of literature. Ducasse-Lautréamont commented ironically upon the true content of his work which represented the black sun of literature. It brought the light which, as the light of Lucifer, was forbidden.

As a subject and as a writer he tried to go beyond the principle of reality. Lautréamont was not a madman. To go beyond the principle of reality does not mean necessarily the imposition of the so-called primary processes. The subject Lautréamont affirms himself as a being more in his project of being, his writing, than in the limitation of a pre-planned existence. Uruguayan by birth, he went to Paris where he proposed himself as fiction, in the truth of his life. Here is where we find Freud's assertions about the function of the uncanny in literature.

"Dreams invented by writers will often yield to analysis in the same way as genuine ones."¹⁷

This assertion of Freud shows that writing is the path towards the

subject's unconscious. Also creativity is overdetermined. It will be in the name of *Le Comte de Lautréamont* that we interpret the following: *Comte*, is Lord, and Lord is master.

L'autre, the little other, this is to say, the image in the mirror, the other as specular, visible, and as such, the condition of aggressivity and jealousy, the place where the imaginary occurs.

L'Autre, this Other is none other than that from where the subject is born, namely, the unconscious.

a, the algebraic sign and connotation for *objet petit a* which is the object "in desire",¹⁸ meaning not the object of desire but the cause of desire. This *a* is between the *little other (l'autre)* and the *capitalized Other (l'Autre)*. In its re-appearitions, *a* produces *Angst. Mont*, which is pronounced like the personal pronoun *mon* in French is translated into English by the pronoun *my*. It is the appropriation of the Comte who was Lord and master. Lacan says "I do not say that the verb creates, I say what my practice implies, that the verb is unconscious". I would like to stress here that the Lord and master is the unconscious. This is why, when this excellent writer tries to become the father of himself by giving himself a name, his pseudonym "I am the son of a man and a woman from what I have been told. This astonishes me. . . I believed I was something more"¹⁹ he cannot ignore that he must carry with him what the true inheritance from his father is, "the sins".²⁰ The legacy, the sins, is the text of the *Chants de Maldoror*, from the *Other* to the *other* with the seal of the unconscious. Lautréamont. *Le Comte*.

NOTES

- ¹ LE COMTE DE LAUTREAMONT (1846—1870) Poems in Maldoror, Poem 1, translated by Paul Knight, the Penguin Classics.
- ² There are many biographers who tried to exhaust and build up a life around a few events. Perhaps the best is Francois Caradec's *Isidore Ducasse, Comte de Lautréamont*, La Table Ronde, Paris, 1970. Gaston Bachelard's book *Lautréamont*, édition Corti, 1939; corrected edition 1956, Paris, is a brilliant study. See also Raymond Jean *Lectures du désir*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1977.

PAPERS OF THE FREUDIAN SCHOOL OF MELBOURNE

- ³ FREUD, S. The Uncanny (*Das Unheimliche*), (1919). Stand.Ed., Vol.XVII.
- ⁴ LACAN, J. In the Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis Lacan says that it is in the truth where we find the ethic status of the unconscious.
- ⁵ CARROLL, L. "... every such idea and nearly every word of the dialogue, *came of itself*. Sometimes an idea comes at night, when I have had to get up and strike a light to note it down — sometimes when out on a lonely winter walk, when I have had to stop, and with half frozen fingers jot down a few words which should keep the new-born idea from perishing — but whenever or however it comes, *it comes of itself*." Italics in the original, from Alice on the Stage, April 1887. It is interesting to remark that Lewis Carroll (pseudonym for Charles Lutwidge Dodgson) was contemporary to Le Comte de Lautréamont (pseudonym for Isidore Ducasse) and in his description "*it comes of itself*" he seems to anticipate the German *Id* that Freud chose to represent the unconscious and whose best translation into English is *It*.
- ⁶ FREUD, S. Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious, (1905). Stand. Ed., Vol.VIII.
- ⁷ LACAN, J. Desire and the Interpretation of Desire in Hamlet, in Literature and Psychoanalysis, Yale French Studies, 1977.
- ⁸ LACAN, J. *Ecrits*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1966.
- ⁹ FREUD, S. *Humour*, (1927). Stand.Ed., Vol.XXI.
- ¹⁰ FREUD, S. The Moses of Michelangelo, (1914). Stand.Ed., Vol.XIII.
- ¹¹ LEON PIERRE QUINT. *Le Comte de Lautréamont et Dieu* in *Lectures de Lautréamont* by Michel Philip, Armand Colin, Paris, 1971.
- ¹² ZENTNER, M.I.R.de. A Pseudonym, the Itinerary for a Perversion in Papers of the Freudian School of Melbourne, On Perversion. PIT Press, Melbourne, 1981.
- ¹³ FREUD, S. Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious, (1905). Stand.Ed., Vol.VIII. "Louis XV wanted to test the wit of one of his courtiers, of whose talent he had been told. At the first opportunity he commanded the gentleman to make a joke of which he, the king, should be the 'sujet (subject)'. The courtier at once made the clever reply: '*Le roi n'est pas sujet*'. (The King is not a subject.)"
- ¹⁴ LE COMTE DE LAUTREAMONT. Maldoror, translated by Paul Knight, the Penguin Classics.
- ¹⁵ CARROLL, L. Alice in Wonderland published by Bramhall House, U.S.A.

HOMAGE

- ¹⁶ HOFFMAN. The Sand Man, in Eight Tales of Hoffman, translated by J.M. Cohen, London, 1952.
- ¹⁷ FREUD, S. *On the History of the Psychoanalytic Movement*, (1914). Stand.Ed., Vol.XIV.
- ¹⁸ LACAN, J. Desire and the Interpretation of Desire in Hamlet, in Literature and Psychoanalysis, Yale French Studies, 1977.
- ¹⁹ LE COMTE DE LAUTREAMONT. Maldoror, translated by Paul Knight, the Penguin Classics.
- ²⁰ LACAN, J. quoting Kierkegaard in The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, The Hogarth Press, London, 1977.

ANGST, THE NULL SET SERIES AND THE $(-\Phi)$

Gayle Paul

Wahl: "Is topology for you a method of discovery or of exposition?"

Lacan: "It is the mapping of the topology proper to our experience as analysts, which may later be taken in a metaphysical perspective. I think Merleau-Ponty was moving in this direction...¹

I think Ruben Cerutti in his paper presented at the first Homage was also moving in this direction, a direction I too wish to follow today.²

Angst? Well, what does *Angst* mean? I asked myself more than several times. I knew what it meant, then I didn't and then I did again and on the question went in an infinite repetition as it is shown in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*.

Enough of this nonsense part of me said, and start writing. This was easy to say but difficult to do for to write is a side effect of *Angst*. I had the urge to begin with the end and work forwards to the start at the end

or then even to start on the last page and write backwards to the first word. The paradox of which is first or last began to resound, how could this be conveyed in the writing of words which is generally a unidirectional task? But this is the problem before us with *Angst*. Our own writing is our epitaph not our words, as Lacan tells us in his Caracas seminar.

"It follows that what language can do better is to show itself in the service of the death *Trieb*. This is an idea of Freud's, a genial idea and therefore grotesque. The best is that it is an idea which is confirmed with what follows: language is only effective when it becomes writing. That is what inspired my mathemes."³

Let me try again with numbers and the problem becomes clearer, for, as Oscar Zentner has taught us in his Thursday seminars:

"That with which we are provided in the real is not, for sure, the real of the rest of the species. For, all of us with direct clinical experience with children can learn that the pronoun I is the last to arrive, after the child's use of the third person. Until then, if we ask the child how many siblings he has he will count himself as well. The relation of the numbers and the I are relevant in this way."⁴

Angst then is an X (Aleph, containing all possible points) which appears uncomfortably on an infinite time line of an individual, now and then at times of X_n . At times of X_n *Angst* appears in a chain of signifiers where X_0 , the first event, receives meaning by $X_{(1,2,...\infty)}$ and $X_{(1,2,...\infty)}$ obtains meaning by $X_{(2,3,...\infty)}$ and so on up to X_∞ . Or should we start with X_∞ the last element first and say X_∞ is the first element which signifies all that has gone before it and makes them count? Why, this is not logically possible you say, yet this is the way in which *Angst* appears. It seems to be that it is not the finite ($X_1...X_{100}$) which causes so much the *Angst* which the talking being expresses through chest-pain or by somatization, but it is the infinite (X_∞) which arouses *Angst* since the subject is a mere point in it.

The School does not accept *anxiety* as the translation of *Angst* and has taken *Angst* as a *concept* in the way intended by Freud. In order to make this clearer *Angst* will be maintained throughout this paper.

Angst, like other of Freud's concepts, is difficult to grasp intellectually unless one does the learning work of working along with Freud and his reasoning. One cannot just pick up an easy definition. Yet *Angst* seems to be a key element appearing in everyday life. Is it then a question of understanding its origins, its place in an illness or its mechanism? Freud works through these questions brilliantly in his paper on Inhibitions, Symptoms and *Angst*.⁵ I will therefore skip several historical self-abandoned moments by Freud in his writings on *Angst* as transformed libido, the distinction between neurotic and realistic *Angst*, the distinction of *Angst* due to danger or traumatic situations and therefore, *Angst* as a signal, and start with *Angst* and birth and no doubt end somewhere else close to the real Freudian *Angst*.

Freud states the problem thus:

"The problem of how *Angst* arises in connection with repression may be no simple one; but we may legitimately hold firmly to the idea that the *ego* is the actual seat of *Angst* and give up our earlier view that the invested energy of the repressed impulse is automatically turned into *Angst*. If I expressed myself earlier in the latter sense, I was giving a phenomenological description and not a *metapsychological*⁶ account of what was occurring."⁷ "It is always the *ego's* attitude of *Angst* which is the primary thing and which sets repression going. *Angst* never arises from repressed libido."⁸

So, in order to understand Freud's concept of *Angst*, I shall try for a while to build a topological model of *Angst*. In doing so I am following the explicit example of Lacan. Topology for Lacan is neither exterior nor superficial to the psychoanalytic theory. Topology is *not* analogy either but has the expressed intention of giving a further step in the theory.

What then are the needed elements?

- the familiar repressed (X₁)
- a pole of attraction (X₀) and (X₃)
- return of the repressed (X₁)
- automatism of repetition (X₃X₁)
- the loss of an object (X₁)
- fear/danger A fantasmatic (X₁), represented by (X₃X₁)
- desire, *objet a* (X-φ)
- castration (X₃)
- birth/death. . . etc. (X_∞)

The etcetera refers to the numerous symbols but as shown by Freud, the symbolised ideas are only few." For each of these elements we could ask three questions, why? from where? and, of what? and already we have thirty odd answers and questions. Combining these sets in various ways we have one thousand odd interesting combinations of answers or questions, depending upon whether you think the set of questions is larger than the set of answers!

Anyway, the sets of possible questions and answers has been made 'easier' for psychoanalysis and we can approach the limit of the truth by Freud's discovery of the unconscious and Lacan's *objet a*.

Usually *Angst* is described as an unpleasurable affective state which is associated with physical sensations felt in the heart and the respiratory organs. For psychoanalysis there is always however the assumption of the presence of an historical factor and the need of psychical content. This led Rank to propose the prototype of *Angst* as the birth trauma. Lacan refers to the attempt as follows:

"That fellow Otto Rank came close (to Freud's discovery) to that in speaking of the trauma of birth. The trauma, there is no other: man is born misunderstood."¹⁰

Freud however sees Rank's proposal as very limiting, for an infant cannot know the danger to its life at birth nor have established a psychic link with its mother to realize that she is lost. Nevertheless Freud does not reject birth and *Angst*, he reinterprets the historical events and gives them psychoanalytic meaning. The links must occur at a later time making earlier events significant — Freud's concept of *Nachträglichkeit*.

Angst is then a function of history and the psychic links with that history. Let us then map the *Angst* loci.

The baby is born at time X₀. The growing tension a baby feels over time is due to a need against which it is helpless, a *mental helplessness*, X₁.

The mother's absence or presence is given meaning, and it is a *longing which is really born*, X₂.

The baby is separated and separate from the mother, the faeces are continually lost and the years pass to the Oedipus complex, the threat of castration offers a solution to the Oedipus complex and a *fear of the lost is born*, X₃.

The fear of loosing love or the phallus, (X₃) sends the narcissistic subject hurtlingly backwards into its history attaching meaning to those physiological feelings that were present at birth. The losses of that history are then made significant, birth, separation, absence and presence. At the time of the fear of castration all that has gone before is given meaning, *Nachträglichkeit* (N), and X₃ becomes X₃, marked by castration.

"Obsessive neurosis originates, no doubt in the same situation as hysteria, namely the necessity of fending off the libidinal demands of the Oedipus complex. . . Ego begins a defensive struggle. . .throws back genital organization. . .to an earlier sadistic-anal level. This fact of regression is decisive for all that follows. . .it could also be timing."¹¹

"The *Angst* felt in animal phobias is, therefore, an affective reaction on the part of the ego to danger; and the danger which is being signalled in this way is the danger of castration. This *Angst* differs in no respect from the realistic *Angst* which the ego normally feels in situations of danger, except that its content remains unconscious and only becomes conscious in the form of a distortion."¹²

The subject of fear reappears with *Angst* produced during the time of

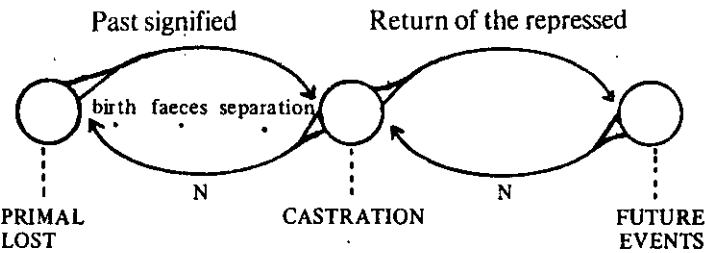
the fear of castration whilst the *subject of longing for the lost object is born*: X_4 or X_3X_0 .

This 'loss' becomes the affective state that repeats the subject throughout the rest of his history as the desiring subject. From this lack $(-\varphi)$ (minus phallus) *the desiring subject is born, objet a*, X_5 or $X_3X-\varphi$.

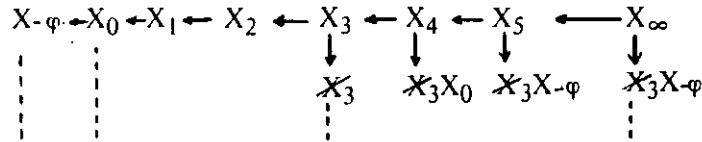
At the psychoanalytic nodal point of castration all that has gone before is made significant, all that passes in the future will also be forced to refer back to this time. The forced reference is Lacan's concept of lack $(-\varphi)$, through which desire is born, Lacan's *objet a*. This is the *Angst* of The Uncanny referred to by Freud, the familiar repressed and returned in an attempt to find the impossible in repetition,¹³ because to repeat is never an equal repetition.¹⁴

Diagrammatically

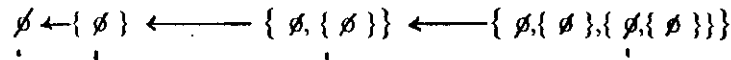
(1) *Angst loci*



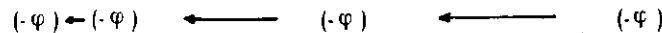
(2) *Historical Moments*



(3) *The set of Nulls Referring to the Lack*



(4) *The Subject of Desire Repeated as the Minus Phallus*



This function of the lack $(-\varphi)$ and of missing then lies at the very limit of psychoanalytic truth and is found in repetition as seen in the diagram above. Thus, this function makes it clear that the so-called pre-genital stages ($X_0 \dots X_3$) exist but they are unthinkable from the psychoanalytic view point.¹⁵

What is at issue in geometrical perspective is simply the mapping of space, not sight. The *objet a* in the field of the visible is the gaze, where the eye may function as *objet a* at the level of the lack $(-\varphi)$. The *objet a* has the function of symbolizing the desire born of the lack.

Ruben Cerutti¹⁶ poses language as an infinite chain from which speech erupts in the attempt at capturing this *ideal point*, this *objet a* — nevertheless, whatever the attempt, as he points out, will always encounter the set with nothing in it (the Null Set, $\{\emptyset\}$) signifying a lack.

Lacan takes up Freud's *Angst* as the structuring function of the lack, minus phi, $(-\varphi)$. The function of the $(-\varphi)$ is to haul the subject into a path he cannot escape from; Freud's *Wiederholen* (repeating). The dream then repeats also, revealing that the trauma is still there but is hidden behind the screen of distortion.

"Only the subject — the human subject, the subject of desire that is the essence of man — is not, unlike the animal, entirely caught up in this imaginary capture. He maps himself in it, in so far as he isolates the function of the screen and plays with it. Man, in effect, knows how to play with the mask as that beyond which there is the gaze. The screen is here the locus of mediation."¹⁷

The subject is ignorant however of what is beyond the appearance of this mask — the gaze. Like the Babylonians in Borges' lottery¹⁸ who are oblivious to the forced draw, the psychoanalytic subject also 'kids' himself by insisting that he is constituted outside of the effects of the signifier, while he is, as psychoanalysis has shown, the effect of the signifier which expels him from the chain of signifiers.

"The character of a set, in the mathematical sense of the term, possessed by the play of signifiers and which opposes it for example to the

indefiniteness of the whole number, enables us to conceive a schema in which the function of the obligatory card is immediately applicable. If the subject is the subject of the signifier —determined by it— one may imagine the synchronic network as it appears in the diachrony of preferential effects. This is not a question, you understand, of unpredictable statistical effects — it is the very structure of the network that implies the returns.”¹⁹

Angst is forced onto us by the very effects of the signifiers, which we refuse to recognise — *Angst*, signifies this lost space, this lack from which our desire springs. The paradox is that this desire was not born last as I have made you believe, it was there as the first element, from the start, in the desire of the parents, born from the (-φ).

“...The Freudian field is a field which, of its nature, is lost. It is here that the presence of the psychoanalyst as witness of this loss is irreducible.”²⁰

Psychoanalysis brings an unwelcomed repetition.

“Let us not forget that when Freud presents it to us, he says — *what cannot be remembered is repeated in action*. This *action*, in order to reveal what it repeats, is handed over to the analyst’s reconstruction.”²¹

Angst ⇒ (-φ) ⇒ *objet a*

Angst implies a primordial lack which implies *objet a*.

NOTES

- ¹ A question asked of Lacan after his lecture. Anamorphosis.
- ² CERUTTI, R.A. *Ideal Objects and Repetition*. Papers of the Freudian School of Melbourne. *Homage to Freud — 1979*. PIT Press, Melbourne, 1980.
- ³ LACAN, J. *The Seminar*. Paris, June 10th, 1980 reprinted in *Papers of the Freudian School of Melbourne*. PIT Press, Melbourne, 1981.
- ⁴ ZENTNER, O. *The Number and the I*. Seminar Freudian School of Melbourne, 1981.
- ⁵ FREUD, S. *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Angst*. (1926). Stand.Ed., Vol.XX.
- ⁶ My italics, as phenomenology occurs in any approach, but the metapsychological is where theories are different. The metapsychology is the theory itself.
- ⁷ FREUD, S. *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Angst*. (1926). Stand.Ed., Vol.XX, 93.
- ⁸ *Idem* p.109.
- ⁹ ZENTNER, O. *The Freudian Unconscious, Symbolism and Censorship*. Papers of the Freudian School of Melbourne. *Homage to Freud — 1979*. PIT Press, Melbourne, 1980.
- ¹⁰ LACAN, J. *The Seminar*. Paris, June 10th, 1980 reprinted in *The Papers of the Freudian School of Melbourne*, PIT Press, Melbourne 1981. Brackets mine.
- ¹¹ FREUD, S. *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Angst*. (1926). Stand.Ed., Vol.XX, 113.
- ¹² *Idem* p.126.
- ¹³ FREUD, S. *The Uncanny* (1919). Stand.Ed., Vol.XVII.
- ¹⁴ ZENTNER, O.
- ¹⁵ LACAN, J. *Ecrits*. Tavistock, London, 1977.
- ¹⁶ CERUTTI, R. *Ideal Objects and Repetition*. Papers of the Freudian School of Melbourne, *Homage to Freud — 1979*. PIT Press, Melbourne, 1980.
- ¹⁷ LACAN, J. *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. Hogarth Press, London, 1977.
- ¹⁸ BORGES, J.L. *The Lottery in Babylon*, in *Labyrinths* (1959). Penguin, 1970.

¹⁹ LACAN, J. *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, p.67.

²⁰ *Idem.* p.127.

²¹ LACAN, J. *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, p.67.

BEYOND THE PLEASURE OF THE TEXT

John Dingle

"Life goes down the river, from time to time touching a bank, staying for a while here and there, without understanding anything — and it is the principle of analysis that nobody understands anything of what happens. The idea of the unifying unity of the human condition has always had on me the effect of a scandalous lie."

Lacan!

"Credo che il giusto è un istrion beffardo,
e nel viso e nel cuor,
che tutto è in lui bugiardo:
lagrima, bacio, sguardo,
sacrificio ed onor.

E credo l'uom giuoco d'iniqua sorte
dal germe della culla
al verme dell'avel.

Vien dopo tanta irrision la Morte.

Credo d'Iago, Otello, G. Verdi!

Concerning his being awarded the Goethe prize for 1930, Freud writing in 1935 stated "this was the climax of my life as a citizen".³

In Freud's address in the Goethe House at Frankfurt, read by his daughter Anna,⁴ he quotes Goethe's paraphrase of the context of dream-life from the poem, *An den Mond*.

"That which, not known or not heeded by men,
wanders in the night through the labyrinth of the heart."⁵

In the same address, Freud contemplated the contributions which psychoanalysis might bring to the study of Goethe and Shakespeare. He claimed:

"Psychoanalysis can supply some information which cannot be arrived at by other means and can demonstrate new connecting threads in the 'weavers masterpiece' spread between the instinctual endowments, the experiences and the works of an artist."

He concludes, alluding to Goethe's style:

"But I admit, in the case of Goethe we have not yet succeeded very far. This is because Goethe was not only, as a poet, a great self-revealer, but also, in spite of the abundance of autobiographical records, a careful concealer."

— an activity in which Freud himself was no slouch.

On the question of Freud's own style, for a Goethe prize winner, surprisingly little has been written.⁶

In a recent seminar discussion of the Editor's introduction to Freud's (1977) paper, *A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams*, the group was wrestling with the problem of the relationship of consciousness to attention.⁷ Oscar Zentner, referring to our present complacency in reading the familiar and accepted works of Freud, remarked that "what is readily accepted is almost impossible to grasp."⁸

Concerning the style of Lacan, much has been written and this question is one on which his writings are most frequently attacked.

Reuben Fine, in a recently published history of psychoanalysis (not

without imprimatur) dismisses Lacan in these few lines:⁹

"Some of Lacan's ideas may turn out to have value, but on the whole he seems too confused and disorganised to be able to make any real contribution to the mainstream of psychoanalytic thought."

I have no quarrel with those whose position is to state that Lacan's texts are "difficult" to penetrate.

In an essay in 1978 George Steiner addressed himself to the question of the difficult text and I would like to quote in full the first paragraph of his essay.¹⁰

"What do we mean when we say, 'this poem, or this passage in this poem is *difficult*'? How can the language-act most charged with the intent of communication, of reaching out to touch the listener or reader in his inmost, be opaque, resistant to immediacy and comprehension, if this is what we mean by 'difficulty'? There is one obvious, crucial level at which this is a question about language itself. What is signified by the pragmatic experience that a lexically constituted and grammatically organised semantic system can generate impenetrability and undecidabilities of sense? No coherent answer could be given outside a complete model, such as we do not have, of the relations between 'thought' and speech and outside a total epistemology, which again we do not have of the congruence or non-congruence of speech-forms with a 'precedent' body of intention, perception and vocative impulse. In such a model 'difficulty' would, presumably, be an interference-effect between underlying clarity and obstructed formulation. This, roughly is the classical and Cartesian reading of opacity, a reading whose inference is necessarily negative. But all the relevant terms — 'inside'/'outside',

'intentionality'/'verbalization' and the crucial 'between', with its innocent postulate of a kind of mental space— are notoriously elusive. They activate a metaphor of separation and transfer about which neither logic nor psychology are in any agreement."

Whether psychoanalysis is such a conceptual model as Steiner seeks, I am as yet unprepared to ask.

In this context, I would like to bring two personal observations from my own experience in Oscar Zentner's Thursday seminars over the last four years of reading Freud and Lacan.

The first observation concerns the not infrequent experience of the reader, that he is already familiar with what is written, (especially in the case of Freud) but at the same time, the subjective sensation of not being in context with what one might call the 'message'. This phenomenon is perhaps most familiar to the analyst in the form of a certain response from the patient to an interpretation which is 'accepted' without consequence. Much has been made of the extent to which 'psychoanalysis' has become a part of Western intellectual culture to the extent that for us now Freud has become *das Heimliche*.

The second observation relates to a subjective experience of disorientation, of unfamiliarity, of unreality and intellectual bewilderment associated with the eerie sensation that something self evident has eluded one's grasp. The strange loops and veiled references of Lacan's more opaque passages, particularly, seem to engender this effect which I would risk calling uncanny, *unheimlich*.

It occurs to me that these two observations are not unrelated to the clinical questions of depersonalisation and derealisation — issues to which both Freud and Lacan seldom addressed themselves specifically but to which allusions are often made in both their writings.

Freud's thoughts on depersonalisation are summarized in his open letter to Romain Rolland on the occasion of his seventieth birthday (1936).¹¹ He regards depersonalisation as an effect of the ego's attempt to keep certain *trieb* derivations in repression. It is of interest, in relation to the previously described reading effects, that the issue occurs to Freud

when he encounters in reality, something about which he had only read as a child — The Acropolis. He says

"It would be impossible to maintain that it was true that when I was a schoolboy I had *thought* I was convinced of the historical reality of the city of Athens and its history, but that the occurrence of this idea on the Acropolis had precisely shown that in my unconscious I had *not* believed in it and that I was only now acquiring a conviction that 'reached down' to the unconscious."

He continues:

"Incredulity of this kind is obviously an attempt to repudiate a piece of reality, but there is something strange about it. We should not be in the least astonished if an attempt of this kind were aimed at a piece of reality that threatened to bring unpleasure; the mechanism of our mind is, so to speak, planned to work along just such lines. But why should such incredulity arise in something which, on the contrary, promises to bring a high degree of pleasure?"

With a momentary thought 'What I see here is not real', Freud believed that he warded off a feeling of derealisation at the cost of making a false pronouncement about the past.

Freud goes on to point out two general characteristics of the phenomenon of derealisation;

"The first is that they all serve the purpose of defence; they aim at keeping something away from the ego, at disavowing it."

This applies equally to the internal and external worlds — i.e. the world of phantasy and the world of objects.

The second, more contentious aspect of derealisation, Freud referred to as:

"— their dependence upon the past, upon the ego's store of memories and upon earlier distress-

ing experience which have since perhaps fallen victim to repression."

Bearing this in mind, let's return to the question of reading Lacan. My experience has been that this feeling of disquieting strangeness (*das Unheimliche* is strictly untranslatable),¹² increases the further one probes into the Ecrits and Seminars, perhaps a function of one's accumulated past attempts to encounter that which eludes us in the text.

Lacan tackles the question of depersonalisation in the seminar on Desire and the Interpretation of Desire in Hamlet.¹³ Ophelia in Act II, scene I, describes the depersonalised Hamlet, after his encounter with his father's ghost,

"He seemed to find his way without his eyes,
For out o'doors he went without their help and
to the last bended their light on me."

Lacan describes this new position of distance from the object of his former passionate attention using the English word 'estrangement' and relates it to,

"those periods of irruption, of subjective disorganisation which occur when something in the phantasy wavers and makes components of the phantasy appear."

"This dimension (*le fantastique*) arises when something from the imaginary structure of the phantasy is placed in communication with something that normally reaches the level of the message; i.e. the image of the other subject, in the case in which the image is my own ego."

Lacan then refers to Freud's concept of the *Unheimliche*, the uncanny, "which is linked not, as some believed, to all sorts of irruptions from the unconscious, but rather to an unbalance that arises in the phantasy when it decomposes, crossing the limits originally assigned to it and rejoins the image of the other subject."

Freud, quoting Jentsch, takes as a paradigm of the *Unheimliche* the situation where there is doubt about whether an apparently animate

object is really alive, or an apparently lifeless object is animate.¹⁴

If I may digress for a moment into another area of my preoccupation, those of you who have seen Miss Carden's portrayal of the automaton Olympia in the Australian Opera's revival of the *Contes de Hoffman*, for the Offenbach centenary, will have experienced an excellent portrayal of the effect under discussion. The doll's decapitation in the Act I finale brings us to our next point. The question of what specifically in the *Unheimliche* relates to *Angst*.

I do not wish to enter into a discussion of the issue of body image which is discussed at length by Schilder in his paper on depersonalisation, or of the question of ego-feeling which Federn elaborates in this connection, but I would like to raise for consideration two clinical forms of depersonalisation which will elucidate the relationship.^{15 16}

The first is the so-called phobic anxiety-depersonalisation syndrome described by Professor Sir Martin Roth, a condition predominately suffered by women, where the usual symptoms of depersonalisation are accompanied by a fear usually of appearing in public and especially a concern that they may fall down in the street.¹⁷ The head and extremities, particularly fingers and legs are often experienced as numb or dead. The phobic aspect of this syndrome is often exaggerated by proximity to a fast moving or dangerous object, such as a speeding car — the spectre of the fallen woman brought into association with death.

The other example is *sou-yang* or *koro*, which is what Yap¹⁸ has called a "culture-bound depersonalisation syndrome", in which the effected patient is usually a man who experiences his penis as being retracted into his body. For traditional Chinese medicine, this represents a preponderance of yin over yang. The syndrome usually occurs in the wake of some sexual indiscretion which has occasioned intense guilt and the expectation is that once the offending member is completely retracted the outcome will be death. Needless to say this syndrome is associated with the most acute and severe *Angst*.

Freud associates his feelings when confronted by the Acropolis with a sense of "filial piety" and the possibility of surpassing the father. Nor is it merely by chance that Lacan approaches depersonalisation using the example of Hamlet confronted by the ghost of his dead father. This refers

us of course, to the *nom-du-père* and to the symbolic order. When Freud, in his paper on the Acropolis, refers to what is accepted in consciousness but not accepted in the unconscious, we are reminded that the question of our own death has no representation in the unconscious except as castration.

Let's return now to the question of that form of sublimation called reading, with which we were originally concerned and consider a couple of classical examples.

The first concerns the seventeenth century Jesuit polymath Athanasius Kircher, whose fascination with Egyptian hieroglyphs dated from the times when they were generally regarded as mere decorations. Kircher was familiar with the Coptic language and in fact published the first Coptic grammar to appear in the Western world.¹⁹

He correctly inferred that the Coptic language bore a close relationship to that of Pharonic Egypt. But when he came to attempt to decipher the hieroglyphs his approach was purely a semiotic one. This opportunity to devote himself to this task came in the 1640's when Pope Innocent X ordered the re-erection of the fallen obelisk before the Palazzo Pamphili (a matter of family pride was involved).

Kircher regarded Egypt as the post-diluvian cradle of all arts and sciences and the precursor of all the hermetic teachings listed on the title page of his *magnum opus* *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*.²⁰

Kircher's interpretation of the hieroglyphs then was retrospectively inductive as a result of the extraordinary situation that although he knew the Egyptian language (Coptic) and could read the Egyptian script, he did not make any connection between the two.²¹ That the hieroglyphs constituted a phonetic system of writing was not known until Francois Champollion solved the problem in 1822 with the aid of the Rosetta Stone.

It is easy in these times to ridicule Kircher's lofty interpretations of what ultimately were revealed to be generally no more than inventories and accounts of the material wealth of Kings as containing the mysteries of phallic worship and the Egyptian fertility cult.

Kircher's task, confronted by the hieroglyphs was certainly a heroic one, as is ours in approaching the Lacanian texts. Despite his un-

familiarity with the nature of the elements with which he was working, Kircher was able to arrive at some symbolic truths.

In my paper at the first Homage to Freud, I referred to Freud's discovery in that the prototypes of all scientific theories are our own infantile sexual theories. He associates his depersonalisation when confronted with the reality of the Acropolis with the wish to surpass the father and the consequent *Angst*.

"Freud, the *objet a*, is the, object of *Angst* for each analyst. . . . the transmission of Freud, the cause, occurred through his desire."²²

I would like to conclude this paper in which I have questioned some aspects of my own experience, making my first attempts at the detailed study of the texts of Freud and Lacan, by quoting again from George Steiner. This time from a paper called *Text and Context* given in 1976.

"The real students in such 'houses of reading'—a phrase with Biblical precedent and promise—will be few, fewer perhaps than even the more sombre of our stoic seers would admit. The ironies, isolations, even falsities of the "literate condition" will deepen. But if it is allowed to be done at all, the teaching, the transmission of tensed delight before the word, must be done proudly, *con amore*, or in that equally forceful if eroded idiom, 'by heart'. If it is not done, if it lapses by cheapness or default, the 'text' will cease to be what, for some of us, it must be: the vital circumstance, the informing 'context' of our being."

NOTES

- ¹ LACAN, J. Of structure as an inmixing of an Otherness prerequisite to any subject whatever, in Macksey, R. & Donato, E. (Eds.) *The structuralist controversy*, Johns Hopkins, 1970.
- ² BOITO, A. After Shakespeare, Iago's act II aria from Verdi's *Otello*. "Credo in un Dio crudel . . ." "I believe that an honest man is a jeering buffoon, both in face and heart, that everything in him is a lie: tears, kisses, looks, sacrifices and honour. And I believe man to be the sport of a malign fate, from the germ of the cradle to the worm of the grave. After so huge a mockery comes Death."
- ³ FREUD, S. (1935) *Postscript, An Autobiographical Study*, (1925), Stand. Ed. Vol. XX, 73.
- ⁴ FREUD, S. Address delivered in the Goethe house at Frankfurt, (1930). Stand. Ed., Vol. XXI, 209.
- ⁵ "Was von Menschen nicht gewusst
Oder nicht bedacht
Durch das Labyrinth der Brust
Wandelt in der Nacht."
Goethe, *An den Mond*.
- ⁶ The essential references include:
MUSCHG, W. *Freud écrivain*. La Psychanalyse, 1959, 5, 69—124, P.U.F.
SCHONAU, W. *Sigmund Freud's Prosa*, Literarische Elemente Sienes Stilo. *Verlagsbuchhandlung*, Stuttgart, 1968.
Psychoanalytische Bewegung, 1930, 5, 510—511.
PEDERSON-KRAG, G. The Use of Metaphor in Analytic Thinking. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 1956, 25, 66—71.
GROTJAHN, M. Sigmund Freud and the Art of Letter Writing. *Journal of American Medical Association*, 1967, 200, 13—18.
GROTJAHN, M. Sigmund Freud as Dreamer, Writer and Friend. *Voices*, 1969, 5, 70—73.
STEIN, C. *Sur L'écriture de Freud*. *Etudes Freudiennes*, 1973, 7/8, 71—119.
DERRIDA, J. *La Carte Postale*. Aubier Flammarion, 1980.
REY, J.M. Freud's Writing on Writing, in Felman, S. (Ed.) *Literature and Psychoanalysis*. Yale French Studies No. 55/56, 1977.
DAYAN, M. *L'arbre des styles*. Aubier-Montaigne, 1980.
ROUSTANG, F. "... elle ne le lâche plus, Editions de Minuit, 1980.
- ⁷ FREUD, S. *The Unconscious*, (1915). Stand. Ed., Vol. XIV.
"Hence consciousness stands in no simple relation either to the different systems or to repression. The truth is that it is not only the psychically repressed that remains alien to consciousness, but also some of the impulses which dominate our ego — something therefore, that forms the strongest functional antithesis to the repressed. The more we seek to win our way to a metapsychological view of mental life, the more we must learn to emancipate ourselves from the importance of the symptoms of "being conscious". p.192—3.
- ⁸ ZENTNER, O. Personal communication 1981 "What is readily accepted is almost impossible to grasp." One is reminded of course of Dupin's curious remarks in Edgar Allan Poe's tale of *The Purloined Letter*, in *Selected Writings*, Penguin, 1967. "Perhaps it is the very simplicity of the thing which puts you at fault", said my friend. "What nonsense you do talk!" replied the Prefect, laughing heartily. "Perhaps the mystery is a little too plain", said Dupin. "Oh, good heavens! Whoever heard of such an idea?" "A little too self-evident."
- ⁹ FINE, R. *A history of Psychoanalysis*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1979.
- ¹⁰ STEINER, G. *On Difficulty in On Difficulty and Other Essays*. Oxford University Press, 1978.
- ¹¹ FREUD, S. A disturbance of memory on the Acropolis, (1936). Stand. Ed. Vol. XXII, 239—252.
In this concept Freud introduces the concept of *Entfremdungsgefühl* (feeling of derealization). Freud and Romain Roland had previously been in correspondence concerning the related concept of so called *ozeanisches Gefühl* or *Ewigkeitsgefühl* which Roland had derived ultimately from Sanskrit sources and of which Freud had made use in 1930 in *Civilization and its discontents* — see also Masson, J.M. "The Ocean Feeling, the Origins of Religious Sentiment in Ancient India". *Studies of Classical India*, 3, D. Reidel Publishing Co., Dordrecht, 1980.
- ¹² In this connection see: Rey, J.M. *Des mots a L'oeuvre*. Aubier Montaigne, 1979, Esp. Chapter 1, 'Rappel'.
- ¹³ LACAN, J. *Le Seminaire*, 15th April 1959 published as *Desire and the Interpretation of Desire in Hamlet*, in *Literature and Psychoanalysis*. Yale French Studies. 1977, 55/56.

PAPERS OF THE FREUDIAN SCHOOL OF MELBOURNE

- ¹⁴ JENTSCH, E. *Zur Psychologie des Unheimlichen*. Psychiat. Neurol. Wschr. 1906, 8, 195, 219—21, 226—7.
- ¹⁵ SCHILDER, P. *The Image and appearance of the human body*. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1935.
- ¹⁶ FEDERN, P. *Ego Psychology and the Psychoses*, Imago Publishing Co., London, 1953.
- ¹⁷ ROTH, M. The phobic-anxiety depersonalisation syndrome. Proc. R. Soc. Med., 1959, 52, 587.
- ¹⁸ YAP, P.M. *Koro* — a culture bound depersonalisation syndrome. Brit. J. Psych, 1965, III, 43—50. Cases in women where the nipples or labia are experienced as retracting have been described.
- ¹⁹ GODWIN, J. Athanasius Kircher — A Renaissance Man and the Quest for Lost Knowledge, Thames & Hudson, London, 1979.
- ²⁰ KIRCHER, A. *Prodromus Coptus Sive Aegypticus*, Rome, 1636.
“Egyptian Wisdom, Phoenecian theology, Chaldaean astrology, Hebrew cabbala, Persian magic, Pythagorean mathematics, Greek theosophy, Mythology, Arabian alchemy, Latin philology.”
- ²¹ See also:
WARBURTON, M. *Essai sur les hieroglyphs des Egyptiens*, Paris, 1744, recently republished by Aubier Flammarion, 1977.
- ²² ZENTNER, O. Non-libidinization and its return, Papers of the Freudian School of Melbourne (1981) p.16.

PSYCHOANALYSIS OR PSYCHOANALYST

Gustavo Ezequiel Etkin*

“...Ich sonst eher nachtragend bin und keine Einzelheit eines Vorfalles, der mich geargert hat, vergessen kann...”

“...I am normally rather apt to harbour grievances and can forget no detail of an incident that has annoyed me...”¹

Freud (1901)

Zur Psychopathologie des Alltagslebens
G. W. IV. s. 151.

Would the International Psychoanalytic Association (I.P.A.) or its affiliated organizations recognize a candidate who would identify with someone who wrote:

“Mine is a most peaceable disposition. My wishes

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are. a humble cottage with a thatched roof but a good bed. good food. the freshest milk and butter. flowers before my window and a few fine trees before my door; and if God wants to make my happiness complete he will grant me the joy of seeing some six or seven of my enemies hanging from those trees. Before their death I shall moved in my heart. forgive them all the wrong they did me in their lifetime. One must. it is true. forgive one's enemies — but not before they have been hanged”.

The author of these words is the poet Heinriche Heine, the one who quotes him is Sigmund Freud in Chapter V of *Civilization and Its Discontents*.

Surely such a declaration of hate —and in writing— would immediately awake the rejection of the *candidate* for not being sufficiently *candid*. The required ingenuousness, amongst other things, consists in believing that the psychoanalyst should exhibit a personal lifestyle, a way of loving and hating, a sexuality that in everyday life —beyond practice— should characterize and differentiate a psychoanalyst. The image of the psychoanalyst —as ego ideal— has or should have specific characteristics; a professional ‘identity’. This is obvious since each profession has its image, a specular prototype, constitutive and constituted by the *doxa*. Because —and this is not new either— in everyday life (where the professional professes) are the scenarios in which the ego will try to *gestaltize*, suturing with greater or lesser effort all possibility of fragmentation. The psychopathology of that ego —it is very well known— consists in the unavoidable failures.

Such credulity, nevertheless, is stimulated by leaning on a theoretical discourse which facilitates it and transforms it not only into certitude but also into compulsion. If what we consider ‘cure’ is the identification with the ego of the analyst, obviously that ego *must* have integrated its partial ‘instincts’ synthesizing them with genital efficacy in order to adapt it —with ‘maturity’— to the *détours* imposed by the principal of reality. The Kleinian alternative supposes elaborated mournings which will allow ultimately —in the here and now of a forced transference— to

establish a total object relation, through a depressive position, with the analyst. Thus this is how the projective/introjective bladder will be in equilibrium as $+1 - 1 = 0$ (of perceptual distortion). The relation with the total object will allow an object relation adjusted to ‘reality’ which will be the happy effect of the depressive *reconnaissance* of the proper ambivalence corresponding to the good and bad parts of every object. And the valid intermediary with that adult and depressive reality (although open to the reparatory satisfactions) will also be, of course, the analyst, from whom is expected then —thanks to his training analysis— non-split, equilibrated, homeostatic behaviour; an integrated *inenwelt* and *umwelt*.³

This is about Totality: the practise of analysis cannot be split from the everyday life of the analyst; from his intimacy. He who promotes genitality, integration and totalization through a healthy ego ought to show, as well, that he is genital, integrated and capable of establishing total object relations.

However, having had the ‘training analysis’ is a necessary but not sufficient condition. The final proof —almost never made explicit— will be that the analyst exhibits a lifestyle from which can be inferred the happy ending of analysis and training. Such expectations of what ought to be the lifestyle of a psychoanalyst sometimes reaches specification in regulatory clauses. The Argentinian Psychoanalytic Association (affiliated with the I.P.A.) in the matter of the reasons for which a member can be expelled in Article No. 5 Clause b of its statutes says: “to carry out any immoral behaviour”; behaviour which obviously refers to the personal life of the member, since in the next Clause c, it makes a specific distinction from behaviour which could be prejudicial to the social interests “of the Argentine Psychoanalytic Association”.

On the same point, a group split between 1976—77 from the Argentine Psychoanalytic Association (A.P.A.) called the Psychoanalytic Association of Buenos Aires (A.P.D.E.B.A.), and also a member of the I.P.A. is more explicit and radical. In the regulations and requisites of the Board of Admission and Promotion of Members (C.A.P.S.), the information is given that, psychoanalysis “besides being a science of man(?) is also an ideology which possesses a system of judgement of value and patterns of behaviour proper to it. . .” that determines what is

called a "psychoanalytic identity", the definition of which is one of the objectives of the institution: "The psychoanalytic identity embraces personal, ethical, scientific and institutional aspects". And in order not to leave any doubts a clarification is made concerning ethics, where it is important to differentiate two aspects; on the one hand "the personal transitory crisis of the analyst" and on the other hand the transgressions produced by a "professional ethic different from the explicitly psychoanalytic". Such transgressions, it is known, are a consequence of splitting in the "personality of the analyst". . . "Being the personality of the analyst his instrument of work, and the need of the integration of his personality being an essential requisite, it is obviously necessary that the ethical qualities of his behaviour, already mentioned for the psychoanalytic task, ought to rule his relations with his colleagues, his personal life in general proper to each context." (Even if it is not explicit, it is supposed that those who will enforce the rules, if the adjustment to each context is adequate, are the Committee of Admission and Promotion of Members (C.A.P.S.), which will work precisely as being able to evaluate the above adjustment to each context.)

It is not difficult to find such an image of the normal psychoanalyst in his everyday life: genital, monogamous and sedentary. He will move from the armchair to the home and from the home to the armchair. In social encounters, he will *understand*, he will be able to contemporize with different opinions and he will encourage people to take insight above all ambivalence and help others to accept the good parts with a milky and calm smile. Action awakes immediate suspicion of acting out. Neutral and mature, he will demonstrate that he has finished his analysis or, better still, his training.

In addition to this proposal of lifestyle of the International Psychoanalytic Association there was yet another opinion. In 1971 in Argentina and Uruguay this position was questioned by a group of candidates in training which called the institution 'reactionary'. This group offered instead a psychoanalyst 'engaged' and 'concrete' and for whom psychoanalysis was not dissociated *from 'reality'*. A psychoanalyst who as a candidate to incarnate the totality puts into question (through self-criticism) his theory, his practise and his lifestyle. Then pathetic questions appear: "how can we unlearn and come to be human?" For that, it

is not sufficient to exemplify a politicized life, since it concerns totalities and concreteness, it must integrate such striving for humanization within the technique itself. But "beware of educating for immobilization". Then there are questionings of that technique, because —as it is known— where least expected, ideology springs:

...the transference actually most feared by us and by our patients is that which directly or indirectly, questions our social identity". "It is the one which concerns itself more with our vocation; with our existence." And since "My ideology, *all* my most important values intervene in the psychoanalytic process" one must "... see the significations of the class of a task (the one of the analyst)". Because "the technical processes ought to be in liaison with a revolutionary theory". All that, at the same time, "... must have a very high pragmatic sense, be useful, help inspire practical transformations immediate to the real" (here, there is a sign of impatience).³

In regard to the good Freud, who it seems did not even meet Lenin, it is sufficient to take the consciousness of his class and the times in which he lived to realize that he was mistaken in many things — in his pessimism, his dualism and his reactionary Thanatos. Taking the remainder, that is to say *his dialectic part* and integrating it with Reich and Moreno plus the neo-behaviourism of Pichon Rivi re and Bleger, and discovering that the Kleinian depressive position is neither more nor less than the higher synthesis (*Aufhebung*) of the dialectic spiral, the analyst, now psychotherapist, can look at himself in the mirror and feel concrete, thanks to Polizer. Distancing himself from the schizoid-paranoid position, which is the alienation itself, he will be safe.

It is then that both discourses the one which is questioned as well as the questioning one:

1. condemn 'dissociation': that is the illness. This dissociation keeps no relation with the Freudian notion of the splitting of the ego before the castration in the mother. It is related, instead, to a pathologic division — reflection of a dialectic process supersedable thanks to History.

2. state that integration, totalization and gathering are in general very well seen as fundamental criteria of healing.
3. maintain that, in the last instance, it is about an educative task in the pedagogic meaning of the term. While some teach in order to adjust to the status quo, others teach to adjust to change.
4. pose that such pedagogical intention includes necessarily a pragmatic objective: Psychoanalysis, in this stage already psychotherapy, *must* be 'useful' to the Revolution. Psychoanalysis ought to *serve* to adapt the individual to 'society'.
5. the possibilities of realization of the above four points are shown and exemplified in the every day life of the analyst — the same dog with a different collar.

*

The same discourse therefore, with an 'institutional' variable and with an 'anti-institutional' one. In front of that discourse of whale or polar bear —it makes no difference— we only want to pose the difference. A difference which, since Freud and Lacan, is articulated in the moment of the analytic dialogue.

In other words, we are trying to underline the way in which the 'personality' of the analyst does not intervene in the listening and in the interpretation; that is to say the imaginary of his everyday life, values, ideology, integration, maturity, genitality and all those gatherings in which the illusion of an identity is supported.

Freud emphasized the need for a personal analysis as one of the essential (not the only) conditions for someone who wants to analyse and be recognised as an analyst. It is supposed then, that he who aspires to cure someone else must be cured. But, what is it to be cured for Freud?

... "the possibility of recovering the functional capacity and the capacity for *jouissance*."⁸

However, *the specific form in which that result is socialized remains beyond psychoanalysis* because to psychoanalyse is not to unify nor to synthesize the ego. On the contrary, it is to allow, to make it possible, to facilitate —within the analysis— this is to say, analytically, that the ego —*a posteriori*— makes its own synthesis, the only possible one:

"The psycho-synthesis is achieved then in the patient, in an automatic and inevitable way,

without necessity of our intervention. With the decomposition of the symptoms and the suppression of the resistances, we have created the conditions for this synthesis. It is not true that in the patient, there will be something disengaged in its elements which will wait patiently for our unification."⁹

It is because the symptom, precisely, is a synthesis that analysis fragments. This fragmentation, at the same time, constitutes a place where ethics and technique overlap.

"We refused most emphatically to turn a patient who puts himself into our hands in search of help into our private property, to decide his fate for him, to force our own ideals upon him, and with the pride of a Creator to form him in our own image and see that it is good. I still adhere to this refusal and I think that this is the proper place for the medical discretion which we have had to ignore in other connections. I have learnt by experience, too, that such a far-reaching activity towards patients is not in the least necessary for therapeutic purposes. For I have been able to help people with whom I had nothing in common —neither race, education, social position nor outlook upon life in general— without affecting their individuality."¹⁰

It is coherent therefore, that Freud insists on saying that;

"It is impossible to define health except in metapsychological terms i.e. by reference to the dynamic relations between the agencies of the mental apparatus which have been recognized —or (if that is preferred) inferred or conjectured— by us."¹¹

More specifically then, that place of intersection between ethics and technique is the articulation between the transference of the analysand with the suspended attention of the analyst, or what is the same, the particular relationship with the signifier —proper to the analysis— which

constitutes the propitiatory function of the analyst in the dialogue with the analysand.

As Lacan underlines from Freud,¹² the suspended attention is not to be understood as 'fluctuation' but as equality in the level of the free associations of the analysand, to which it is the counterpart. What both have in common in the discourse and in the listening is *neither selection nor retention of signifiers*. Because for both the analysand and analyst such a retentive selection is fulfilled by the ego. In the former as a suture of a repetition which surrounds the truth with the *mi-dire* of *Angst*. In the latter, as resistance to recognize that there is no knowledge from the analysand just like there is no knowledge of himself.

This is then how the repetition of the analysand corresponds specularly with the resistance of the analyst as a function of that synthesizing ego, which is its narcissism: Freud advises that *selection and retention* of something heard should not be made because, inevitably, it would be the effect of "our hopes or tendencies" in which case "we will run the risk of never discovering except what we already know"¹³ which, as is well known, is pleasurable, tranquillizing and relieving.

Now, if to be cured then, is neither to propitiate synthesis nor to reinforce egos, nor to make proselytisms of lifestyle but only "to facilitate modifications between the dynamic relations of the psychic apparatus" or the meeting with the phallus, in so far as it is the *signifier* of that which neither is nor has, what is then the reason why it is supposed that an analyst should be 'cured'? Only to be able to be an analyst. To be an analyst is to be in a condition to be able to speak and to listen in a certain manner; the manner in which the ideal ego of the analyst disappears in the analytic dialogue.

Those forms of disappearance are four. Four narcissistic wounds: three in the listening and one in speech.

In the Listening, when the analyst recognizes himself:

1. as having an imaginary knowledge attributed to him by the *transference* love,
2. as the place of the *objet a*, that is to say a residue, a remainder without sense where the analysand will place the analyst as the cause of his desire,
3. as the place of *das Ding*, thing absent in the real and for that mute

cause which gives place to the word.

In Speech, in so far as the analyst is deprived of his enunciated which —as an interpretation— will become enunciation of the analysand since to interpret is to disappear also as *das Ding*, but now in the speech, turning his being object-image into the dignity of Thing, a moment in which the analyst sublimates. Said in another way, to interpret is the metaphor of his *un-being*. Also his *un-being* is the condition of interpreting.

These wounds, nonetheless, do not prevent him from hurting, because, if the analyst sublimates something in order to be able to analyse, it is his sado-masochism.

Sadism, in so far as he is prepared to analyse, to cut, to fragment an enunciated which is offered to him in the *moi* of he who demands from him love. From a demanding *moi* —which reveals itself insufficient— to a *je* which will appear then fragmented in desire and *Angst*, leading in the analyst to the possibility of succumbing to a sadistic pleasure. It is not for nothing that the models with which Freud exemplifies the function of the analyst would be the ones of the surgeon and the chemist.

Masochism, in so far as the analyst could be dissolved in the *jouissance* of un-being since deprived of his word and his body:

- * it is not him to whom the patient talks
- * it is not he who listens
- nor;
- * is it he of whom the patient talks,
- is it to him the patient listens.

A desire without subject is then offered —as a signifier— to a subject which has to find his desire.

From all of which is inferred that the 'formation' of an analyst (if an analyst can at all be formed) is a preparation in order to *a-symmetrize* a dialogue which, from the imaginary, demands of itself to be symmetric, equivalent, egalitarian, specular, a dialogue between two 'persons', two 'individuals', two 'human beings'. And it is in order to *a-symmetrize* that mirage of equality that the analyst should be in the place of the 'dummy' (*muerto*) in a game which can be certainly more mortal than bridge.¹⁴ Because if to interpret is to decipher a signifier as a function of another (the phallus) before what, for instance, will an analyst meet himself when his patient talks to him —explicitly— of death, torture and violence?

While the patient *speaks to him*, the analyst will find signifiers. He will then be able to analyse. If the patient becomes mute—even if he becomes mute by speaking more—that silence will become for the analyst the patient's resistance. Even if it is the definite silence of his physical death, in that case he will not be able to analyse.

Because if an analyst believes that when his analysand speaks to him of the living and the dead, proletariat and bourgeoisie, oppression and liberation, God and the devil, love and hate, he is effectively talking of that; when the analyst listens to signifieds and not signifiers, another thing becomes mute and dies: psychoanalysis.

That silence then, distant and cut from the Thing (*das Ding*) does not arrive, giving place to the word. That silence is without clippings or marks of the real or the silence of the gaze fascinated by love and hate by a likeness. In both cases it is the silence of the insignificant.

It is for all this then that we can affirm that between the psychoanalytic act and the everyday and personal life of an analyst there is a bottomless abyss.¹⁵

Moreover: the condition for analysis is, precisely, that that abyss can be excavated, scooped out, constituted by the signifier.

It is not therefore a psychoanalytic criterion to evaluate or anticipate the aptitude to psychoanalyse *from* the personal life of the analyst. On the contrary, when that happens, usually it is the reflection of opinions, social conventions and trends which—in a certain epoch—are circumstantial and imaginary emblems of prestige.

How will the difference be established for instance, between a mature psychoanalyst, genital and monogamous, who ambulates from armchair to family and from family to armchair and an obsessional character or even a very well camouflaged neurosis? Or between an 'engaged' psychoanalyst who 'militates' politically and intends to integrate his professional practise and his everyday life from somebody with a megalomaniac salvationist aim? Or a 'liberated' psychoanalyst who makes proselytist exhibitions of 'mature' promiscuity and 'autonomous' couples of perverse rationalization?

To say it in another way: he will retain and choose the signifiers that are identificatory supports of these narcissistic sutures of his ego, sutures

which will impede him from listening to signifiers deafening him with signifieds, which will prevent him from psychoanalysing; for the same reason that a psychotic or a dead man cannot analyse: because they do not listen.

It will be convenient to differentiate nonetheless, the image of the analyst in the function of transference for the patient from the ego-ideal of the analyst. It is not the same, but they overlap in a zone, a point in which transference is installed.

In everything which I have said before, there is no asepsis: if there is a place in which the Borromean knot presents itself in act, it is in the analytic dialogue. It is there then that the ideal ego of the analyst will play an inevitable function, to sustain the transference. Moreover, the transference begins before the empirical meeting with the analyst, from the moment his name is known. This encounter afterwards will be the occasion in which the details of a scenario will be completed, an encounter where the image of the analyst will be already functioning. Which, at the same time, will remit to a veil: neither altogether analyst nor altogether analysis. *Total-analyst* is—we have seen this already—an educative model, an identificatory model, exemplifier: promotion and proselytism of lifestyles, 'mature' moralities of 'change' or 'freedom'. *Total-analysis* is the impossibility—real—of establishing transference: no image would render it possible. Between the real of the impossibility of the *total-analysis* and the real of the *total-analyst* there is an *aporia*, the place of an impossible synthesis: the place of the analytic act.¹⁶

To be an analyst is then to be able to play with words, not in order to *preach the good* but in order to *say—well*.

To analyse is more difficult yet than to do "crossword puzzles".¹⁷ To analyse is for the analyst to allow himself to be crucified by words, a cross which does not redeem. On the contrary, it annihilates the one who listens only in order to prepare him to listen.

NOTES

- ¹ FREUD, S. Psychopathology of Everyday Life, (1901). Stand.Ed., Vol.VI, 136-137.
- ² HEINE, H. *Gedenken und Einfälle*, quoted by Freud in Civilization and Its Discontents, (1930). Stand.Ed., Vol.XXI, 110.
- ³ Lacan's systemic and specific criticisms of this are well known from the Ecrits and seminars.
- ⁴ In italics in the original.
- ⁵ Whoever will feel moved by the examples given —taken from different benefactors— could continue the track of spiritual salvation, catechizing with "*Questionamos*" umbers 1 and 2 of Editorial Granica, Argentina.
- ⁶ Consciousness, equal to the awareness of belonging to a social class.
- ⁷ There was an apolitical and festive by-product of such an educative programme in countries (ad hoc) which announced that a "notion of freedom prevails in our marital relationship, in our family, in our profession," in order to achieve that "we ought to love our sons as we used to love our parents" (without incest, obviously, with maturity). Peace, Love, and now Freedom, which does not prevent the awakening of new energies, to point the radar at the avant-guard which now comes from France. Then, they can present themselves now as bio-Lacanian. "*Cosas veredes.*"
- ⁸ FREUD, S. Recommendations to Physicians Practising Psychoanalysis, (1912). Stand.Ed., Vol.XII, 111.
- ⁹ Furthermore that "*strengthening of the ego*" —in so far as it is an effect— always was relativized by Freud: "If we are going to make an alliance with the ego, this will be normal. But a normal ego of this kind is, as normality in general, an ideal fiction. The abnormal ego, which does not serve for our purposes, is unfortunately not a fiction. A normal person is in fact normal in so far as he belongs to the median. His ego is close to the psychotic ego in one or other aspect, either in greater or lesser degree." Analysis Terminable and Interminable, (1937). Stand.Ed., Vol.XXIII.
- ¹⁰ FREUD, S. Lines of Advance in Psychoanalytic Therapy, (1919). Stand.Ed., Vol.XVII, 164.
- ¹¹ FREUD, S. Analysis Terminable and Interminable, (1937). Stand.Ed., Vol. XXII, 226.
- ¹² LACAN, J. Situation of Analysis in 1956 in Ecrits. Ed. du Seuil: Paris, 1966.
- ¹³ FREUD, S. Advice to the Physician in Psychoanalytic Treatment, (1912). G.W.VIII, 332.

- ¹⁴ The analyst does not fear the madness of his patient but his patient's death through the only act, which being perfect, is not a repetition; suicide.
- ¹⁵ LACAN, J.
- ¹⁶ The same in reduplication will appear in the articulation between the psychoanalyst and the psychoanalytic institution: all institutions make the psychoanalysis which should be transmitted disappear; it is the obsessional neurosis of the beurocracy which transforms psychoanalysis into "*an eternal ceremony of mutual recognition*". (Neitsche — The Gay Science), this is to say a religion with its corresponding rituals — *All-psychoanalysis*, is the self-sufficient megalomania of the anarcho-analysis where in order to recognise itself it is enough to look at the mirror.
- ¹⁷ LACAN, J. Function and Field of the Word, Advice to a Young Analyst.

PART II

**SEMINARS OF THE FREUDIAN
SCHOOL OF MELBOURNE**

The following two seminars by Dr. Safouan were given
at an open day organised by the Freudian School of Melbourne
at the *Alliance Francaise de Melbourne*
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SEMINAR I — ON SYMBOLISM*

Moustapha Safouan

Oscar Zentner:

The only way the Freudian School of Melbourne has of presenting Dr. Safouan is to make quite clear something we said at our last Homage to Freud in September when we knew that Dr. Lacan had died. We said at the time that when a real analyst dies the School does not make a single minute of silence. The School produces work and today's seminar is really the confirmation.

Dr. Safouan is a psychoanalyst who started his psychoanalytic formation in the late 1940's in the *Société Psychanalytique de Paris*. He worked closely with Dr. Lacan for a long number of years until Lacan's death in 1980. He also was a member of *L'Ecole Freudienne de Paris* up until its dissolution.

Dr. Safouan will speak on Symbolism.

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Dr. Safouan:

As the topic of this morning's conference, I have chosen the topic of symbolism because of its wide interest. The sociologist, the anthropologist, and the psychoanalyst may be concerned with it; not to mention the linguist and the mathematician. Symbolism also appears in so different fields as ritual, advertisement, magical formulae or political slogan. One can go to the extent of saying that wherever there is discourse there is symbolism and even one may ask if there is symbolism beyond discourse. I mean when a wolf presents its neck to a stronger or more aggressive wolf, one may ask if this gesture is not a symbol of submission. But the word is no guarantee for the concept. I mean that anyone who tries to study symbolism in all its generality is liable to discover that there is no unity at all that underlies these different uses of the word. That is what makes it interesting to study symbolism in one particular field because it helps us to bring out these differences. I am going to talk about symbolism in psychoanalysis and as a matter of fact I have in mind symbolism mainly as it appears in dreams.

Concerning the subject of symbolism in psychoanalysis, I consider that the key to the solution of the question of the nature of symbolism was given to us by Jones' comparison of symbolism and metaphor. This comparison is the true approach which allows us to grasp the nature of the form of symbolism as it has arisen, but it is only the key to the solution and not the solution itself. Because this conception of metaphor, in as far as it is still tied up to Aristotle's definition or conception of metaphor, requires a severe revision.

This conception in Jones relates to three theses, the first is that the simile is the simplest figure of speech and it logically antedates even the metaphor and certainly the adjective (citing Jones). The second is that metaphor serves to eke out the relative paucity of attributive description. The third concerns what he calls the *decay* of metaphor which means that once it has been called by a *simile*, that image tends to acquire an objective reality. This means that a proper or a literal meaning is in place of subjective reality or figurative meaning in which subjective meaning is lost in the previous stages. So it is that acuity of mind no longer makes us think of a sharp knife and in this process of decay or evolution of metaphor as Jones likes to call it, the original meaning is

lost. And to show just how far a word can move away from its primitive usage, Jones cites as an example current usages of the word head. I did not open the Oxford Dictionary, but in France there are something like at least three pages in the *Littre* just to enumerate the different usages of this word.

Now each one of these theses requires a long commentary. To start with the first thesis, which has it that the simile is the simplest form of speech, I would remark that one cannot in fact read metaphor as a simile without altering its meaning and without destroying its effect. Take an example, one of Jones' himself; the simile which says 'John is a lion' (is like a lion). I would say that to say that John is a lion, is not simply to say that he is as courageous as a lion or like a lion, it is also to signify that courage is his natural element which never betrays him to the extent of allowing him to be another species. I mean that the weight of the image that captivates the subject is not the same in simile as in metaphor; for the latter conveys a conviction and an idealization which is stronger and more unfettered. Jones himself reckons that the evolution proceeds from the more concrete to the more abstract — from image to attribute. Now if we consider the respective effects, the most concrete would tend to belong to metaphor rather than to simile or image. It is therefore the former that logically ought to have precedence.

As to the second thesis which has it that the prominent motive for metaphor making is that it ekes out the paucity of attributive description. This also calls for some comment. In fact this paucity would to Jones' mind explain why that simile or comparison would precede not only the metaphor but certainly the adjective he says. In some primitive languages, and he gives the example of Tasmanian where there are no adjectives, similes are being used in their stead. Well, even if one were to treat this fact as uncontroversial it would make more sense to see this as a proof that a language may do without the grammatical category of adjectives, rather than seeing it as an index of some primitive mentality. I would like moreover to know if the Tasmanians habitually say 'X is like a lion' as the thesis of the precedence of the simile over metaphor would require; or whether on the contrary they would say 'X is a lion'. When Jones applies the same conception to dreams which in fact show marked predilection for expressions of imagery he is simply confusing what

Freud calls '*Darstellungsbarkheit*', that is considerations concerning figurability.

Anyway the important thing to note is that the motive of metaphor is not where Jones takes it to be. Hence the question. Where then is it, this motive for metaphor making? To answer this question I will consider metaphor in its current use among a people who in terms of their technological development may assuredly be reckoned among the most primitive. I refer to the Fang who are people living in West Africa who belong to a neo-Bantu culture and practise forest agriculture. Their most characteristic institution is called the *palaba*, the 'house of advice'. It is a place of incessant activity, be it artisanal production, rituals, performances, discussions and debates concerning deaths, marriages, divorces and rights, claims, inheritances etc.

Since it is an egalitarian society, decisions in these matters rest not with chiefs but with men who have what they call a 'reputation', which means the authority that they assume because people listen to them. They undoubtedly have this authority because they are intelligent, persuasive and eloquent; but the man who rules, who is intelligent, persuasive etc. prefers to put it that they are not the sort who would break the words but would rather cut them out. What we actually have here is a metaphorical description of judicial techniques and one which refers, whoever hears it, to the forest and to the work which is done there. The difference between breaking and cutting up which is clear enough to us, is endowed with even more meaning to the farmer. For each man if he wishes to provide for his own means and those of his dependents must work the forest with skill, and he must be an artisan who knows how not to break but to cut with care the raffias and other fibres of trees of the forest.

Should one say then that the motive for the metaphor consists in the image of differences or what one could say is before ones eyes? Certainly not, in fact if a man no matter what cultural level he belongs to says x is a wise man or x has good judgement or even that x is a good judge, he is simply giving a testimony about x. He is testifying to the fact that x is a good judge. Well, a testimony certainly has weight if one has the ability to believe that the witness knows what he is talking about or if he even knows what it really is to be a good judge. Such a knowledge is difficult

to articulate. I mean not out of any primitivity. It is the very problem that all our logicians tackle when they define logic as the art of thinking well. But still such knowledge even if it cannot be articulated it can, at any rate, be signified by means of a metaphor.

To judge well is not to break, but to cut up. That is to conform to the order of things. I mean that metaphor's function or motive is not to decorate our sentences, nor to give them more force or liveliness; nor even as Jones has it, to heighten the listener's appreciation, or to eke out the relative paucity of attributive description. Metaphor as a substitution is the obligatory road for any advance towards meaning. When someone asks you what is a bachelor you have, in order to give an answer, to make a substitution, you put other words instead. A bachelor is an unmarried man. . . So considered as a substitution, metaphor is the obligatory road toward any advance towards meaning.

Now we will proceed to Jones' third thesis concerning the decay of metaphor, in as much as this thesis presupposes a distinction between the proper and decorative meanings. This thesis is fundamentally only a consequence in evolutionist terms of the Aristotelian definition of metaphor. I shall not dwell here on Saussure's interpretation on the idea of a *langue* the terms of which would be fashioned according to the differences between things and words to designate them. One cannot help but wonder if there was a time, before measuring it, when the depth of the sea was not the thing by which man measured his despair; a time in which head was not used to say chief.

M. Dorn is a well known French specialist in semitic languages. I do not know if he is still alive. He is mostly known by his translation of the bible in a well known Editions Pléiade; and other things. One of the titles in French is '*L'emploi métaphorique des noms des parties du corps propre en Hébreu et Arcadien*' (The Metaphoric Use of Names of Parts of the Body in Hebrew and Arcadian), published in 1923. The importance of this work is that you only need to open the book in order to realise that no object of nature or of industry may be grasped by man except through the image of his own body. Yet how would this imaginary interposition be possible if man did not receive this image already fragmented from language. I mean that the very fragmentation that Freud identified so early in hysterical symptoms is also that which

causes the names of parts of the body to be lent to objects which people the world. At the end of their journey however, these names return to the human being. I mean that if the eye lends its name to the neck, the latter would be bound to render it the same metaphoric service. Take a very common example, we say wine is the blood of the vine. But much to my surprise I have also encountered the inverse metaphor which underlay an analysand's symptom and which constituted its repressed and pathogenic content. Through this symptom an almost vocalised wish was seeking expression, namely that her blood was the wine of the person with whom she was then preoccupied. Wine being a drink which that loved person much favoured. And the symptom was a kind of haemorrhagia.

Two conclusions follow from this. The first is that no reference to the object or law of signification, such as the one that holds metaphoric extension of things from the concrete to the abstract, or the one that has that it precedes from things belonging to the body to things belonging to the world, no such law orders substitution between signifiers. One would be as little justified in tying metaphor to resemblance, as in explaining totemism in terms of the resemblance between people who give themselves the name of a particular animal and the animal itself. The second conclusion is that the order of the signifier conveys what we might call an imaginary symbiosis between man and the world. But this symbiosis in which man lends his own forms to the world and receives them from it is a screen rather than knowledge, if one understands by the last term some sort of purchase or grasp on reality.

At this point I cannot help yielding to a digression in order to show you that the subordination of metaphor or signifier to a signified is at the root of a conception according to which fantasy, in the psychoanalytical meaning of the term, expresses what in French is called *la tout puissance* (all powerful) and not what I would call a lack of being. I will show this point by examining Ella Sharpe's theory of metaphor. She has written it in her selected writings under the title, An Examination of Metaphor.

Well, Ella Sharpe no more questions the Aristotelian definition of metaphor than Jones does and in fact she explicitly acknowledges it. Likewise, and for motives similar to Jones, it is her desire to cut short any spiritualistic deviations. She assigns metaphoric translations a

meaning which moves from the physical to the spiritual, from real experience to abstract ideas. That is the direction. In point of fact her translation or interpretation of, for instance, an original metaphor such as a 'flood of words'; when she interprets such a metaphor by urinate, the result is that part of the interpretation encounters insurmountable resistances. The interpretation is simply refused. Still this does not in any way shake her conviction that she has hit upon something. For sooner or later, she ends up by eliciting the confession of a phantasy through what she calls working through. But the point is that she does not notice that she only succeeds in obtaining this confession of the phantasy by using herself expressions that belong to the same metaphorical domain in which the analysand himself moved. For example when she tells him 'Oh yes, indeed, and you would drown me with your words' and then afterwards begets the confession of a phantasy. We can formulate this question on her behalf, as she does not notice what she is doing: whence then, comes this peculiar efficacy of metaphor in interpretation?

Here I will begin by noting that to translate 'a flow of words' as a flow of urine is to suppose that 'flow' is only properly used in relation to urine which is already a phantasy and then only by extension to a relation to words and therefore not at all surprising that her interpretation should provoke the resistances she describes. Since by proceeding as she does she takes the real object as constituting the whole of the desire or the wish. Is she therefore altogether wrong then? No, for the fact is that the insistence of liquid metaphors sometimes betrays a phantasy that one should describe not as original, but rather as Gulliverian (from Gulliver). As any analyst may verify for himself by pursuing what Ella Sharpe herself does next. By this term Gulliverian, I mean that the jet of urine is involved in the phantasy not so much in terms of what it really is, but rather as a significant element in a montage in which the taste for power in relation to the object is certainly satisfied, but where what is actually signified is the lack, if not the derisory quality of this same power. It is this lack therefore that determines metaphorical transference or more precisely what I have called that imaginary symbiosis between man and the world and not a resemblance which is only self-evident in so far as one takes the moon to be made of green cheese.

The very effort employed by Ella Sharpe concludes contrary to what

she assumes regarding the relation of desire to the object, the exception indeed, the real of the primordial affinity between phantasy and fiction. That is why Ella Sharpe obtains the avowal of the phantasy through the use of metaphor since only this use in the form of a confirmation of the metaphor uttered by the analysand shows up the lack. To put it in a nutshell I would say that to interpret a metaphor, and the same thing applies to a symbol, is not to give its equivalent or what it is supposed to represent. *The interpretation of a metaphor is not interpretation of the metaphor but is interpretation by metaphor.*

The same formula that relates the signifier to the signified makes it practically impossible for Jones to get rid as completely as he should of some erroneous opinions exposed by Rank and Sachs concerning the main characteristics of the psychoanalytic symbols. They enumerate six characteristics of the psychoanalytic symbols. I do not think I can dwell on all of them. I will content myself with an example of the fifth characteristic concerning the linguistic connections of symbols. Jones' statements regarding these connections of symbols are all too reminiscent of the thesis an author Theodore Thass-Thienemann has recently advanced in two volumes under the title of Interpretation of Language, the first volume being called Understanding the Symbolic Meaning of Language.

From etymology he postulates a universal primitive language. For him any language represents a certain relation to the real. It constitutes in short a form of knowledge. In fact the study of etymology serves us sometimes to attest the symbolic reading of a word, not by bringing comparisons between two ideas which would not occur to our conscious minds to bring together as Jones would put it, but rather by demonstrating the homophonic links that tie the word symbol to another word which in another given epoch had the same meaning as is involved in the repression. Jones for example shows what I mean quite clearly. What accounts for the English word *Punchinello* having the value of a phallic symbol. He refers to the physical characteristics which are suggested by this word—a long hooked nose, an elongated chin, a hunch back, a projecting stomach and a pointed cap— even Jones will not go this far. At the most he takes it as an index confirming that interpretation. Nor does the symbolism of *Punchinello* depend on the four

ideas which according to Jones its Latin and English roots evoke. That is the ideas of 1) the caressing name for male offspring equivalent to little man; 2) the projecting part of the body; 3) the notion of piercing or penetration; 4) that of shortness and stoutness. This is not enough. But the Latin words *Pullus* and Neapolitan *pol(l)ecenella*, which means 'little turkey cock' or the English *punch* are signifiers which were already used and recognised as phallic metaphors and it is this indeed which lends weight to our conception of *Punchinello* as a symbol of the Phallus, when the context demands it. To be more clear, you cannot say that x is a symbol for y because of its resemblance to y which is the method mainly adopted by Robert Fliess in his book titled Psychosis, Dreams and Symbols. The way to know if such a term is a symbol or not (and a symbol of what) is to proceed like the classic author Britt Harloff (sp?) who published about two years ago a book titled The Half Open Door. The half open door is a very common motif in Roman funeral sculpture. From this he got the impression that this was a symbol, but, a symbol of what? He did not look for resemblances but he went to the poetry of that epoch to see if this was a metaphor and if so of what. So he effectively finished by finding out that the half open door was used in the current Roman literature as a metaphor to say the transition between life and death; for the communication or the break up between both. This was the method and you could say the sculptor himself used the motif without knowing anything of its meaning.

It is also a fact that Jones accorded to metaphor as well as to symbols the value of being a form of knowledge. It is this fact that hindered him from separating himself as completely as he would have liked from Jung. To show this let us examine more closely what are the differences, according to Jones, between the symbol and the metaphor. Metaphor according to him is based upon the perception of a resemblance; it is the outcome of a comparison. In the case of metaphor this comparison remains transparent and is easy to make explicit in spite of that mechanical translation. I will explain that fact of transparency of metaphor, which is a substitution, in my terminology by saying that the replaced signifier is simply 'glossed over' or avoided *élide*. As the symbol according to Jones is also based upon the perception of resemblance, the only difference is that in the symbol this resemblance goes to the extent of identification, which means that one part of the comparison is resolved in

the other. So much so that the comparison itself gets occulted and that the subject is no longer aware that he is using a symbol. Again in my terminology I will say that the replaced signifier is repressed. But it remains that in the two cases the two figures are conceived of as the outcome of a cognitive operation, thus the operation that is summarised by saying that say *x* represents *y*, *y* being the signifier which is simply omitted or repressed.

Now this is precisely an error. I will take even the most classical metaphor, the most respectable metaphor, which was first given by Aristotle himself the one of 'evening of life' for 'old age'. I say that it is *simply an error to think that in this metaphor the 'evening of life' represents 'old age' or means 'old age'*. Rather I will say that in the substitution of 'evening of life' for 'old age' it is the evening which gives as a signifier a meaning to old age. It gives a meaning which is metaphor which I will say cannot be fully grasped by meaning except by the people for whom the night was really darkness.

To sum up I will say that to believe that we find the meaning of the metaphor with what is simply its latent signifier; is an operation based upon the subordination of that signifier to the signified as if all the significations were already there constituting a closed world in which nothing new can arise. It is precisely the function of a metaphor to bring out new significations. . . from the things which present themselves to us as enigmas.

Now the production of a new signification implies that at the moment of this production there was some lack (I would say some hole in the field of significations) and it is in this very hole and not in any act of cognition that we situate or locate what we would call the subject. As long as we remain in the perspective of the secular tradition according to which the subject is synonymous with the subject of knowledge and according to which every representation is a representation of something positive or a being, no possible demarcation can be made between Freudians and Jungians. Jones gives us the proof. After all Jung himself would admit, like Jones, that the soul represents something known but it is not the same thing as a symbol and here the symbol may represent something unknown. Still, he would say the soul or the mind represents itself in the symbol, for example, the soul reads its cure in the symbol of

the mandala. And so it is around the relation between the subject and the signifier that we have the real line of separation.

Either we start from the subject who represents himself — who knows himself unconsciously— or we start from the signifier in as much as it fragments the subject and from this very fact prefigures the idea of unity which remains an ideal in perpetual flight. Either we start from unity and identity or we start from the signifier in as much as it determines the loss, both of identity and of unity. This loss still gets its indication in what Freud called *Wunsch* or *Vorstellung* (a term which we usually translate by representation of a wish). Still, we have to observe that this representation (let us remember the example of Ella Sharpe) does not represent any object but rather it represents a lack; a lack which is inscribed in its very representation.

To conclude I will refer to the famous distinction of Spinoza between mind constituted and constituting mind or *nature naturée* and *nature naturante*. I would say that no consideration of what is already constituted can give us the motive of a metaphor because it is in the very metaphor that what is still unconstituted gets constituted. Looking at things from this angle I would say that the progress in an analysis or in the psychoanalytic process consists in the movement which leads the subject to recognise the metaphors which underlie or are hidden behind the symbols of his dreams and his symptoms. This is the meaning which the famous dictum 'where it was I ought to be' assumes. This is not to say that this is the only explanation or description of this dictum. There can be many psychoanalytic explanations possible but from the angle of the symbolism we can say that psychoanalytic process consists in discovering the metaphors behind the symbols. Thank you.

Oscar Zentner: I suppose it is a kind of metaphor that life is very short therefore I would like to ask a question, just in case! There is a question which is important here, I mean for the Freudian School and for analysts of the English school in general. Could you expand a bit more the difference between Freud and Jung. Of course I agree with you, because in so far as we follow Jones, there is no point in making any difference between them. In short then, what is the difference between something which is going to be a symbol for Freud and for Jung?

Dr. Safouan: The difference concerns mainly the meaning of the

unconscious, because if we start with say something called psychic life or psychic apparatus, we can consider Jung as representing as a whole occidental philosophical tradition, which takes the subject as synonymous with the subject of knowledge. Even the knowledge by symbols will be at most unconscious knowledge; which would be a contradiction in terms. The fact is that the unconscious is there and we have dreams as its demonstration. In dreams they have what is called the latent content, that is the manifest content, thanks to what is called free associations, leads you (and here is the metaphor of the Royal Road) to something which was not known before. That means that the unconscious signifies something, the latent content, in the dream. Now this unconscious which signifies so well so many ideas, and Freud goes to the extent of saying that the unconscious ideas have the same variety as our conscious ones on the plane of intellectuality — we have affirmation, negation, denial, exclamations, refutations etc. So does the unconscious which signifies know the ideas which are signified, that is the whole question? It does not know.

This makes of the unconscious and of the dream something like a message received as if it was from another subject, from God. Whereas the whole value of Freud's discovery in his *Traumdeutung* consists in the fact that he conquered a territory which up until his day was reserved to gods and here is the very difficulty of thinking the unconscious. But because of this difficulty we do not have to regress to the idea of the subject as a community corporation. Jungism represents such a regression:

Leonardo Rodríguez: How do you see the scope of metaphor especially in relation to symbolism, because metaphor cannot be reduced to or be explained by reference to pre-existing signifieds. You now defined it as substitution. Does this mean any sort of substitution or is it for instance metonymic substitution? Or, are you thinking of metaphor in very broad terms?

Dr. Safouan: No, metaphor. I mean metonymy is completely another field. We may tackle the question this afternoon. But every substitution is not metaphor. For instance when you say the English word cat and say what does it mean to a Frenchman he translates it *chat*. This is a case of heteronomy, which is a case of substitution, not a metaphor. Or

what does the word bachelor mean? You make a substitution and say an unmarried man, but this is a substitution by synonymy. It is a case of substitution which is like heteronomy but it is not metaphor. Metaphor is a case in which substitution is characterised by the fact that it brings a new signification, like the example of Aristotle. Structurally you can take the idea of the two axes of combination and substitution as coordinates. Metaphor surely is to be located on the axis of substitution; metonymy is on the axis of combination as we shall see this afternoon.

Inés Zentner: Dr. Safouan could you please explain why psychoanalysis would not be hermeneutics but the investigation of the unconscious?

Dr. Safouan: Well Paul Ricoeur's book has given the idea of hermeneutics a big vogue since the 60's and I think it has been translated into English. It has some affinity to the methods of Schipper. . . when you open a book. . . like the book of Artemidore. . . these books are like catalogues to the dreams, and these books are very current in Greek and Arabic —especially under titles like— The Key to Dreams. You can have the signifier and the translation already in your pocket! This is one of the errors which one is liable to fall into in treating symbolism. I didn't expand the other major features of symbols, but according to Rank and Sachs, they say that symbols have only one meaning, which is not true. Jones himself corrected it. He did not subscribe to this idea.

As a matter of fact a symbol may have different meanings in different contexts. It depends on the context and you cannot even say immediately of one image, even if it is well known that it is a symbol (for example the ox as a phallic symbol). You can never have a dream in which this figure appears and it means so and so. You must look very carefully, maybe this ox was reminiscent of somebody who was called ox as a surname. It is only the context which will tell you if it is a symbol or not. So the idea of hermeneutics testifies some greediness to signification. This greediness of knowledge is precisely what one must suspend. This is the objection I have to hermeneutics, it is a dangerous pretension in approach.

Rob Gordon: Yet, there are symbols which recur with a certain regularity. Would you say that these really rest upon a common body of experience which people share?

Dr. Safouan: You mean different individuals or different cultures?

Rob Gordon: Yes.

Dr. Safouan: Yes, indeed yes.

Rob Gordon: Jung would say that this implied some fixed meaning to a particular symbol. But as I understand you any common meaning would rest upon some common associations or some common experiences.

Dr. Safouan: Yes. The point is that effectively there are symbols which are very recurrent in different dreams of the same person, or in dreams of different persons and even in widely different cultures; like for example the house for the body or the serpent for the phallus and so on. One of the main discoveries or illuminating ideas of Jones was to remark that the symbols are numerous. You can count them by hundreds, if not thousands, but the topics symbolized are very limited. All the symbols refer to one of the five topics, life, death, the human body, parenthood, kinship and sex. Of course any of these five topics can be divided into many topics, such as parts of the body. But on the whole all symbols relate to these five topics, without going into the explanation to be given to the given facts; for example Jones himself talks about needs. The needs govern all humanity, life, death, sex and kinship. But a moments reflection would make us realise that there is nothing in these things which we could legitimately compare with what we could call a need. These topics are impossible to conceive unless the subject is already taken in a web of signifiers. It is impossible to explain the frequency of signifiers on the basis of needs. Now, this is outside of your question. But to go to your question itself, indeed the same symbols are recurrent and this refers to the fact that jokes can be repeated by many people. It is not because you take the serpent as signifying the phallus or the house as the body but it is due to the context. One dreams of building a house, this may be taken to symbolise a wish to rebuild oneself. In this case the house refers to ones own body. But it may be just as well that the house has another symbolic meaning. So the frequency I admit it, but that is no reason to prejudge the image in a particular case.

Stanley Gold: Could I ask a question about your comparison of metaphor and symbol. If I heard you correctly, when you were describing the characteristics of symbols, you pointed out that resemblance

goes further to identification and that comparison is occluded and the subject is not aware of using the symbol. I wonder if you could make a comment about this concept, which sounds to me clinically rather like what we may see clinically as a psychotic person — to the ideas of Hanna Segal in the relationship of symbol to symbolic equation?

Dr. Safouan: This is a difference... The difference between metaphor and symbol is that in one case the replaced element or signifier is simply latent but without being repressed and all the comparison is transparent, while in the symbol the comparison goes to the extent of identification, so that the latent content simply dissolves in the symbol and the subject has no knowledge even of losing the symbol. I subscribe to this except for the fact that it is not a question of comparison but a question of substitution. This being given I admit to the differentiation between the two cases. In the one the signifier is latent; in the other it is repressed. So the characterization I agree to, except it is substitution and not comparison, implies the novelty of the meaning in the situation. Now I have the feeling that your remark relates rather to the question of the overwhelming power of symbolism in psychosis, no? That does the predominance of symbolism in psychosis require a special explanation.

Stanley Gold: Well, yes in a way. I was referring to the concept of the symbolic equation which Hanna Segal has described — where the symbol is the object and does not stand for the object in comparison to symbol *per se*, in which there is standing for. She gives an example you will recall of the violinist who believed when he played his violin in public he was masturbating. This is one example she gives and it seemed to me that where the comparison is occluded as you were describing Jones as saying, this is very close to that kind of psychotic symbolic equation and leaves out other uses of and categories of symbolization.

Dr. Safouan: Well it may be characteristic of psychoses, but to be characteristic of psychosis it does not imply the negation of the part it plays even in neurosis and inhibitions. In *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Angst*, Freud gives an example of the inhibition of the act of writing which takes place in the very measure of the extent to which the pen comes to symbolize the phallus and paper the mother's body. This means that in fact an inhibition is an effect of the intervention of an unconscious desire. Once that incestuous desire gets mixed up with the

apparent desire of writing, then comes the inhibition. To this extent you can lead the subject or conduct him, and I will say it again, to the point of knowing the metaphors under the symbol of the pen — I am sure you can find poetic uses in the literature in the language, yes. For example in France we say *l'âme de la plume* and you say *la page vierge*. So if you know the processes underlying the symptom this is the process of doing away with the inhibition. The point of the peculiarity of psychosis to me is not the use of symbol, not even that the symbol is used in a more extensive way. It is the fact that the mechanisms are not those of repression. I mean you cannot restitute the meaning to the subject even at the appropriate moment. He does not want to know anything about it because he believes that what he lacks is a real object. So he does not want to know. For example when he sends you some letters, a psychotic patient, then some days later he demands that they must be given back to him. You cannot settle this matter by letting him know what these letters mean to him. No, what he needs is really the letters and that is that. For Schreber the birds were really the birds, there were no metaphors. I think for him subjectively speaking, there were neither symbols nor metaphors. For him 'that is that'. And that is why you can compare the report of Schreber with a scientific report. From his point of view it is a scientific report and he presented it as such. So I will recap that you find symbols in the psychotic productions but the question is are they symbols for us or for him. I doubt that they are symbols for him. He moves in the real.

Oscar Zentner: I would like to tackle this question. Octave Mannoni in Buenos Aires gave a good example of the same thing. A psychotic patient treated by Bion. The patient who was trying to take his ear off. Bion said something like — you are trying to cut or uproot your penis. And the answer of the patient was that the penis was a word of two syllables *pe/nis*. I think this is the way in which a psychotic will treat symbols, if by symbols we understand a phenomenon of language. He will treat it as any linguist or grammarian would treat any production of language. Of course the interpretation did not arrive to him and, as Dr. Safouan was pointing out, the patient was not using repression, but a different kind of mechanism altogether, namely that of forclusion. I think we have a problem there and that is how to interpret in psychosis.

Dr. Safouan: Yes, I think that is the problem with psychosis as I see it. I have had little experience with psychosis, but the little I know allows me to put the difficulty not in the degree of symbolization. I am sure there are symbols in any psychotic production be it a written word like Schrebers, or a hallucination. But the whole question is if they are symbols to him.

Norma Grieve: Your idea of hole, you used the word earlier, is in a way the motive for completion of attribution. Is it possible that there are degrees of that absence. Are some symbols more accessible than others for the patient because there is only a little to be filled in. In fact there is a lot known. Whereas in other symbolic productions it is difficult because a lot has to be filled in.

I was trying to extend your idea, as it seems there are degrees of accessibility of symbols and what might be at the bottom of that? For the psychotic maybe the original signifier has a lot of holes in it. I mean the elegance of a metaphor is often in poetic terms because a lot of attributions are known commonly amongst people but this person, the poet, picks out a small one which is not obvious to everyone although everyone can immediately fit it in and they immediately recognise it and find this very creative.

Dr. Safouan: Yes, you make me think of the Snark of Lewis Carroll. What does this Snark mean for everybody? There were a great many interpretations and he said yes he accepted them all! I mean one may produce a signification to answer to an enigma. In poetry though, the signification is produced as an enigma in itself. That is the difference between the use of symbols in poetry and in dreams for example. I think it is a good angle to examine the particularities of the relation between the poet and language. It is surely different from the relation which we have with the signification in dreaming or in symptoms, not to mention of the relation of a psychotic. It would be nonsense to compare the production of a poet or even a philosopher or thinker for example, who could continue to the end of time commenting on the dialogues of Plato, or some poems of Rilke or Hölderlin. This is a completely different relation. This relation consciously constructed by the poet is completely different from unconscious formations such as dreams and symptoms. I would not mix both together at all.

Frances Moran: Is it a bit like the poet plays with the signifiers but with the patient, the signifiers are playing with him.

Dr. Safouan: Yes, yes. I mean this is the first approach. This is the minimum you can say.

Frances Moran: Dr. Safouan, I was wondering before when you said that the production of metaphor suggests a hole, if there is some connection between that and your emphasis earlier that the interpretation is to be made not of the metaphor, but rather by metaphor. Does the difference here concern where you place the subject?

Dr. Safouan: *a priori* there must be a relation, yes.

Frances Moran: I mean that interpretation of metaphor seemed to me to suggest a completion, a bit like hermeneutics, whereas in interpretation by metaphor you are just extending the branches of the metaphor.

Dr. Safouan: Yes, yes.

Frances Moran: Therefore the subject must be located differently, and that is one of Ella Sharpe's mistakes.

Dr. Safouan: Yes, surely.

Oscar Zentner: Freud characterized the symbol as the only thing that escaped repression. If that is so, if it escapes repression, even if it helps repression, maybe we can situate the problem in another level. Because symbols will be for the psychotic, neurotic or perverse no more than an element of language, but with the characteristics that do not belong to the formation of the unconscious. It is not a dream, nor a joke or a parapraxis and I wonder if you can extend that point — that the symbol according to Freud is not under the control of repression.

Dr. Safouan: No, why say so? I will say that the symbol is the sign, in neurosis, of a very deep repression and that is why you can not interpret it directly like that. Jones was certainly right in making of the resistances to the interpretation of symbols, one of their main characteristics. I would say that you can interpret metaphors by metaphors but symbols is another formula. For example take the symbol of the ox. I remember a dream in which this symbol appeared. An ox in a meadow. The main association was the memory of the dreamer, that when she was a child of 3 or 4 years, near a promenade in a meadow where there was some

grass and sometimes the grass was high, so she compared her measure to the measure of the grass and she was shorter than the grass. So if I add to this other association, I think I will not be mistaken in the meaning of the dream which was to the effect, 'smaller than the grass but an ox still'. But if I had given her this interpretation even in this form, I think it would have been too tough. So the symbols are a very formal matter as far as their interpretation is concerned, precisely because they indicate a very deep repression. I would say the topic in the symbol is in the very first moment of its own constitution. If you attack this too early sometimes in conducting an analysis, the analysand is led to realise some classification of his memory and this classification then announces a new chapter in his analysis — say, the chapter of his relationship to his brothers. Then there may come a dream when there are symbols of worms, as symbols of brotherhood — this means that the new subject is just starting to be dealt with and you can not intervene and you must give time. So, I would not say that the symbol has no relation to repression or escapes repression. It is the first state of the return of the repressed.

Frances Moran: Is there any connection between the symbol as you describe it now and hallucination?

Dr. Safouan: No, no.

Frances Moran: Are some of the characteristics of an hallucination not the same?

Dr. Safouan: If you take the hallucinations in the sense of the return of the repressed, as in a hysterical psychosis. For example, like the well known hallucinations of Anna O., yes in this sense. When you first mentioned hallucinations, I thought of paranoid hallucinations like words.

Stanley Gold: Would you link what you are saying now to the Lacanian notion of the symbolic?

Dr. Safouan: The Lacanian notion of the symbolic has two facets: the one according to which the symbolic is synonymous with the order of the signifier, which is characteristic of human beings, and the other facet which is also characteristic of human culture as such, which refers to the order of alliances and kinship. This always revolves about the predominance of the father, or rather the *Name-of-the-Father*. It relates to lists of names (*nomenclature*). So the two facets are tied up together

because there is no nomenclature without language. In this case, what I am saying about symbolism can claim to be a conception in the line of Lacan's doctrines in as much as the accent was put heavily on the notion of the signifier. Also because of the insistence on what characterizes the signifier, which is that it has no fixed signification, as Saussure says in his manuscript notes. This is a very important document. It is a pity it is not translated into English. You could equally call the signification the non-signification since it has no meaning given in advance. It is open to all possible significations.

So when he bases his considerations upon what he calls the linguistic sign for him this is not the state of things. Rather for him it is a mystery. How does it happen that the signifier which has no signification in advance can have a particular signification? And the answer comes through the relation of the signifier to the other signifiers — a relation of substitution or of combination. For him, the sign was not an expression of what the signification is, but was the expression of a mystery. Even before Lacan, I believe according to him, that the bar was one of separation and not of conjunction. And once the subject is located in the hole, the question is 'what does it mean that something is lacking?' It is the metaphor we give as an answer. This hole, you can see, is identical to the bar which separates the signifier from the signified. All that I have said relates to the predominance of the signifier and its definition as being separated from the signification. These are the links.

SEMINAR II — ON JOKES

Moustapha Safouan

This afternoon I would like to present to you in a summary form three notions. The first one you would call in English the retroactive passing of meaning, the second is the notion of metaphor as you can see it as a special technique in the formation of jokes and the third is the notion of metonymy.

If time permits, we will talk about the comic object in itself and about the same techniques in the dreams.

Regarding the first notion of retroactive passing of meaning, at first view you can say that it results, as I explained this morning, from the fact that it is the signifier that produces the signification. This priority of the signifier implies the sequence of signifier first and then signification. The notion itself was introduced by one of the greatest rhetoricians, maybe of all times, an Englishman, I.A. Richards, the author of *The Meaning of Meaning*. This book appeared in the 20's. In the 30's he changed completely in his orientation and he published in 1960 *The Philosophy of Rhetorics*.

In this book he denounced, very severely, a rhetoric in which it is assumed that words each possess a proper meaning along with their spelling. His criticism accorded with the observation of Brentano, a Viennese philosopher who, having noted that the whole world of significations was constructed out of insignificant letters, stressed that the same applied to words which cease to be amenable to signification and that each did in fact have an influence in meaning. But Richards did not stop at this negative observation that meaning is not given in advance. He specifies that it is in a retroactive way that meaning comes to be placed beneath a word. I quote him. He says for example,

“In the kind of prose I am talking now, you usually have to wait until I have gone on a bit before you can decide how to understand the opening parts of a sentence.”

This thesis leads Richards to substitute for the notion of meaning as fixed or previously defined, a thing he observes never encountered outside the discourse of science — e.g. in the mathematics of a grid. Outside this kind of discourse, what we observe is what he calls the movement of meaning. However, unfortunately, this latter notion of movement of meaning is not very well drawn in his writing because he makes it hidden and thereby it is rendered almost ineffectual. He tries to illustrate it on different levels. To start with he tries to illustrate it on the level of what he calls the simplest prose. On this level he gives an example and comments on it in such a way that this movement of meaning becomes virtually synonymous with the diversity of words of which the sentence is composed. For example he says in ‘the cat is on the mat’, we begin with cat and finish with mat. This comment is a bit too cursory. I mean we have to develop it more than that. It seems to me that it is fair to note in this example chosen by Richards himself, that when one comes to the end of the sentence, mat turns cat, so to say, into a being cut or made from the same stuff as mat. I mean it is at the end of the sentence that it appears we have a cat which is on the mat as if it were of its own element. In short, we have a cat of a quite singular kind without being ineffectual, since it is an effect of assonance.

In order to see how much an apparently simple signifier as cat is a part of what we call the domestic zoology of most human societies, you only

have to think of the cat poems of T.S. Elliot. This will show you how it could be open to all kinds of significations. I may cite the Victorian limerick which goes like this:

A man from Peru
didn't know what to do.
He sat on a mat,
played with a cat.
And sent the
results to the zoo.

and so you had to wait until the last word, zoo, in order to understand about this cat and this is the retroactive movement which is such that the beginning of the word or phrase or discourse is understood at the end. This is what Lacan illustrates by what he calls the *points de capiton* (anchoring points). It is a technique of the people who make a mattress. It is impossible to criticise Richards from levels other than the simplest prose, because his examples are taken from Shakespeare among others and any one example would take all the time at our disposal this afternoon. I think that the idea is clear enough.

Now the point is that the techniques of rhetoric really are retroactive techniques; be they metaphor or metonymy. Of course I talk of rhetorics not as it was defined in the classical times, as the art of persuasion, but rhetorics as we can define it now, as the study of the ways of production of meaning.

Well, let us now consider the question of jokes. Jokes give rise to two questions; one concerning the techniques whereby a particular joke is as it is, I mean a spirited and nicely turned saying, rather than a banal one. The other question concerns the reasons for provoking laughter. These two questions are connected because where there is a joke there is technique but they are also separate questions, for where there is technique there is certainly wit (*esprit*) but not necessarily a joke. This latter is defined by the laughter it provokes. It is this characteristic which suggests the following definition of a joke as wit, in so far as it uncovers the comical. One can therefore justify a separate study of technique because it constitutes the necessary but not the sufficient condition for jokes.

Indeed, as you know, Freud devotes the first part of *Jokes and Their Relations to the Unconscious* to just such a study. I will not dwell on the

method he uses, which to me is very misleading but I will summarize it. His method is what he calls the method of reduction. He takes the joke as it is and in order to study the technique, the natural method seems to be to study its meaning and then to compare the non-witty version with the witty one, and the comparison brings out the technique in both. The method has the defect of suggesting that the work of wit (*esprit*) is a work of transformation; as if you have the meaning first and the humour second. While in fact it is a work of production and not of transformation. The second defect is that the non-witty version is always longer than the witty one, which brings us to the fallacious result of considering everything as condensation. Condensation, instead of denoting a special technique, becomes synonymous with what he calls the tendency of wit to 'spare'.

With these considerations given, I think it is better to go directly to the examples and to submit to you the way I analyse them. Of course the first example is the one concerning the lottery seller, Hirsch-Hyacinthe who, having visited Solomon Rothschild, wanted to describe the reception which was given him by this millionaire and to say he was received in a very familiar way. He said instead, in a very *famillionaire* way. This is an example which has been analysed so many times I will spare you another time but I will give you another example on the same theme. This is the example of the Sovereign called Leopold, whom all Europe dubbed *Cleopold* on account of his infatuation with a young woman called Cleo. If this example makes us laugh it is definitely not because of the historical references which are no longer current but because it touches a very sensitive spot. After all, infatuation is not only the privilege of crowned heads. I would say that this Sovereign Leopold with all his infatuation with this Cleo poses you a question. What does this infatuation mean? What does he want? You have the name of the King, Leopold, and this is the signifier and it brings the question of what is the main characteristic of his infatuation. So when you put *Cleopold* instead of Leopold you laugh even if you cannot formulate a meaning and one does not need to formulate it in order to laugh. The joke produces a meaningful effect and we do not need to go to the extent of making this explicit. Leopold becomes *Cleopold* and people's ideal of love is that two become one and here you have one becoming two and so you laugh. So this very substitution of *Cleopold* for Leopold gives us the

signification of the x of interest here.

So with this you have the formula of the metaphor according to Lacan:

$$\frac{S}{S'} \cdot \frac{S'}{x} \rightarrow S \left(\frac{I}{s} \right)$$

Why does he write it like this? In fact, when one says a joke, one is the first to be surprised by one's own joke. One laughs at it, receives the joke as another person. One receives it as one would a dream. You can say that what is significant comes to you from the place of language, from what Freud calls the other scene, the other place. You can say that what is significant of the other scene or place and you can say also the signification of the Other. Why he put 'One' here is because in French you would say the substitution produced '*une*' signification. '*Une*' in French has the double meaning of the indefinite article and the meaning of *one*. So this means one signification — it produces a signification of the Other. This is the explanation of the formula of the metaphor according to Lacan. And of course if you go back to *famillionaire* you can see immediately how the same structure applies.

Now I have another example which pertains to a completely different technique and that is the joke that a young man makes when faced with a friend's astonishment that he is wearing a wedding ring on his finger because he was supposed to be a 'merry bachelor', so to say. And after an absence of some years his friend met him and saw the ring on his finger. "What, are you married?" To which his friend replies "*trauring aber wahr*". Now, that is the case every time you talk about unconscious formations: They are so couched in the language, the *langue*, that you cannot translate them. Well, *trauring* means an alliance and there was a saying (*locution*) current among the Viennese, *traurig aber wahr* (sad but true). So the man said *trauring aber wahr*. As you may see the technique of this joke does not consist in the substitution of *trauring* for *traurig*, but rather in the combination of *trauring* with *aber wahr*, such that it necessarily evoked the *traurig*, so much so that the two differ only by a single letter. So he said *trauring* but he made you hear *traurig*, which makes all the difference. To say that marriage is sad or that it is not, is simply, in either case, to profess an opinion, whereas having caused the illusion is what we would call the mark of a gay spirit and one which I

would say is content to avoid misrepresentations, without pretense to knowledge.

This technique I would call metonymic. What we have here we can formulate in this way by the formula of metonymy according to Lacan:

$$f(S \dots S') S \cong S (-)s$$

I read it this way. If *trauring* only means *trauring* and *traurig* only means *traurig* and that is that, there can be no joke. The possibility of a joke, of making you hear something when I said something else, is only possible when there is a separation between what is significant and the signifier. This separation is symbolised in this way by the dots. Thus it is possible to make some signifier S allude to some other signifier S'. You can put it in the reciprocal way. It is the connection between this signifier and the other signifiers which permits that separation between what is significant and the signifiers. The sign \cong here means congruence as in mathematical logic.

Now, as far as metaphor is concerned (the first technique), it is useful to point out that it does not necessarily always imply, as in the case of *Cleopold* or *famillionaire*, what Freud has called condensation in the sense of compression. There can be metaphors without any condensation. For example, there was a man called Herr N. who was known as the wittiest person in Vienna, who made a joke concerning a certain gentleman whose sole qualification for the post of Minister of Agriculture, was his own status as that of a gentleman farmer. So that when he gave up his office to devote his time to his land, Herr N. declared that like Cincinnatus, the Roman senator, "he has gone back to his place before the plough". When he said this, he did not say it in order for you to understand that his place was behind it. In this case it would have been a metonymy. In this case he wanted to say that his real place was before the plough, like the ox, so there was a substitution of *before* for *behind* and this very substitution produces a shade of meaning of stupidity; that his incompetence was the incompetence of an ox to administer.

I also take this example so that you may not, when you read Freud, tie up substitution with condensation in the sense of compression. So

substitution may or may not go with condensation in the sense of compression. It may also go with metonymy based on the connection between the signifiers. There is a point to be made here. In the example I analysed of *trauring aber wahr*, the connection between the two signifiers was based upon a case of assonance. I mean it pertained to the structure of the signifiers as such. But this is not necessarily the case. The connection between the signifiers may sometimes be due to the fact that the significations themselves in their current usage refer the one to the other. For example, in French you say "let us *boire une verre*", you do not say "let us drink a glass of wine" because the signification of glass refers to the signification of wine. You just say the one and you are representing the other.

Well, in order to kill two birds with one stone, I will give an example from a dream. This is the text of a female analysand's dream. "I dreamt that someone wanted, I don't know, either *mettre un toit* or *enlever un toit*" which is either to put a roof or to lift a roof, to take off a roof, either of which in French sounded bizarre. So this by itself was arresting.

Sometime later came the associations in which we found that when she was a young girl she had spent a certain period of her childhood with her father. Her father was so tender and careful about her, that he was always fearful that during the night she may uncover herself and get cold. So he woke up frequently during the night in order to be sure that she was well covered. He even pushed his care to the extent of tying the two ends of the coverlet to the end of the bed. Well, all the behaviour of the man was to the effect that did he want to cover her or uncover her? So that was the meaning of the dream. But the technique of the dream was simply metonymy. Instead of *couverture* (blanket) she put the roof — because there is a unity of meaning here, both are a kind of cover.

Here is an occasion to stress an interesting point. As you know Freud examined the relation of the alternatives in dreams. He gives as the example, the most famous example in all the dream literature. That is the dream he had the day following his father's death when he saw a board upon which was written, *Please close either one eye or both eyes*. The explanation he gives to the alternative is that the dream failed to unite the two ideas. This explanation is not convincing at all because the

dream work can make whatever it wants in creating composite images or composite words, etc. I do not know why it fails in this particular case.

Now, in the example I gave concerning whether the father wanted to cover or uncover; the alternative to the manifest content is given in its latent content as revealed by her associations. So the same thing applies to this dream of Freud's because the father is dead. It means one of two things, either he pardons you (or as they say in German, he *closes an eye*) or he is ignorant of the fault (of the *culpa*), but he cannot be both, he cannot ignore the fault and pardon it. So it is one or the other and this is the alternative, you cannot close one eye and two eyes. So when there is an alternative in the manifest content there is also an alternative in the latent content. But to go back to the topic of jokes, I can summarize what has been said so far.

I do not attempt to persuade, I will just illustrate a method of analysis and it is up to you to see how it works. But I claim that all the varieties of technique given by Freud, listed as techniques of wit (the first topic is condensation with two subdivisions, condensation with substitution like *Cleopold*, or with a little modification like the one which puts before instead of behind and then comes two other main divisions each with many subdivisions, these are divisions like playing on words, decomposition, recomposition, puns, double sense, etc.) are varieties of metaphor and metonymy and that the categories of metaphor and metonymy subsume all these different techniques. The first two, condensation and substitution pertain to metaphor and all the others are varieties of metonymy.

Take the famous example of the story of Napoleon III who started his régime by confiscating all the possessions of the former Royal Family, the House of Orléans. One witty man commented on this by saying "*C'est le premier vol de l'aigle*", this is the first flight of the eagle, but *vol* can have the sense of flight or theft. So here you have as the key to the whole operation of wit that you exploit the variability of meaning according to the variability of the context. So you are putting into action something in the dimension of combination and in that sense I call it a metonymic technique. Well once again all this has to be controlled but take it as an illustration.

There is another interesting point in Freud's book and that is the moment when he puts the question, whether there are any jokes which do not imply or which are not based upon verbal technique. You know that in classical rhetorics, there was a wide distinction between two sorts of figures that ancient rhetoricians made between figures of speech and figures of thought, '*figures des mots*' and '*figures de pensée*', so Freud seems to be born into the same orientation. He then puts the question whether there are any jokes only pertaining to thought, without verbal technique. His reasoning is absolutely subtle—he is damned subtle—I mean I cannot tell you how he goes through the question but he starts with a splendid joke by Heinrich Heine about the golden calf and then he goes through the famous *mot d'esprit* of "did you take a bath?" — "Why, is there one missing?" etc., and then he comes to the very famous example of *salmon mayonnaise*. He says here that the joke depends not on any playing of words but that it depends upon something happening which he describes as displacement of thought (and here comes the word *displacement*). I will take this example because it is a very important point to set down. Can you see the importance of this question? You can put this question in a very generalised way; are there any unconscious formations without verbal technique? That is the point.

So let us consider this example of *salmon mayonnaise*. An impoverished individual borrowed 25 florins from a prosperous acquaintance, making assertions of his needy circumstances. The very same day his benefactor met him in a restaurant, with a plate of salmon mayonnaise in front of him. The benefactor reproached him, "What! you borrow money from me and then order yourself salmon mayonnaise! Is that what you have used my money for?" His answer was, "I do not understand why you reproach me in that way. If I haven't any money I cannot eat salmon mayonnaise and if I have money I must not eat salmon mayonnaise! Well then, *when* am I to eat salmon mayonnaise?" Thought is implied in this affair because it is the illogical character of the answer of this impoverished person that strikes us and it is most probably because logic was at stake and Freud saw this as being a pure example of absence of all verbal technique.

Still one needs but only to glance at Aristotle's refutations of sophistry to learn how much an argument of sophism depends upon the discourse

and upon playing on this. In this one example, what is astonishing is that Freud, in this discussion underlines the temporal adverb 'when'. Because there is a sophism here which consists of the fact that the benefactor was telling him, "If I give you money, you do not eat salmon mayonnaise". So that 'when' in the discourse of the benefactor has the sense of the conditional, while in the answer, 'when', has the sense of the adverb. So it is true that thought is implied but the sophism is absolutely inseparable from the playing on words, exactly as the sophists of old times. I would say this example, which is a clear example in the book, if it raises a problem, it is not so much that it resides in its technique, as in the following question. How does something which is violently illogical contain something which is not false but something which is absolutely true. To rephrase it. How is it that a truth, the one that is so laughable, comes to light by way of a sophism? I will indicate that the solution to this problem lies in the distinction between what is said and what in this saying, where the sophism is articulated, is signified. This distinction in turn implies that the truth, as we encounter it in unconscious formation, is not to be measured in terms of things (by equations to facts etc.), but itself constitutes the thing which without being articulated in discourse is however signifiable. You say that the truth in a psychoanalysis does not mean an equation to something outside, it is the thing itself which is signified in what is articulated, without being itself articulated.

Out of this rectification of the analysis given by Freud of this example, I must admit that there are in fact comic stories, not precisely jokes, which do not imply any verbal technique. Here is an example. A *schnorer* (in Yiddish, a beggar) approached a wealthy baron with a request for the grant of some assistance for his journey to Ostend. The doctor, he said, had recommended him sea bathing to restore his health. "Very well" said the rich man, "I will give you something towards it, but must you go precisely to Ostend which is the most expensive of all sea bathing resorts?" "Herr Baron", the other answered, "I consider nothing too expensive for my health". Here, there is no verbal technique.

What makes us laugh in this joke is the kind of error to which we are all liable. The kind of error which concerns one's own identity. He spoke as if he were the rich man. It is impossible to be both the one who formulates the demand and the one who answers the demand. You cannot

be both. But what is impossible in the reality is quite possible by virtue of the operation of identification, on the level of the imaginary. The whole story I would consider as a verbal construction which has the value of bringing to light this kind of comical error. So here from this example, and there are many examples like that, I would not say there is no verbal technique. The whole thing is a verbal construction designed to give a laughable meaning. I am hesitating here, because I wonder if I can regard these stories as pertaining to metonymic technique. I mean something is said, but something else is being signified that makes you laugh. Well, I am not obliged to resolve all the problems in this field, but since I have just spoken of identification, I must add that to speak of identification is also to speak of objects.

I will explain myself. I will tell you another famous story of the young man Itzig, who was declared fit for service in the artillery. He was clearly an intelligent lad, but intractable and without any interest in this service. So one of his superior officers who was a friend, took him to one side and said to him, "Itzig, you are of no use to us. Buy yourself a cannon and make yourself independant". Well, this story leads Freud to put the question of how does it happen that with nonsense of this type you can make such a witty joke. What I would like to stress is that the comic sentiment here answers to the appearance of an object whose possession alone constitutes, in the subject's eyes, the sole good to which it aspires; regardless of any use to which it is put. I mean that Itzig likes weapons but he does not like to use them. His place, he has been told, is not in the army but among the owners of cannons, which is as much as to say, that his identification is half, and it is with the latter and not with the soldiers. An object whose very possession constitutes desire is an object whose function is to be a guarantee of ideality, or of identity. A sign in which his ego's narcissism is given some reassurance. You can see this for example with the miser. His desire is just for the possession of money and not for the use of it. So you cannot say that the object is for the desire or that the desire uses it. You will say that desire is captured in the object. So you can see that this object appears in such stories in a variety of ways. In the first place in the guise of wealth. (I do not have to be explicit about the possible symbolic meaning of money) and in the second in the guise of cannon (with its symbolic latencies) and I do not have to explain the meaning of these objects. It can take many other forms, for

example, the saying that "never to be born would be the best thing for mortal man" and the famous philosophic answer. . . "that this happens so scarcely, something like only one person in every two hundred thousand. . ." This is simply a nonsense discourse. For the one who talks or gives the advice of "not to be born" is simply wanting to give a command in which the command itself will be the object of desire, in which the desire is captured and it becomes comic.

Breuer in his book, *Objects of Thought*, makes the remark that if you say 2+2 makes 4 well, that is fine. But if you say make 2 and 2 make 4 well, then it has a crazy quality to it. So the crazy quality here comes from this very attachment to command as such.

I will finish this summary analysis of jokes by pointing to the fact that this very object, which is the comic object, may also appear as the object of *Angst*. But this is altogether for another time.

So far I have said that the structural coordinates of linguistics which were not at Freud's disposal have made it possible to simplify Freud's theory of the technique by reducing them to two techniques and the second point is that the distinction between the techniques of the words becomes very questionable and as far as what is at issue, is not the technique, but the comic as such, which is coloured by the technique. Well, I summarized it by an allusion to what I referred to as the comic object; as long as this comic object was a sign of identity. Now I would like to tell you that you can find absolutely the same techniques in the dream.

When you read the books of Freud, open the index of the Standard Edition and just look at the titles, playing on words, puns, switch words and so on; you will find an example on every page. The point is, why is it that the majority of examples are used for one purpose, which is to avoid censorship? For example, someone says, "I went with a miserable decore". In French you say *décore miserable*, but this decore can be analysed in French to give *des corps* (of bodies). Take the case of a woman in love with a man who had embraced her the day preceding the dream. The next day she came with a dream which said *un cadavre macéré*. Cadavre needs no translation, *cadavre* means corps but what does *cadavre macéré* mean? Of course she thought it quite harmless; but *macéré* is when you put something on the fire, say a ham and you want

it well done. You can write it also like this for the feminine *m'a serrée* and it means he embraced me. Then it betrayed under the most draconian censorship, what she really thought of the man.

Why didn't Freud explain these as examples of displacement? He probably was always defending himself from making too much of a case of such plays on words. In fact, what he meant by displacement was mainly this. All these examples, as I see them, are examples of the technique of metonymy.

So, to sum up metonymy, it is easy to find if we recognise in playing on words the avoidance of censorship and at the same time the mechanism of displacement. In jokes the metaphor is much less frequent.

Take the examples of condensation that Freud gives in his chapters on the dream work. He gives three examples. One is the famous "dream of the botanical monograph", the other dream is the one he entitles "a beautiful dream" and the third dream is the "dream of the *Maikäfer*", the *May Beetle*. In this last dream, as a woman was closing a window, two beetles were squashed and killed. This gave her a very strong sentiment of disgust. Freud described this as a strong mixture of sensuality and sexuality and you read the associations such as that she was born in May, she was married in May, her husband was impotent. . . She knew that a strong aphrodisiac was made from a *Maikäfer* and there is a line from von Kleist, which says; "You love me as a *Maikäfer*". With the fact that the impotent husband was absent at the moment of the dream and a girl fourteen years old was sharing her bed, you can not escape the fact that this *Maikäfer* was a metaphor of herself; a metaphor for herself and her daughter. The same conclusion concerning the intervention of the metaphoric mechanism can be seen but not as easily for the other two dreams.

This is why, after all, it is a very defensible point of view to consider what is called the primary processes as linguistic processes. Of course there are people who would make objection that metaphor and metonymy are conscious. But no, if you allow this kind of objection to stop you, then why not let yourself be stopped by the objection that a dream cannot be written because you write when you are conscious. The whole point is that some things happen without your intervention. This

is the whole point of the *Freudian Discovery*.

Thank you.

Oscar Zentner: If the unconscious is structured as language, we have to put this together with Freud's formulation that in the unconscious we have representations of things while in the pre-conscious we have representation of words. To this Freud adds that it is nothing other than the link of the word which produces the phenomena of consciousness. Could you please comment on this?

Moustapha Safouan: The point is that this opposition between representation of things and words is not simply opposition, it is also a tie. I mean by that, that things are things, or objects, in so far as they are set down in words. This is a chair, glass, paper, etc., they are all words. Without words they cannot have objectivity. There would be only actions and reactions between the organism and the *milieu*. So without language there would be nothing to be called objects or things. So it is the word which really carries the thing and it is precisely because the thing is not-seizable, you cannot grasp it except through the word or in the word, that the relation to things can be expressed through the techniques that I explained. For example, to take that the unconscious in a dream like *décore miserable* was inhabited by representations of things *des corps misérables*. But because these representations of things are couched in words to start with, it can give place to *décore miserable* in the other sense of *décore*. In other words it is not simply an opposition between the two, it is also a tie.

Oscar Zentner: Then Dr. Safouan would your advice to a young analyst be like Dr. Lacan's, to do crossword puzzles?

Moustapha Safouan: Lacan has his own particular humour. Myself I never followed this advice, but it may be useful. For me, the best advice is to read Lewis Carroll.

Oscar Zentner: I would like to thank Dr. Safouan very much for today's seminars. We hope that there will be a second time, a return.

Moustapha Safouan: I hope so, and I would like to meet you in Paris. Thank you.

PART III

THE FREUDIAN DISCOURSE

THE RHETORIC OF *ANGST*

Gustavo Ezequiel Etkin

Angst is that which does not lie in regard to (*a*) because it is a point of encounter between the word and nothing, where the symbol zero lacks. It is a silent place cut out in the Other.

If the border of *Angst* is erotogenic, from the inside of that border, encompassed by it, is the brute nothing of silence, then a direct encounter, without an intermediary, with the lack in the Other, as well as the truth of desire occurs.

Since the word always lies, between one word and another—in all signification—it will be the zero of the un-nameable. Through the labyrinth of rhetoric, slips the phallic glimmer which allows the play to be ordered, encompassing the dull silence of that which this glimmer points out, but is incapable of illuminating.

The direction of the cure—its orientation—is in the direction of the transformation of this zero into (*a*), $-\varphi$ and into ϕ ; that is to say to put into movement the law of discourse.

However, by Real premise (the Real is the impossibility of the king),

because the *Word* in the beginning didn't say *Everything* also at the end the lack of the beginning is found; this time as the beginning of the lack, that is to say Law.

The placing into order of this nothing does not make it disappear, but it transforms it into a residue, which is re-encountered as lack.

It is then that brute nothing—which before was *Angst*—by metonymy becomes babbling, a tear, a tone of voice, a fleeting smile or the convulsion of a laugh.

Thus its proximity provokes—we know—effects *in* the body. But if it is also an effect *from* the body, it is so in so far as that body is the place of the silence of death, which can also be a cry; but whatever—cry or silence—it is a continuity. A continuity which—also—is the 'in-differentiation' of the Real which from outside excludes the discourse allowing it.

This condition of non-encounter, which is always violent, between the discourse and the Real, would be sexual.

Because sex is not the Real, but on the contrary, the difference which is established—like a scar or tattoo—in the real from the encounter with the signifier—as pure difference—marking it.

This is why the body is the place of the *jouissance* of the Other, because the borders of its surface are the limits between its silence and the word.

As a biological body it is the silence from the Other, constituted by the lack in its word: its death.

As an erotogenic body it is the surface, the border of which, as bridge and limit, encompasses and orders that lack: its castration.

It is thus around the (*a*), that the Real remains excluded reappearing in the discourse through cuts, and in the image, it is what is not seen.

This results in an exclusion of the continuity, an inclusion of the lack and a blindness of the image. As exclusion of the Real, then; the word. As inclusion; impossibility from the discourse. As blurring, in the image; a wound.

So, rhetoric would be a point of intersection between psychoanalysis

and literature; in both are the ways of not saying. Such an intersection is met with by the writer in the moment of writing; by the analyst, in the moment of interpretation; because the writer like the analyst treats the ways of non-saying, of the detours with which the tatters of the tongue (*la langue*) can make the un-nameable.

The interpretation is an *enunciated* of the analyst which transforms itself into an *enunciation* of the analysand; that is to say the one who occupies the place of desire in the discourse, is the analyst, who then passes to listen to himself as another voice in the discourse of the analysand, a discourse which finishes in this way, by excluding him.

Because to occupy the place of the dead (dummy) is—as far as possible—to try to disappear in a pure *enunciated* in order to—simultaneously—become pure *enunciation* in the discourse of the analysand.

In the same manner, the writer's text, his own *enunciated*, passes to be the *enunciation* in the reading of the reader, a moment of disappearance which transforms also what was his text, into another voice.

Text and word which fall down, are lost, and pass on to be encountered as the—other—desirable, namely the *objet a* which would reappear then—apart—with that which, in the beginning was separation, and in consequence a hole to be encompassed.

This situates the desire of the analyst as desire of interpretation because in this case, to interpret is to be situated in a position of re-encounter with the 'lost' in so far as it is lost—his own loss as the analysand's voice, saying true word, that is to say his desire.

Moebius keeps his word: (*a*) returns, because it has always been there.

ANGST AND THE THEATRE OF THE ABSURD

Frances M. Moran

Ah! who will liberate my mind from the heavy
fetters of logic?

Gide!

The central concept regarding the human condition for the writers of the Theatre of the Absurd is one of impossibility. This conception of impossibility refers to the individual's ultimate inability and incapacity to reach the truth of himself and to grasp the reality which is ever beyond him. The postulation of a condition of impossibility rests upon two fundamental assumptions for writers such as Beckett, Ionesco, Genet and Pirandello. First, they assume that true knowledge of the individual lies beyond that which is knowable through the individual's sense making articulation and secondly, they assume that true reality lies beyond appearances. The implication of these assumptions is that the speaking being can never speak the truth just as he can never appear to be as he really is.

For writers of the Theatre of the Absurd, to speak about the self is to lie, it is to deceive for:

"The more I try to explain myself, the less I understand myself. Of course, not everything is unsayable in words, only the living truth."

This is why the characters portrayed by authors such as Beckett and Ionesco are doomed to ultimate failure in their search for self knowledge. To speak is for them to falsify, it is to be tyrannized by the fetters of a sense making logic which is implicitly embedded in their articulation. They cannot escape the framework of sense which is imposed on their attempted self revelation as it is formulated in words. Hence Beckett concludes *The Unnamable*, the agonizing search for self knowledge, with the following:

"... I don't know, I'll never know, in the silence you don't know, you must go on, I can't go on, I'll go on."

It is the world of common sense and sensory perception which is being challenged through the characterizations presented in the Theatre of the Absurd. Watt struggles to do that which cannot be done, that is, to speak the truth. He longs for freedom, for truth, for what he considers to be the arbitrary quality of the instantaneous present, yet he finds himself imprisoned by the falsifying coherence which the speaking of common-sense necessitates. The characters of the Theatre of the Absurd struggle in an attempt to conquer the unsayable — they want to say what they know cannot be said. The very saying of the unsayable would change its meaning, it would be transposed into sense and it would thereby become untrue in the very saying. Molloy epitomizes the attitude of many of Beckett's characters where he explains:

"Not to want to say, not to know what you want to say, not to be able to say what you think you want to say and never to stop saying, or hardly ever, that is the thing to keep in mind, even in the heat of composition."

The problem for the characters of the Theatre of the Absurd is that the sense making mind cannot conceive the non-sense save in terms of sense.

The conscious mind is sense making, therefore it can never know that which is beyond its grasp — it can never know the non-sense. In *Victims*

of *Duty*, Nicolas D'eu wishes to crush the fetters of a sense making logic with the imposition of a different logic, a different conceptualization of what is thought to be real:

"I should introduce contradiction where there is what common sense usually calls contradiction... We'll get rid of the principle of identity and unity of character and let movement and dynamic psychology take its place... We are not ourselves... Personality doesn't exist... There are only in ourselves contradictory or non-contradictory forces."

While Nicolas longs for a new logic, he too is imprisoned within the walls he desires to deplete. He lacks the means whereby he might engage upon his self ordained task. The *Angst* of the characters of the Theatre of the Absurd is the *Angst* produced by the recognition that there is conceptualization which lies beyond that which is experienced within the framework of common sense.

The assumption concerning the illusory nature of appearance is highlighted in the Theatre of the Absurd in the work of both Genet and Pirandello. Genet's characters feel imprisoned in definitions and caught like Narcissus in reflected mirror images. Whilst they fight against these restrictions or chains, they know that ultimately they must submit to them.

Life is then a perpetual masquerade from which there can be no relief: "You must go home now", says Madame Irma dismissing the audience at the end of *The Balcony* "where everything you can be quite sure — will be even falser than here."⁶ This problem of appearances or masks is portrayed particularly clearly in Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. Here, in the words of the Director, we see that there is no way in which we can appear as we truly are: "What's the truth got to do with it? Acting's what we're here for."⁷ It is the father of the *Six Characters* who knows well the *Angst* of the deceptive mask:

"It will be difficult for it to be a performance of me... of me as I really am. It will rather be — leaving aside the question of his appearance — it will be how he interprets what I am... how he

sees me, if he sees me as anything at all. . . And not as I, deep down within myself, feel myself to be. And it certainly seems to be that whoever is called upon to judge us will have to take this into account."⁸

Both Genet and Pirandello desire and esteem the purity which lies beneath appearance but which always somehow eludes them. "His initial desire is realistic", writes Sartre of Genet, "He wants what exists. But the very object of his desire soon changes into a dream. Genet without ceasing to desire the real embarks into the imaginary".⁹ Genet may like to believe that he wants what exists but it could well be that he 'embarks into a dream' as a way of avoiding that which he desires.

The assumption that there is a distinction between the illusory nature of the individual's appearance and his unknowable reality is reminiscent of the distinction Plato draws between his Ideal Forms and their reflections.

"And these you can touch and see and perceive with the senses, but the unchanging things you can only perceive with the mind — they are invisible and are not seen."¹⁰

The precedent of the impossible task which besets the characters of the Theatre of the Absurd may be found in the analogous task of the philosopher king — to know the good.

The assumptions which underly the perspective of the writers of the Theatre of the Absurd are significant in that they definitively contravene the assumptions which underly the perspective adopted by common sense man. Whereas these writers assume that truth is unsayable and that reality lies beyond appearances, common sense man assumes that truth can be known, and so spoken, and that reality can be grasped through his senses. This means that the writers of the Theatre of the Absurd open to interrogation what common sense man takes for granted, namely, that it is within the empirical framework that man will find the answers to the questions that confront him. Moreover, the characters of the Theatre of the Absurd express the *Angst* of those who recognize the limits pertaining to the framework of common sense. They witness to the need for a consideration of a meaning-giving context which goes

beyond the structuring logic of common sense. Such a context would not be limited by the laws of thought¹¹ and the law of cause and effect, nor would it be susceptible to the lure of sensory perception which provides the material for the scientific formulation of a knowledge of the common sense self.

The difficulty that confronts the writers themselves is that they, like their characters, are subject to the same rules of order — those productive of sense. They indicate the problems posed for the speaking being, who, within the context of common sense, seeks his own truth while recognizing the inadequacies of the criteria of common sense truth. They represent the struggles of one who suffers from the recognition of the illusion of appearances.

These writers are themselves unable to find the entry into that domain where the inadequacies of the logic of common sense may be superseded. Their unwitting allegiance to common sense incapacitates them in their endeavour. What their sense-making minds fail to recognize is, as has been said in the introductory paper of this book, "the exit is the entry".¹²

NOTES

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INTERVIEW WITH JUAN DAVID NASIO*

Miguel Kohan

M.K. We would like to pose the problem of analytic training and the functions of the institution. Why the need for creating a psychoanalytic institution and linking this to what is happening in France at the present time?

J.D.N. Before questioning the functions of the institution, I would want to clarify the relationship between the analyst in practice and the analyst in the psychoanalytic community. Why do analysts have this need to be together, to gather under the pressure of a sort of gregarious urge? It is not the solitary character of his work which pushes the analyst towards the group but I think moreover of two facts, two reasons inherent in the nature of his very experience, one related to the act, the other to knowledge.

On the other hand, the analyst discovers with horror¹ that what he does can have an effect, that is to say that psychoanalysis works. Even if

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in an analysis acts and their effects are rare things, there only needs to be one of them to make the analyst stop and draw back with a motivated horror in view of what concerns the analytic act: not only that he has gone too far, that a limit has been exceeded making the relationship with his analysand somehow different, but that this jump, this doing which has become an act, has been accomplished without knowing it. Without knowing it was a risk, that is without knowing that his intervention could produce unforeseeable effects in the real of a life, and moreover without knowing—at least at the same moment of posing the act—that such an intervention did not come from himself; it is not his own act, but an analytic act. It is difficult to realize that this idea, of the interpretation that we pronounce is not our own, but the returning to us, as a truth, of the repressed knowledge of the analysand.²

This is what the analyst does not know and can only learn *après-coup*, with horror; the horror of recognising that his action always carries a part which remains veiled from him. Then he is seized by doubt, by suspicion, by the question of knowing if what he does is not a gigantic operation of trickery and by the feeling that the judgments he makes of his action are only in the last analysis the price one pays for fulfilling his function.

You see the act generates horror and horror calls to knowledge, to the wish to know. The wish to know what? To know how psychoanalysis operates. Now, to know, there must be others, fellow-men. How does psychoanalysis work? That isn't a question that one can undertake all alone, there must be others, and more than others ideals on which to rule our experience. To question the real of the experience—this veiled part we were speaking of—to be permitted to believe and to doubt analysis, in brief to tolerate the weight of a truth which affects us or an act which strikes us dumb, there must be the stable referant that we call in theory the *ego ideal*. The question "How does analysis operate?" or what amounts to the same, how is the *Sujet-supposé-Savoir* of the analysts supported, is only posed on the condition of an ideal which permits it to be posed. Now, this ideal reference³ is only inscribed in the measure of a precise community, I want to say to name (and with a history) psychoanalysts. The problem today, in France and here as well, is not so much a problem of organization, as a problem of an analytic

ideal which isn't any longer in place such that they do not find a certain stability. Our interrogations not only cease to be taken with others, but above all they become more marginal in relation to the social context.

M.K. Could you develop further the problem of trickery?

J.D.N. When, in 1977, Lacan threw his formula in Brussels, "Our practice is a swindle" it surprised but also lightened the burden of many people. It is necessary to situate this phrase in its context. Psychoanalysis is a swindle, at least considered from the point of the confrontation of the analyst with the real of his experience. This real flies and even if it is from this flight that our practice is undertaken, the analyst can never from this fact, occupy the place which returns to him in an analysis. Psychoanalysis is a swindle to the extent that, whoever the psychoanalyst is, he will never be up to the level of his task. There is a fundamental discordance between the analyst and the place of the analyst. Why? Because the place of the analyst in an analysis is that of the cause, of the motor of the cure. Which means that the place of the analyst in an analysis is the place of the object as an inert thing, as a lost thing. Now, to occupy this place of the object is impossible for the reason that the psychoanalyst himself is a speaking being. In as much as he speaks he cannot occupy the place of the object. To correct this, there is nothing but silence, the major likeness of the *objet a*.⁴ The feeling of trickery derives then from the recognition that he is not in the place the signifiers assign to him.

But there is another reason yet which can provoke the suspicion of trickery. It is what we can call the paradox of the psychoanalytic act which consists in this: with the fundamental rule and by installing the conditions proper to the analytic experience, couch, armchair, rites etc. . . the analyst incites the analysand to a single thing: to speak. Now, it is sufficient for the analyst to say the first word for him to find a sufficient reason in what he says; or in other terms, to install himself—without his knowledge—as the Other, as someone who knows. I say, and if I do not know what I say, it does not matter, someone knows. The paradox is this: the analytic device 'incites' the analysand to have faith in the Other, as Other of knowledge, but the psychoanalyst himself knows that, in every way, in the end, this Other of knowledge is only a fiction

to be discarded and that he himself can only become the debris of this statute of knowledge. It is in this way that the suspicion of imposter appears. "I have misled in inciting the patient to institute the Other to proceed afterwards to demonstrate to him that that to which 'I' have pushed him is primarily inexistent, fictitious and secondly results in the destitution of the Other of knowledge, an operation of which I become the dregs".

M.K. How do you link that to necessity for an institution?

J.D.N. What is an institution for? What are its functions? It is true that the traditional classic idea is that the function of the psychoanalytic institution is training. Certainly. The institutions accomplish this function as they may, above all with plenty of splits. In France particularly, these splits have occurred especially by reason of the training criteria to be adopted: the training is always the pretext, authentic or not, which motivates the crisis.

Now, I do not think that the training should be the principal function of an institution nor that the training is realized in an institution. I hope I have made you feel that from the start, the institution is not to be thought of as serving this or that function, it is an effect, an effect on the horizon —Lacan would have said psychoanalysis in extension— of a conjunction internal to the psychoanalytic discourse between the act and the knowledge. I think, like others, that the formation only occurs in the experience of the analysis. It is for this reason, I think, that Lacan is always opposed to using the word 'formation' to the point of affirming that he has never written it.

M.K. Why refuse the term 'formation'?

J.D.N. Because it implies a whole conception of the transmission of psychoanalysis which suggests that psychoanalysis is learnt and that knowledge is transmissible. I am not so sure that the teaching transmits a knowledge, the teaching is not the transmission of a knowledge. When transmission effectively occurs, one should speak then of the production of a knowledge, that is to say, not of the transmission of a knowledge which is textual, referential, or theoretical but the production of an unconscious knowledge. I will explain myself: when I say production of a knowledge I think of the fact that the transmission of analysis is made in

the experience, that is to say in the experience of being effected by the truth of the patient forgetting it and letting it come back, as another truth under the form of an interpretation, for example. That the truth of the patient comes back in another truth in the analyst implies the production of a knowledge.

M.K. Having said this, there still remains a point to clarify and what about those who wish to transmit or teach psychoanalysis without having had the experience of it.

J.D.N. There are two different points at play here. One thing is to teach psychoanalysis and another is to believe that the teaching forms the psychoanalyst. That the teaching should be a condition for the transmission of analysis does not signify that the teaching would be what makes a psychoanalyst. For there to be a psychoanalyst, there must be an analysand, not only the one we listen to, but also the analysand we have been. When I said that the transmission is accomplished in the experience of being effected by the truth of the analysand, one could also conceive this truth as having been said (half-said) from the analysis of one's own analyst. To have been effected by the truth signifies that later and in another place, the same truth will be said. If you have followed me, you can understand that an interpretation encloses. Both the repressed of the analysand to whom the interpretation is addressed and the repressed talk of the analyst when he was an analysand himself — for this I use the expression *dire refoulé*. I would also employ the term knowledge, repressed knowledge or unconscious knowledge understood as the chain of repressed speech, of signifiers if you wish. In saying *savoir* I avoid another error, that of assigning belonging to *dire refoulé*, as put forward for example when I have just said "repressed speech of the analysand". If there is repressed speech it cannot belong to anyone and has no other status than as a link in the signifying chain called knowledge.

Then, when we say that the transmission of psychoanalysis corresponds to the production of a knowledge, I understand it as the knowledge which comes when a truth is spoken (*mi-dite*).

M.K. Is it a matter of knowledge and truth of the analyst?

J.D.N. Again I insist that it is an error to say: truth or knowledge "of the analyst" or "of the analysand". The truth can be spoken by one or

other of the partners, it matters little, the question is that when it is there, unconscious knowledge itself ex-sists.

The couple truth-knowledge, is a paradoxical relation of terms which Lacan takes back to Hegelian philosophy in giving it an absolutely different sense. It is a paradoxical relation because it concerns a relation between the truth in so far as it is one and knowledge in as much as it is a chain. With the Lacanian symbols one could in a first approximation identify S_1 with the truth and S_2 with knowledge. The truth is one and knowledge is all the other signifiers. This relation between one signifier and all the other signifiers is a delicate and difficult relationship. In the celebrated formula "a signifier represents the subject for another signifier", the delicate and the key word is the "for"; a signifier "for". In order to think this paradox truth-knowledge and to render an account of this "for", Lacan proposes to resort to the topology of the Klein bottle. Following the sketch of this topologic object, one can account for how that which signifies that S_2 , the knowledge, ex-sists at S_1 , the truth.

M.K. Can you explain this?

J.D.N. I said that to transcribe the couple truth-knowledge by S_1/S_2 was a first approximation. In fact it would be more correct to suggest, to think of the truth as a *place (lieu)* and the knowledge like a *bond (lien)*, like a chain. This difference thus conceived depends on another notion, that of the discourse. I will not go further. But in whatever manner the discourse, the couple truth-knowledge will always be a paradoxical couple.

M.K. I am thinking of two ways of conceiving knowledge. On the one side the knowledge of the theory of which you spoke at the start of this interview in terms of the judgment of the psychoanalytic action and on the other hand, the knowledge linked to the truth. Why utilise the same word? Why affirm that the repressed is a knowledge?

J.D.N. It is Lacan and not Freud who calls the unconscious a knowledge and this is so for several reasons. In my opinion there are two main ones. Firstly when the patient speaks without knowing what he says, the word speaks supervenes so *à propos* and so opportunely that this word appears to know the time and the place to which it should be enunciated to produce a failure. One recognizes this easily in the *mot*

d'esprit where one says —at the wrong moment, without knowledge— *le mot juste* at the right moment so that all laugh and are surprised including the one who says it. The question arises then; who knew that it was at that precise moment that such a word ought to have been spoken? With this question, I pass to the second reason for calling the unconscious a knowledge. The relation of a signifier —a witticism for the occasion— with other signifiers is a 'wise' relation. That is to say that the chain is articulated in such a manner that at a certain moment, a truth supervenes. This question echoes that of Newton. Newton asked himself how it was possible that in the gravitational field, masses know to maintain themselves at a good distance, neither too far to be definitely separated, nor too close to be self destroyed. I believe that Newton's question must have inspired Lacan to qualify the unconscious as knowledge. The other signifiers, S_2 , know how to enchain themselves at a good distance to ex-sist from one of them, the one which goes beyond which goes out as a limit in our example.

M.K. When Newton was asked how the elements have this knowledge of attraction and repulsion, he replied: "God knows".

J.D.N. "God knows" is also the reply of the neurotic in the face of events in the course of the analysis. He wishes to know what is the reason for his symptom. In the beginning the reply implicit in his question would be: "he should know", the analyst should know. Then, there is another degree of the supposition: not only that the analyst knows, but that he is the truth itself, he is only knowledge, in a word, he is the unconscious. Thus the analyst comes to the place of the *Sujet-supposé-Savoir*; not only in the sense that the patient supposes that the Other knows —in my view this is a poor translation of the formula *Sujet-supposé-Savoir*— but rather because the patient puts the analyst in the place of knowledge, more than to attribute a knowledge to him, he identifies him with the knowledge and, inversely, makes of knowledge a subject. This is all the difference between the patient's supposition and the supposition that the analytic theory makes. Analytic theory also supposes that there is a knowledge, but this knowledge is the place of the chain of repressed signifiers called unconscious. The patient on the contrary makes this place a subject and names it. This supposition is not necessarily thought or imagined by the analysand. And still, in general,

during a cure even the contrary occurs: the patient doubts; he doubts and distrusts the knowledge of his analyst. No, the supposition of the Other of knowledge of the *Sujet-supposé-Savoir*, is a structural supposition, that is to say it is inherent in the very fact of speaking. In so far as there is speaking and listening there is the other as sufficient reason.

M.K. It makes me think that there would not be an analyst who listens but rather a listening which is constitutive of the speech of the patient.

J.D.N. I would translate your proposition into the following question. Must there be an analyst for such an effect to be produced? If it is sufficient that someone says 'I' to put the principle of sufficient reason into action up to the effect of the Other of knowledge it remains to ask oneself if the listening is an indispensable condition. Let us take your formula again: if the listening is constitutive of what the patient says, is it or isn't it necessary that someone listens to him? Or even, going much further, must someone be listening for there to be unconscious, for the couple truth-knowledge to become knotted? I think that yes, the listening conditions the unconscious to the point that we should inverse the terms of the question and ask; is there unconscious without listening? This is for me an insistant question which never ceases to formulate itself and sends me back to other questions: what is the place of the analyst? What is the purpose of the analyst? Or even, as we said in the beginning, how does analysis operate?

We return then to the concept of the place of the analyst and a crowd of questions arise: who is the one who is behind us? What is it? An image, a voice, a piece of a body? Is he the destination of my demands, the reason for my demands or even the style of my demands?

The listening is all these instances reduced to the terms which compose the logical matrix of the experience, of the analytic discourse: S_1 , S_2 , the *objet a* and $\$$. If one calls S_1 the being of truth, S_2 the being of knowledge, 'a', the being of *jouissance* and $\$$ the speaking being, the psychoanalyst in the position of listening would occupy, while displacing himself, each one of these places, according to whether he is silent or whether he interprets. But what I wish to underline is this: that these four agencies do not belong to any of the two partners in the analysis; as if there was installed between the patient and the analyst, above them,

thanks to them and without their awareness; an enormous psychic apparatus —to use the Freudian term— a gigantic and monstrous head which includes them and excludes them. If we agree to conceive the analytic discourse, the analytic social bond as a cut, like the putting into play of these four agencies that we agree for the moment to call psychical, we find again Freud's proposition written a little before his death, of thinking the psychical apparatus as extended in physical space. For some time I poorly understood the meaning of such a thesis. How I tell myself that to think of the psychical apparatus in space is a way of thinking the experience or, if you wish, of thinking the discourse. To make the experience of a speech signifies the creation of a psychical space in physical extension. The experience of the spoken, the putting into play of knowledge, the loss of the object and the effect of the subject signify ridding the psychical apparatus of all subjectivism and understanding it in the space between the two, in the interval between the subject and the Other. This being said, a series of problems are opened up. What should we understand by the term 'space'? If the psychical apparatus extends in space, there is no longer any distinction between the inside and the outside. What space does it concern? And how to understand Freud's concept of the psychical apparatus in the light of Lacan's concept of discourse? Certainly, we can make use of topology and say that the physics of the discourse is the topology and even to study the inside/outside relationship with the *cross-cap* but the field remains still very open.

M.K. To finish I would ask you to reconsider the participation of the analyst in the cure, his presence, if you wish.

J.D.N. It is true that the term 'presence' is not a good one. I would ask you to put it in inverted commas. This has been a word very much criticised by Lacan, even if he used it sometimes. We can oppose the 'presence' of the analyst with the 'presence' of the truth which we have spoken about. One type of 'presence' is the presence of the analyst on the world scene and you will admit that, recently it has become very important. There is plenty of 'presence', plenty of books, plenty of congresses, conferences and journeys. We are today confronted by the phenomenon of a sort of massive presence of the analyst in the cultural sphere, I would even erase the word 'cultural' and put 'commercial'.

Now, this 'presence' is inversely proportional to the quality of the analyst's judgment of his actions. Be assured that the greater his presence the greater will be the flaw in his theory.

The 'presence of the truth' is of altogether another species; it is the presence of the patient or, rather, the presence of the symptom as a being of truth. These two 'presences' are radically opposed, the greater the presence on the world scene becomes, the further we are from the case, from the 'presence of truth'. This latter is not played out in the space of the theatre, in topographical space, it is rather in topological space, that is to say—as we mentioned before—a presence topologically defined in relation to the unconscious knowledge. If there is a 'presence' of the analyst, it should be defined precisely from the truth, from the effects of the truth, in relation to him and his place.

NOTES

- ¹ There is an important text in which Lacan makes mention of the horror of the act, *Discours a l'E.F.P., Scilicet, 2/3*, 18-29. C.f. also the seminar on The Psychoanalytic Act, 24th Jan. 1968.
- ² The analytic act is not certain for us, but it is sufficient that it should be posed for there to be a psychoanalyst.
- ³ An ideal reference that is not to be confused with the ideal analyst. As much as ethical ideals are necessary to the analytic work, the image of the ideal analyst is a pernicious one. In the same way that *the* woman does not exist, there is no universal analyst, there are only *some* analysts.
- ⁴ Let us add that because there is silence and he knows how to judge his action and that he encounters likenesses in an organization, all this is not sufficient to hold adequately his function as psychoanalyst.
- ⁵ Lacan formulates a similar question "Here in brackets (sic), does the unconscious imply that someone listens? In my sense, yes. But it surely doesn't imply without the discourse which exists that one evaluates it as knowledge". Television, Editions du Seuil, p.26.

CONVERSATION IN PARIS BETWEEN
ALAIN GROSRIECHARD,* GLORIA AUTINO,*
GUSTAVO ETKIN* AND OSCAR ZENTNER

- the congress of Paris in 1982.
- the psychoanalytic institution.
- * psychoanalysis and the university.
- * power, knowledge and the psychoanalytic discourse.
- * the structure of the harem; the fiction of oriental despotism in European absolute monarchy in the seventeenth century.

Gloria Autino: Alain, what is for you the importance of this congress organised by the Fondation du Champ Freudien?

-
- Gloria Autino. Argentine psychoanalyst. Professor at the National University of Buenos Aires. This text was transcribed by Gloria Autino.
 - Gustavo Etkin. Argentine psychoanalyst. Member of the Freudian School of Buenos Aires. Member of the Freudian School of Melbourne. Analyst of the Centre of Freudian Studies (C.E.F.), former vice-coordinator of C.E.F. Brazil, former Director C.E.F. Bahia.
 - Alain Grosrichard teaches psychoanalysis in the Department of Psychoanalysis of the University of Paris VIII and publishes regularly in *Ornicar?*, bulletin periodique du champ Freudien. Director Jacques Lacan, Paris.

Alain Grosrichard: The importance is primarily the effect on the French of people from Latin America, especially from Argentina, but also from Brazil, Peru, Venezuela and also from other countries such as Spain, Italy, the United States of America and Australia, who are working in the field of the teachings of Dr. Jacques Lacan coming to Paris. For we French, and particularly the Parisians, it has been a discovery to perceive that the works of Lacan were not only known and provoking theoretical effects outside France but also that his teaching has been further deepened. To find the equal and sometimes even the superior level of this work, compared with Paris, was not a surprise for those who assisted at the Congress in Caracas in 1980. However, it was a surprise for the French psychoanalytic public. Another point of interest is how the work of Lacan is a direct clarification of a clinical and practical approach because, in general, the ideas which come from Paris remain in the state of ideas or debates. We can conclude that the works of Lacan have an incidence in the psychoanalytic practice of a large number of people.

Now, taking all this into account we can show that the importance of this International Congress dwells as well in the fact that it is not produced from one singular organisation. This is why a French International is unthinkable in the way of the International Psychoanalytic Association; a bureaucratic institution. In the Lacanian movement there is no monolithic organisation but rather the contrary. Between the French, Argentinian, Brazilian, Spanish, and Australian Freudian Schools there are different and independent organisations but there exists the common reference to the development of a teaching. I think that it is more important to sustain and share a reference starting from a common work, than to belong to a single international organisation, the danger of which is to become sterile. For the future then, we can think of interchange between analysts and researchers in different countries, each possessing equal rights.

Gloria Autino: You spoke of the surprise to learn that the teaching of Lacan in Latin America is not only the theoretical and the 'university' discourse but that it also produced a clinical practice. This relates to the present congress dedicated to the psychoanalytic practice. You have been in Vincennes and now at Sainte-Anne, a hospital. From your

experience at Vincennes, what would you say were the means by which it is possible to avoid the captivation of the analytic discourse by the university discourse?

Alain Grosrichard: Lacan himself, truly, was the one who in 1968 made the decision that possibly psychoanalysis could be taught at the university. Lacan's initiative was reaffirmed with the organisation of the department at Vincennes. Why? Because the situation of psychoanalysis, the development of psychoanalysis and the fact that Freud's work was able to survive its creator, implies a transmission of psychoanalysis. The transmission of psychoanalysis cannot occur by an initiatory model, that is, a model which is not concerned with the rationality of its content and prefers the esoteric founded in ineffable relations.

I believe that to teach psychoanalysis in the university is to maintain the thesis that there are mathemes of psychoanalysis, in the sense of the Greek $\mu\alpha\theta\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$, which means to learn.

There is something from the doctrine of Freud which is transmissible under the form of mathemes. Contrary to the popular images of Lacan as being esoteric, completely irrational and hermeneutic, I think that the works of Lacan have never failed to point to a rationality that he used to call his 'algebra', which would allow the transmission. This ideal is the possibility of formalizing psychoanalysis in a rigorous manner that is as axiomatic as in mathematical logic for instance. This does not imply ignoring what in psychoanalysis is not reducible to a university transmission of knowledge. There is a knowledge, the unconscious knowledge, which rejects by its own essence, transmission by the university. This knowledge, which is not an accumulative knowledge as it is in the case of the knowledge of the university, does not dwell in books. It is discovered in the individual analysis. For Freud and Lacan insofar as they were analysts, each analysis was undertaken as if they did not know anything of those which they had conducted previously. The very *raison d'être* of a psychoanalytic institution, which is not to be confused with a university or a college, is to maintain this access to the knowledge of the unconscious. This is not to say there cannot be a psychoanalytic school but to say that in every analytic institution, according to its object, namely the unconscious, what Lacan called the effects of the group

should not cover or make the effects of the discourse disappear. The effects of the discourse are then the essential effects of that discourse — the analytic discourse. The discourse of the analyst is not the discourse of the university. The discourse of the university is some kind of social liaison which puts knowledge in the place of order and although it may be a good thing it is distinguishable from what Lacan had written under the form of the four discourses: the discourse of the master; of the hysteric; of the university and of the analyst.² The discourse of the analyst shows that knowledge occupies the place of the truth. It is a knowledge which carries its own truth and the truth is something difficult to support. To find the truth as such, the truth of the unconscious is the revolutionary, dangerous, unsupportable side of being an analyst. All precautions are taken in psychoanalytic institutions to run away from that truth, that unsupportable truth. There is no contradiction between a university teaching of psychoanalysis and the traditional teaching of psychoanalysis but it is necessary to take into account that they reflect two different relationships to knowledge which must not be confused. The formation of an analyst is, at once, both a learning of the doctrine, concepts etc., and a personal analysis, but the former and the latter are not to be confused.

Oscar Zentner: To teach psychoanalysis in the university is not synonymous with giving the direction of psychoanalysis to the university discourse nor with forming analysts.

Alain Grosrichard: I fully agree with you.

Gustavo Etkin: In Vincennes and now at Saint-Denis there are fields close to psychoanalysis and as I understand your field, close to literature. In your last book, *The Structure of the Harem*,³ you apply a psychoanalytic methodology to the political discourse of the seventeenth century. You do not make a chronicle of facts but you work with the imaginary and with fiction. According to your understanding what would be the points of intersection and of difference with psychoanalysis?

Alain Grosrichard: The teachings of Lacan and his works, lead us to establish connections between psychoanalysis *strictu sensu* and related disciplines. If you admit, with Lacan, that the unconscious is structured as a language, that language is the condition of the unconscious and that

the subject is the subject of the signifier then we must question disciplines such as linguistics, logic, mathematics, history, literature etc. Of course, as we understand it, it is not a matter of the so-called applied psychoanalysis which has not produced anything fecund because it relies on a pre-given scenario such as the Oedipus complex. Applied psychoanalysis, in this way, used to find those pre-given concepts in historical facts or in literature. Lacan, when he takes Hamlet or a Greek tragedy or even a work of Edgar Allan Poe, stated; "What I do with literature is pure psychoanalysis". In another way it concerns working with what is called culture. This is distinct from translation in the way of a hermeneutic decoding. When it works in a related field, it is above all a way of making analytic theory progress.

What I was trying to do in *The Structure of the Harem*, was not to make psychoanalysis in relation to a political regime (despotism), but to take apart the structure of a representation, of an illusion, that is, of a representation in which desire is envisaged (as Freud defined illusion) as it developed in the European monarchy of the seventeenth century. The representation was that of a monstrous political system. The coherence of this representation is the coherence of the phantasm. It is the object of the phantasm, despotism in a subject which is the subject of some kind of master, of a *unique maître*, the sun king for instance. It is precisely the moment in which the absolute power of the political master was at the point of vacillation in Europe that we see the development of this representation of an order that we define as the place of the Other; a representation of the political system which is the hypertrophic image of something latent, hidden, in the contemporary political reality of a subject which produced it. What attracted my attention in this phantasmic, oriental, political system, of which very serious philosophers like Montesquieu have spoken, was that in this representation, the despotic master appears as an overpowering master. However, his power dwells over almost nothing. The despot seems to be more tamable when it is not known whether he is alive or dead. His power does not dwell in the strength of his person but in the belief. The belief is this: the despot is not visible because he passes his time enjoying (*jouissant*) an infinite number of women; the sense of the despot is the *jouissance* and his power is not exerted by him. He makes someone else exercise it, the

vizir, who has no existence, except as a consequence of the seal, the letter which has invested him.

Gustavo Etkin: Your book finishes by saying that the guardian of the seal is the mother. Could it be inferred from this that the true place of despotic power is feminine?

Alain Grosrichard: Yes, in effect! When the texts which speak of the harem are examined, where is the heart of the Asian despotic system? It can be perceived that that system works, thanks to two essential personages. The eunuch, who on the one hand is at the side of the master, making the master appear as the exclusive holder of the emblem of power, while on the other hand, all the travellers to the orient discover that that superman, is in reality, very often more feeble than the last of the mortals, being in fact, a manipulable, capricious child, such that the efficiency of the despotic power is the mother. This representation is the sustaining point. The one who believes himself to hold the phallus is the phallus for his mother; which is the proper feminine position. The one who holds the phallus is the mother.

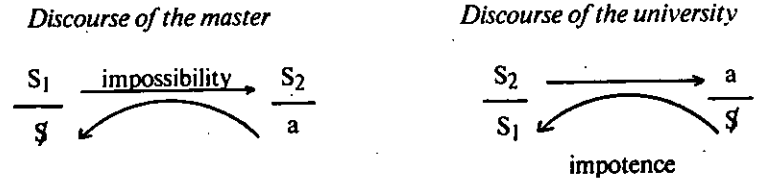
Oscar Zentner: Where do you articulate then, the division between power and knowledge on the one hand and truth on the other?

Alain Grosrichard: We could situate power and knowledge together on the side of the couple vizir — master. The vizir has the competence, the knowledge of the slave. The truth is on the side of the woman, particularly the mother, who is the truth of the whole system. The harem is the place reserved for women and there, there is a place reserved for the mother.

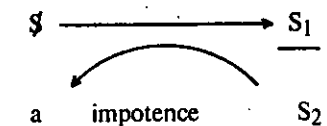
In the bloody moments of revolution, it appears that truth and knowledge erupt together. There is also some kind of contact with the truth — where there is doubt as to whether the master is alive or dead. The moment arrives when it is known that he is dead. There, the relation through death is close to the truth, producing an effect of catastrophe.

NOTES

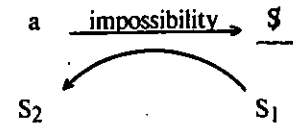
- 1 μᾶθησις, -εως (ἡ)ς action of learning, of instruction (etc.) In our alphabet *mathesis*.
- 2 Lacan, in his seminar *L'envers de la psychanalyse* 1969-70 gives the structural schemata of the four discourses as follows:



Clarified by regression of the
Discourse of the hysteric



Clarified of its "progress" in the
Discourse of the analyst



The places are those of

the agent	the other
the truth	the production

The terms are:

- S₁ the master signifier
- S₂ knowledge (savoir)
- \\$ the subject
- a the *plus-de-jour*

- 3 GROSCHARD, A. *Structure du sérail: la fiction du despotisme asiatique dans l'Occident classique Connexions du Champ Freudien*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1979.

**PAPERS OF
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Contents

	Page
INTRODUCTION	
A Note on Letter 52 of Freud and on the Ethics of Psychoanalysis; the Dissolution of L'Ecole Freudienne de Paris.	1
PART I HOMAGE TO FREUD ON THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH	
The Word of Freud.	Sigmund Freud 8
Presentation of the School.	Oscar Zentner 9
A Reference to Freud and Lacan.	María Inés Rotmiler de Zentner 13
The Entrance of Psychoanalysis in Australia.	John Dingle 23
Ideal Objects and Repetition.	Ruben Alejandro Cerutti 39
People of the Northeast Brazil Talk About Their Legends: "Joao Galafoice, in the Fishing World".	Jacques Laberge 45
Psychoanalysis and Cure.	Gustavo Ezequiel Etkin 53
Psychoanalysis.	Oscar Zentner 59
PART II ON FEMININITY	
The Woman and the Real as a Paradigm of Psychosis.	Oscar Zentner 73
PART III THE FREUDIAN DISCOURSE	
Sexuality and Science.	Oscar Zentner and María Inés Rotmiler de Zentner 95
The Freudian Unconscious, Symbolism and Censorship.	Oscar Zentner 113
Elementary Lessons.	Oscar Zentner 131

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**PAPERS OF
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1980**

Contents

	Page
NACHTRÄGLICHKEIT	1
PART I	
HOMAGE TO FREUD ON THE 41ST ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH	
In the Knot of the Subject. Oscar Zentner	13
Retrospective Unconscious Logic and Perversion, the Moments of Perversion. Gayle Paull	29
Femininity and Perversion. John Dingle	37
The Offended Woman. Gustavo Ezequiel Etkin	49
A Pseudonym, the Itinerary for a Perversion. María Inés Rotmiler de Zentner	65
The Brain as Accommodation of Desire. Graeme Crawford-Smith	79
Tod/Etcetera/Rat Man. Juan Davila	85
PART II	
THE WORD OF LACAN	
The Seminar, Paris, 10th July 1980. Jacques Lacan	97
The Seminar, Caracas, 12th July 1980. Jacques Lacan	103
PART III	
THE FREUDIAN DISCOURSE	
The Comedy of the Bodies. Javier Aramburu and Juan Carlos Cosentino	109
A Case of Perversion? Luz Freire	119
The Death of Freud. Isidoro Vegh	127
Aphanisis. Oscar Zentner	137

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