

Lacanian Psychoanalytic Writings

THE LACANIAN CLINIC

Seminars and Interventions of Jacques Lacan



PAPERS OF
THE FREUDIAN SCHOOL OF MELBOURNE

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David Pereira
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Logos

David Pereira

James Joyce puts into the mouth of Stephen Dedalus the question 'What's in a name?' — a question one hears being pondered in many places nowadays. The existence today of a Lacanian clinic of The Freudian School of Melbourne allows us, even requires us, to pose the question differently. *What is a naming?* The appellation 'Lacanian' engages in a signification, the effects of excess in relation to which, invokes the importance of the very function of naming and the ethics of the Lacanian clinic.

The appellation 'Lacanian' is a naming which, in leaning on the verb as unconscious, situates itself in relation to the Lacanian unconscious as an effect of the act. Such an act draws on what Lacan rescues of the *Wohltat* — the principle of the good action as efficacious, and separates itself sufficiently from a charitable practice of good deeds in order to be able to ask the question of how one

can operate honestly/ethically with desire.¹ At work in the Lacanian clinic is an act, as that effect of the movement of transference within a practice which produces theory whose object in the non-contingent knowledge of the clinic, rather than academic knowledge on the one hand and mystification on the other.

To 'be Lacanian', then, invokes something of an un-being, in being, like Bertrand Russell's definition of electricity, not so much a thing as a way things happen. This is to say that unbeing that allows the act of the analyst. The clinic, and here the testimony of a practice we refer to as the Lacanian clinic of The Freudian School of Melbourne, functions as the writing of a name as distinct and as opposed to the naming of a right.

The works contained in the present volume authorise, through their testimony of a practice, the existence of a Lacanian clinic of The Freudian School of Melbourne — producing theory as that excess of the encounter with the practice. Such a conception of the theory is more than evident in Lacan's Seminars and Interventions. The working bibliography of the Seminars and Interventions of Jacques Lacan, also contained in this volume, inaugurates the publication in subsequent volumes of rigorous and detailed commentary and analysis of unpublished seminars and interventions of Lacan held within the Library of Psychoanalysis of the School. In this, The Freudian School of Melbourne resists the status of knowledge as a commodity — carrying a naming right — and inscribes it as a product of its clinical and theoretical work.

Notes

1. Lacan, J. Seminar 1960-61, Transference.

The Lacanian Clinic

Intervention in the Real

Isidoro Vegh*

When I read that this conference¹ was to have the title 'The father in the Lacanian clinic' it had a great impact on me. For the first time the Freudian School publicly assumed this nomination. When a name is inscribed it is also pertinent to ask what it substitutes: that it could be 'Lacanian clinic' instead of 'Freudian clinic'.

From the beginning it seemed to me that it was not an easy question, while at the same time it continued to excite my interest. 'The father in the Lacanian clinic' is already, nearly, a thesis. I decided to take it literally (to the letter): perhaps there, in that question of the father, I might find some response with which to differentiate and articulate one clinic from the other.

*Analyst, Escuela Freudiana de Buenos Aires.

I will give you a preview of the thesis which I will try to advance to you as far as I can today: I propose to name the father, in the Lacanian clinic, 'Intervention in the Real'.

This response to the invitation extended by today's conference is formulated along shared lines with the articulation of three registers which Lacan proposes as being knotted.

The register of the Real covered by another ring, that of the Imaginary, and knotting the three according to the formula 'over the top of the one on top and under the one under', the Symbolic. This is how we write the presentation according to the plan of the Borromean Knot. Lacan proposes that we situate, at the areas of intersection of the different rings, different letters which name different relationships in libidinal economy. Between the Imaginary and the Real, JA: 'Jouissance de l'Autre', enjoyment of the Other, enjoyment outside the word, for the 'parlêtre', non-existent. There is no Other, if we understand by Other a full set. The 'parlêtre' is defined — as is indicated by the Lacanian neologism — by its first reference to the word, it decides its being and the dimension of inexistence of the Other. Someone could express the objection: 'Then why do we write it?'. That it be non-existent, does not make it non-operative: the neurotic has as his horizon that longing for the Other and it is to him that he offers himself as that object which comes to substitute for the signifier which the Other lacks.

There is another enjoyment which *is* within the reach of the subject, phallic enjoyment, at the intersection between the Real and the Symbolic, it writes the efficacy of the word in the field of the Real.

In another place, intersection between the Imaginary and the Symbolic, Lacan places 'sens'. The sense, which religion offers by the handful, is what each one claims when he or she speaks of inhabiting a world. What is left to one side is that that world which is inhabited by each one and which at times is thought of as each one's truth is sustained by an object which is its cause and which exceeds it, the object *a*.

In a seminar to which many of you were kind enough to assist,² I proposed that it would be worthwhile to think about the diversity of the analyst's interventions not reducible to a simple opposition between scansion and interpretation, from this perspective. If the intervention of the analyst points towards the point of fixation, to the enjoyment which detains the analysand and impedes him from advancing along the path of his desire, if that fixation is written as '*a*', plug for the unconscious, it is easy to see that — if this is a Borromean Knot — I can cut through the Imaginary, through the Symbolic or through the Real in order to produce from the object, a new efficacy: from object of the drive to object cause of desire.

It is from here that I want to propose to you that which the title suggests.

A quote from Lacan's Seminar R.S.I. of February 1975, says the following:

... l'effet de sens exigible, l'effet de sens exigible du discours analytique n'est pas non plus symbolique. Il faut qu'il soit réel.³

One does not respond with sense to the enigmas offered by the analysand, to do so would be to feed the little fish which is the symptom, but rather with an effect of sense, which moreover is Real. What is the meaning of a Real effect of sense? An intervention between the Imaginary and the Symbolic, produces another sense (meaning) as the effect which dismantles the crystallised sense.

In R.S.I. in February 1975, Lacan asks and answers:

What can it mean to say that there exists a construction the consistency of which must of necessity not be Imaginary? There is but one condition which is totally readable — readable here on the blackboard —, or that 'it is necessary' — (he refers to the effect of sense in the Real) — 'that it have a hole...'

An effect of sense which situates a hole in the consecrated sense which will permit the analysand to realise, at this intersection between the Imaginary and the Symbolic, what is the object which sustains and constitutes him; that for him, that is his world. This is an intervention of the analyst.

But he insists, in 'Le Sinthome', on 13 January 1976:

C'est de suture et d'épissure qu'il s'agit dans l'analyse.

He adds: (Isidoro Vegh's explanatory remarks are in brackets)

'It is necessary that we make the knot somewhere, the knot of the Imaginary and unconscious knowledge, that we make a suture somewhere' — (it is the suture between the Imaginary and the Symbolic in order to produce the effect of sense in the Real) — 'all of this in order to obtain a sense (meaning), which is the object of the response of the analyst to that exposed by the analysand for the duration of his symptom.' (An effect of sense, the analyst's response to the enigma of the symptom.) 'When we make this suture, we at the same time make another, precisely the one which is between the symptom and the Real, that is to say that in some way we teach him to suture, to suture his symptom with the Real parasite of enjoyment, which is characteristic of our operation.'

An intervention of the analyst that plays between the Imaginary and the Symbolic as an effect of sense, at the same time — this could be the effect of the interpretation — it sutures the symptom with the Real. By what mystery does it manage to do that? There is no mystery but rather the fact that the analyst only makes interpretations within the transference. It is he who, at the same time as he interprets, sustains by his act the limits of the interpretation in the function of *a*. It is Socrates who says his word, his interpretation to Alcibiades, with an efficacy which that of Pericles does not attain. Socrates, for Alcibiades, is the guardian of something that Pericles does not house within him, the efficacy of the object.

To this point we have two interventions of the analyst which are the conjugation of a clinic which could be called Freudian. In the case of a Lacanian clinic I anticipated something more: articulator of the function of the father and the clinic, the intervention of the analyst in the Real.

Its point of departure is a supposition: something of the structure persists as unlimited enjoyment, this being the efficacy of the function of the father in as much as it draws with it that enjoyment which exceeds it. An efficacy in the hands of the paternal function, impedes the subject in its time of institution, from withdrawing from an enjoyment which subjugates him.

The 'père-version' of the Wolf Man — which was mentioned by Roberto Rubens' yesterday — is not seen in the biunivocal relationship of the father with the subject: the inefficacy of that father who consumes himself in depression to the point of suicide is not propitious in making available a way along which the son may liberate himself from the place of object retained in the primordial Other. The Wolf Man bore the burden of the reiterated complaint: 'There is a veil which sets me apart from the world.'

Intervention in the Real is directed towards an effect of the structure at the intersection of the Imaginary and the Real; there where the analysand offers himself to the Other as object for his enjoyment.

In the time of institution, the double function of the version of the father — what it has of efficacy and what it has of the perverse — is accomplished in an operation of identification. Primary identification which is not the same as the primary repression of which it is the antecedent. When it is accomplished, this primary identification achieves a difference: it is not the same to be absolutely at the mercy of the version of the father and to effect an incorporation of that version. It implies a difference which as it is sanctioned in consequent times will serve to institute a desiring subject.

This does not impede, rather it is the reason for there being a part of that enjoyment of the father which prevails even in the neurotic.

The 'sinthome' is the reply which the neurotic gives, as barrier in the Real, to that excess of the paternal intervention. The aim of an analysis is to situate the reply of the neurotic in such a way as to allow him to do something with it, situate himself in another way.⁶ That is where the analyst intervenes in the Real.

He intervenes in the Real there where the effects of the word do not reach the analysand. The analyst intervenes as a presence which accomplishes a pulsation⁷; a time logically first in which he 'presentifies' the quota of enjoyment which retains the subject, supports the object which the analysand proposes from his fantasm in order to, in a second time, propitiate his subtraction.

Intervention in the Real is homologous to the primary operation of the Real father with the difference that it works retroactively from a realised Symbolic dimension.

What is the realised Symbolic dimension which specifies analysis?: Its disposition which inscribes in the Real the limits of an ethic. The analyst intervenes from his desire which restricts him in the realisation of enjoyment. He sustains, as in the first time, that effect of enjoyment but not in order to advance that way but rather in order to exercise his fall. He suspends his enjoyment in order not to yield in his desire.

The place of the object which the analyst sustains is not that which he proposes in the fashion of a previous disposition, but rather the product of the analysand's saying.

For one who reiterates the letter announcing his failure, it might be the calling out for the whip of the voice. For another the vindication of his exploits expects from the analyst the sanction of the light of his eyes. For he who functions like a bottomless bag, believing only the object possessed to be sweet, the absent one to be bitter, what is called out for is that presence that will discover that there are bitter foods to be enjoyed, that there are sweet absences.

And all of this — to what end? : 'So that the analysand may be able to read in another way', 'lire Autrement' — in French homophonous with 'Autre ment', 'an other lies'. What does this mean — 'to read in another way', and 'to read that the Other lies'? That the analysand may discover that the imperative mode of the Other is the proof of its insufficiency. When children oblige us to give them reasons for one of our decisions: — 'So why should I have to go to sleep now? — Because you have to go to school tomorrow. — And why do I have to go to school tomorrow? — Well, because children study. — Why do children study? — Well, you know, because of the future, and Argentina's state at the moment. — And why Argentina's... — O.K. that's enough, go to sleep! When one says that, in that imperative tone, which does not cease to be necessary and efficacious⁸, what the child also discovers is that the other runs out of reasons. The imperative mode is also a way of confessing to not having arguments, it is the weakness of any regime when it is obliged to use force, it is the beginning of the questioning of its consistency. When he discovers that the Other lies, that the Other does not exist, the subject arrives at the encounter with his desire.

Translated by Nati Sangiau for The Freudian School of Melbourne, March 1993.

Notes

1. Conference of the Freudian School of Buenos Aires which took place in July 1991 around the topic 'The father in the Lacanian clinic'.
2. 'The interventions of the analyst', A Seminar run by The Freudian School of Buenos Aires in 1990.
3. Lacan, Jacques R.S.I., 11 February 75, Class 5, p.9. 'The effect of sense (meaning) which is demanded, the effect of sense which is demanded of analytic discourse is not Imaginary. Neither is it Symbolic. It is

4. Lacan Jacques requisite that it be Real.
Le Sinthome, 13 January 1976, p.9.
'Analysis is about suturing and joining.'
5. Rubens, Roberto The paternal complex in the Wolf Man.
Text presented during this congress.
6. That the sinthome be constructed, or that
it be knotted in a convenient fashion
during analysis — in both cases what is
situated by its joining onto the structure
is the end of the cure.
7. Which reminds one of the unconscious in
its opening and closing, alienation and
separation.
8. In order that its efficacy be sustained it
must anticipate its flexion and its limit.

The Desire of the Analyst and the Art of the Fool

Nati Sangiau

The title of my paper, once written, begged its own question — principally why speak of art in the case of the fool and of desire in the case of the analyst?

As an 'hors d'oeuvre' — that is, an outside the work — I thought I might take the liberty of borrowing King Lear's fool in order to ask him...

'My Lord' says the fool on a day like today, and in order to pass the time and perhaps even achieve some moments of pleasure.

'My Lord, how is an analyst like a fool?

'How my pretty one?' answers the King.

'In that neither be like a king
unless, that is, he be a king
who having the powers of one
employs them but to give them away
leaving himself with but the empty shell
of the kingly word
and the satisfaction that in doing so, he
has done well.'

'How now? Take care my roguish imp!
Say on...'

'Both the analyst and the fool, my Lord,
walk a tightrope
a chain of words along which they carefully skip:
Carefully because to miss for the fool
is to lose his Lord and hence his name;
Carefully because to miss for the analyst
is to lose his analysand and hence his name.
— The name of each of the two, analyst and fool,
being what they do
that being nothing else other than what they say and
don't say
Unlike a king, my Lord, who owns
his crown and all its accompanying
trappings of wealth and power,
the analyst and the fool own naught —
their place is the middle of the knot
which is not safe
but nonetheless their place
The place of the King, my Lord,
is on his throne
which covers up the naught.
Ay, but a foolish King
like a kingly fool or kingly analysts,
is one that has got his naught
so knotted
as to believe that he can be

both naught and king —
he sits on his crown
having got into such a muddle
about where his head should be.'

My paper is not about 'King Lear' but I do take for granted that you know the story of King Lear who wanted to give up his crown — who did so — but not what his crown commanded from others. The ensuing dilemma is an interesting one for us thinking about the desire of the analyst — the Lacanian analyst. King Lear gave away his crown, his kingdom, and was surprised to find that he had, in the process, lost all. His problem, or one of them anyhow, was that he had never had to differentiate between his desire as King and his desire as man. A not so uncommon problem, even amongst those of us who are not kings.

King Lear was rather fortunate, relatively speaking; I mean he did at least have a good fool. His fool being a good example to some extent at least of what Lacan might have meant by he who holds to the ethic of the 'well said', but a good fool mainly in this case because he stayed — he was there through thick and thin, in the palace and on the heath; and he was always honest to King Lear's words and kind to his person — a distinction which is not easy to make but nonetheless absolutely necessary I would think.

During his visit to Melbourne in 1991, Gustavo Etkin, an analyst of the Vel Grupo School of Psychoanalysis of Bahia in Brazil, said, amongst many other interesting things, that the desire of the analyst was always a desire for death.

Lacan in his Seminar 'R.S.I.', Seminar 22, given during the academic year 1974-75 is also, it seems to me, exploring the nature of the desire of the analyst — this desire for death. The analyst as that analysand who has gone through the pass, who has gone through the hole of the Symbolic with the result of becoming aware of the nature of the subject — the subject in theoretical or structural terms being the Borromean Knot, the subject of psychoanalysis.

I begin at the end, and quote for you the last paragraph of the Seminar of 1974-75 on the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary. Lacan says:

It is in the midst of these three acts of naming, the naming of the Imaginary as inhibition, the naming of the Real as anguish, the naming of the Symbolic — the flower of the very Symbolic — as symptom, it is in the midst of those three terms that I will endeavour next year to ask myself about what substance it would be convenient to give to the Name-of-the-Father.

This being the proposed fourth cord of the Borromean Knot. The next seminar referred to that which he would name 'Le Sinthome'.

Before going forward to that Seminar, I would like to work backwards through the R.S.I. Seminar because it seems to me that here Lacan has already gone a fair way in naming, or giving substance to, the proposed fourth ring, or cord as he calls it — the umbilical cord of the matter, one might say. Lacan asks: 'What is there of the Symbolic which cannot be imagined?' His answer is 'There is the hole'.

He had laid down the groundwork for this argument a few pages before when he says:

For us, the interdiction of incest is not historical, but structural. Why? Because there is the Symbolic. This interdiction consists in the hole of the Symbolic in order that it may appear in an individualised form in the knot, something which I do not call the Oedipus Complex (it is not as complex as that) but 'the-Name-of-the-Father', by which I mean the father as name — which means nothing at the start — and not only the father as name, but the father as namer.

Lacan's proposition, as I read it, seems to be that the function of the father is to name — but to name what? To name the knot or,

putting it in another way, to make the knot, to knot the three rings of the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary.

And what is the knot but the subject itself, the subject of psycho-analysis? The subject, made subject as such by the fourth cord — the 'Name-of-the-Father'. A fourth cord, Lacan seems to be suggesting, which comes into play by way of a pass, a pass through the hole of the Symbolic — a pass through to a place which has no name, a pass which marks the end of an analysis, a pass which may allow the transference to flow into a work, a work of analysing a work of writing, etc. etc. etc., a work at once sustained by and directed towards the analysis of the subject. A subject now open to analysis by way of that pass through that hole in the Symbolic. A pass which Lacan gave a 'convenient substance to' as he puts it, on another occasion — in his short seminar on 'The-Names-of-the-Father' of 20 November, 1963. There he says:

Concerning the praxis which is analysis, I have sought to articulate how I seek it and how I lay hold of it. Its truth is mobile, disappointing, slippery. Are you not to understand that this is because the praxis of analysis is obliged to advance toward a conquest of the truth via the paths of deception? For transference is nothing else — the transference into what has no name in the place of the Other.

I add, the transference into what has no name, and on into a work which in the case of the analyst is always carried out in the Symbolic — though not for that on safe ground. Anything but safe; the way being always unexpected, the way of deception, as Lacan puts it, the way of 'lalangue', the way of equivocation. Which brings us back to the art of the fool.

I will define the substance, the convenient substance as Lacan puts it, which I want to give to this concept of art by quoting to you from Freud — from the last two paragraphs of his paper titled 'Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defence' of 1938. And I remind you that it is during this same period that Freud is writing or

re-writing or perhaps simply still trying to make up his mind about the publication of the final sections of 'Moses and Monotheism' in which he is engaged with the myth of the Killing of the Father.

In the 'Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defence', Freud describes a certain way of dealing with reality as 'artful', artful, I suggest, in the same way that the fool might be seen to be so. Rather than paraphrasing, I will quote from the last two paragraphs which are then self-explanatory to a great extent. Freud says:

The usual result of the fright of castration, the result that passes as the normal one, is that either immediately or after some considerable struggle, the boy gives way to the threat and obeys the prohibition either wholly or at least in part (that is, by no longer touching his genitals with his hand). In other words, he gives up, in whole or in part, the satisfaction of the drive. We are prepared to hear, however, that our present patient found another way out. He created a substitute for the penis which he missed in females — that is to say, a fetish. In so doing, it is true that he had disavowed reality, but he had saved his own penis. So long as he was now obliged to acknowledge that females have lost their penis, there was no need for him to believe the threat that had been made against him: he need have no fears for his own penis, so he could proceed with his masturbation undisturbed. This behaviour on the part of our patient strikes us forcibly as being a turning away from reality — a procedure which we should prefer to reserve for psychoses. And it is in fact not very different. Yet we will suspend our judgement, for upon closer inspection we shall discover a not unimportant distinction. The boy did not simply contradict his perceptions and hallucinate a penis where there was none to be seen; he effected no more than a displacement of value — he transferred the importance of the penis to another part of the body, a procedure in which he was assisted by the mechanism

of regression... This displacement, it is true, related only to the female body; as regards his own penis nothing was changed.

This way of dealing with reality, which may be described as artful, was decisive as regards the boy's practical behaviour. He continued with his masturbation as though it implied no danger to his penis; but at the same time, in complete contradiction to his apparent boldness and indifference, he developed a symptom which showed that he nevertheless did recognise the danger. He had been threatened with being castrated by his father and, immediately afterwards, simultaneously with the creation of his fetish, he developed an intense fear of his father punishing him, which it required the whole force of his masculinity to master and overcompensate.

Then the comments on Kronos and Freud ends with:

But we must return to our case history and add that the boy produced yet another symptom... This was an anxious susceptibility against either of his little toes being touched, as though, in all the to and fro between disavowal and acknowledgement, it was nevertheless castration that found the clearer expression.

The fool is artful — artful in being clever but not too clever, honest but not too honest, just entertaining enough, enough to never fade, never become over-exposed, boring, biting enough to excite, but not hurt too much... etc. etc. etc. The fool can be seen to function on the side of the fetish — he offers himself as a fetish — a thing from which to derive pleasure by proxy — a protection against getting too close to the pain of boredom, the anguish of being left alone with one's own words.

Furthermore, the transgression against the law which the art of the fool has been seen to celebrate throughout the ages, is very interesting because it is a transgression which as such is denounced while at

the same time applauded and enjoyed — like a dirty joke — and of course a fool is like a walking joke — a jester — a parody of man.

Petit de Julleville describes the Sottie in the following:

The sottie is played by sots, and the sot is the 'fool';

the two names mean equally the same character. He symbolises mankind in general and great men in particular, indulging in the folly and vice which are basic to our instincts. To represent them in every form, the fool never just plays himself, but pope, bishop, or judge, nobleman or merchant, in turn. But he is always a 'fool' beneath his various 'costumes'.

On the contrary, an analyst, a Lacanian analyst, never offers himself or herself as anything other than an analyst. With the analyst it is never a question — as in the case of the art of the fool — of representing many and varied figures whilst always being the fool — the fetish the safeguard underneath. The analyst is never anything but an analyst — whose place is nowhere — nowhere because it is not a question of taking up, or impersonating some other figure in the geography of the analysand. The analysand might, will if there is a transference, do his or her work by using the analyst as an all-purpose fool in his or her own sottie — but that is the work of the analysand. The work of the analyst is that work which is sustained by a desire whose object and whose cause are one — or should I say none — and the same, that which Lacan has called the *objet petit a*. That which is shed as refuse by the analysand, that which is always dying in order to live. Or, quoting from Santa Teresa de Avila, the Spanish mystic — 'Dying to die' ('Muero porque no muero').

The desire of the analyst, as Lacan suggests in his Seminar 'Encore', is not unlike the desire of the mystic in that it is a desire supported by the demand of an other that is non-existent, that is un-nameable. In the case of the analyst the name of this Other is not God but the praxis of psychoanalysis. That is the interpretation of

unconscious desire of the analysand as heard in his symptoms, his inhibitions, his anguish — these are the 'substances' which, as we pointed out before, Lacan gives to three rings of the knot:

The naming of the Imaginary as inhibition, the naming of the Symbolic... as... symptom...

The 'convenient substance' which I suggest to you might be given to the praxis of the analyst is that of sinthome of castration, that is symptom which has been put to work. The essential nature of this work is well situated by Freud in the passage quoted earlier. Returning to my positioning of the fool in the landscape which Freud creates, as on the side of the fetish, the pretender, I would then place the analyst on the side of the symptom, the symptom of castration: that second type of symptom to which Freud refers when he says:

But we must return to our case history and add that the boy produced yet another symptom... This was an anxious susceptibility against either of his little toes being touched, as though in all the to and from between disavowal and acknowledgement, it was nevertheless castration that found the clearer expression...

A symptom of castration or, to go back to Lacan and his formulation in R.S.I., 'the naming of the Symbolic — the flower of the very Symbolic, as symptom...'. Symptom which in his next Seminar 'Le Sinthome' he gives the convenient substance of a symptom which has been put to work to one's benefit — the benefit being to do, to work. A working, a doing sustained by the always uncertain, slippery knowledge of the fact that the only completion of the task will come with death. Then and only then will there be an end to desire. The knowledge of this is what keeps the analyst 'honest' — as it were — what sorts out the analysts from among the fools.

Both fool and analyst, as the fool suggested at the beginning of this paper, are at the centre of the knot. But, and there is the rub, the fool is there as decoy, as pretender, as trickster, as fetish:

The analyst, the Lacanian analyst, is there as symptom, a semblance of the *objet petit a*, both object and cause of his desire.

To define psychoanalytic praxis with reference to desire and not to art is to emphasise the lack — as opposed to the trick — which is its trademark, the lack which is both its object and cause, the never getting there which is its place.

Notes

1. The seminars which he gave during his visit fleshed out what he meant by this. The four seminars are published in the Papers of the Freudian School of Melbourne, Homage to Lacan, Felicity Bagot, Linda Clifton, David Pereira (eds), Melbourne, 1992.
2. Lacan, J. R.S.I. Seminar XXII.
3. My translation *ibid*.
4. Lacan, J. 'The Names of the Father', Seminar, 20 November, 1963.
5. Freud, S. 'Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defence', St.Ed., vol. XXII, 1938.
6. Julleville, Petit de, 'Les Comediens en France au Moyen Age', Paris 1985, in 'The Fool and the Trickster', p.32, edited by Paul V.A. Williams, D.S. Brewer Ltd, 1979.

Mourning is not Reparation

Luis Riebl

... and thus the use of the voice will
have become associated with suffering
of any kind.
Charles Darwin¹

Introduction

The topic of my paper is mourning in psychoanalysis. My interest was stimulated by the observation that whatever 'progress' analysands appeared to make seemed invariably linked to a certain affective expenditure. Any fundamental avowal made seemed always to be 'paid for' with a measure of pain.

Another starting point was a repeated observation that some analysands, after long periods of analytic work, would at some point

talk with sadness about the hopes they had held for themselves, their treatment, hopes they now felt to be illusions, sometimes talking about an experience of limitation and finiteness. Not infrequently this little mourning would usher in a period of great productivity within the analytic setting and sometimes, as a by-product, in their lives.

A while ago I attended a talk by a colleague of the International Psychoanalytic Association on metaphorical language. In this talk he described a patient whom he considered unable to form or utilise metaphors and who was so rigid that she would greet him for several years with a loud 'Good morning!', irrespective of the time of day. During discussion my question whether that patient had experienced losses or sorrow in her life was answered in the affirmative, as both parents had never really spoken to their child and the patient had described them as cold, somehow dead.

At that point, I suggested that his patient might have tried, over all those years, to tell him something about a 'not so good mourning' — a metaphor that got stuck and became a symptom because it had remained un-interpreted. The question is: what is a good and what a not so good mourning?

Sigmund Freud allocates mourning the status of one of the dark, fundamental concepts that many others are based upon, but which cannot be completely clarified in itself. It shall be the task of this paper to examine whether there are grounds for a differentiation between a mourning which brings with it its own restitution — that is reparation — and a different mourning which shows a greater independence from the image, indeed producing a fall of the image exactly where a reparative mourning attempts to erect it.

Of what we have provisionally termed reparative mourning it can be said that, as far as we are neurotic, we love our mourning. This being in love with one's loss, one's symptom, one's history,² one's identity is to be in love with one's ego, that last resting place of the introjected object, which, as we will see, is really an identification with an image, a specular identification.

In an analysis that does more than stir the pot of the Imaginary, we can find a profoundly different form of mourning, a mourning, to be precise, of the object as ideal. This paper sets out to clarify the importance and status of such a mourning.

Mourning

In 'On Transience', where Freud contemplates the value of beauty as 'something to be lost in time', he comments on the need to accept pain, to mourn its passing in order to be able to enjoy it.

In one masterful stroke he links mourning with pain, beauty and enjoyment.

One year later, in 1916, he returns to the concept of mourning, making it the basis of a comparison with melancholia.⁴

Mourning is commonly the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or of an abstraction which has taken that persons place, such as homeland, freedom — an ideal.⁵

He provides us with a second lead — the lost object is linked to the notion of an ideal.

The work of mourning, for Freud, consists of an ongoing confrontation with what we could call the inertia of the libido; a libido which does not want to accept that the object no longer exists, with the demand of reality: 'The object no longer is. Withdraw your libido.' The I (ego), confronted with the question of whether to share the fate of the object, accepts the narcissistic satisfaction of being alive and surrenders its bond with the perished object, at the price of pain.

In melancholia, Freud has it that the libidinal investment of the object is given up 'much easier'; that same investment is then used to produce an identification. 'The shadow of the object' has fallen upon the I (ego). A shadow — the negative of an image. This

narcissistic identification becomes the replacement of the love relationship:

Love has, through its escape into the I (ego), avoided its own — *Aufhebung*.

Freud uses the same word in his paper 'On Negation' which was commented upon by Jean Hypolite, the philosopher, in Lacan's seminar.⁶ Hypolite makes the following comments regarding this concept:

Aufhebung is Hegel's dialectical word, which means simultaneously to deny, to suppress and to conserve, and fundamentally to raise up.

In melancholia, which represents the most extreme form of a failed mourning, there is, according to Freud, a refusal to a '*Aufhebung der Liebe*', which, following Hypolite we retranslate as a refusal of a raising up of love, a refusal of a redirecting of the libido. As we know, this is the libido turned back into the I (ego).

As early as 1895 Freud had stated that the object falls into two parts — one that can be likened, by the fact of its being different, to one's own body, and that which cannot be established as different, denoted as the Thing;⁷ The Thing remains without signifier.

Lacan states that

Through his relationship to the signifier, the subject is deprived of something of himself. The phallus is the term for the signifier of his alienation in signification. When the subject is deprived of this signifier, a peculiar object becomes for him object of desire ($\$ \diamond a$).⁸

The other part of the object, for Freud, is an object 'attained by identification'. In fact, when later talking about the object of the drive, Freud is absolutely clear: the object is the most variable aspect

of the drive, always an approximation, never 'the same object that once afforded satisfaction', hence always a lost object.

We have noted earlier that in the case of mourning, in 'Mourning and Melancholia', Freud places 'the object' — here in the sense of the love object — in close proximity to the ideal. Lacan has shown throughout his teaching the relationship between specular identification and the ideal.

We have here arrived at the question concerning the link between identification and signification. The love object, the semblances of object *a* and other part objects, while amenable to identification, will tend to act as signifiers, as long as they, by being part of a signifying chain, allow desire to proceed. As the psychopathology of everyday love life clearly suggests to us, desire proceeds along the path of the trait: be it the '*Glanz auf der Nase*', the 'shining on the nose' in Freud's example, which points to the glance at the nose, away from castration, to castration. Now, to proceed along the path of the trait means exactly to proceed along the path of the signifier.

A whole image, by contrast, as we are dealing with in specular identification, will not act as a signifier, but always and exclusively as a sign, thus leading to the following formulation: An image (of other) represents something to someone.

A sign represents something (other; love object, object of identification) for a subject; as far as desire is concerned, it signals a dead end street. This difference between a sign and a signifier is relevant when examining the concept of reparation in Melanie Klein.

Mourning and Reparation — Melanie Klein

Melanie Klein has made the question of mourning a very prominent concern of hers. I intend to discuss her position and her views as a way of contrasting her approach — that of object relation, with an approach inspired by Lacan and Freud, hoping to be able to

demonstrate differences in the direction of analysis as necessary results of a difference in theory.

For Klein, infantile psychotic anxieties stem from phantasised attacks against frustrating, that is, bad, internalised and external objects, in the first place the mother's breast(s), and from the phantasised return of expelled, projected bad part objects. Usually towards the age of six months, with increasing integration of experience, a realisation occurs that the attacked bad object coincides with the good object. This leads to a belief that the good object has been destroyed, hence that it is lost.⁹

The yearning, the guilt and the pining for this object believed lost represents, as we know, the depressive position. Inner good objects can, as a result of successful mourning, become established more and more firmly. In childhood, the depressive position is overcome through happy experiences, such as gratification, proving the intactness of the loved object and leading to a more and more accurate perception of both psychic and external reality.¹⁰

The pining for the lost object and guilt as central features of the depressive position, are hard to bear, and a number of defences are used to avoid this experience: manic defences, such as idealisation, splitting, denial, triumph and contempt;¹¹ obsessional defences, all of which are overcome with the introjection of the whole and real object, thus overcoming splitting and idealisation. Ironically, what Melanie Klein appears to overlook is the fact that this whole and real object represents an ideal — the ideal of wholeness and the ideal of reality.

In 1928, when the concept of reparation first appears as '*Selbstwiederherstellung*'¹² (literally: 'reconstituting oneself'), Klein equates reparation tendencies with reaction formation tendencies.

The fundamental mechanism in reparation is undoubtedly one of identification. The maternal body is equated with one's own; then acting upon either of them the child can reassure him/herself about the condition of the phantasised body, feared destroyed.

In 1932,¹³ the term is changed to become '*Wiedergutmachung*'. Initially, mechanisms of restitution and pity towards the damaged object are seen as employed in order to placate a severe superego, but in later works the ego will identify with the object in the sense of empathy and reparation will be accounted for in terms of love and of concern for the object.

Thus in the later work of Melanie Klein, reparation becomes increasingly the healing, integrating work of maturation and love. Reparation itself has become an ideal, a superego demand for the analyst to be imparted onto the analysand.

I would like to contrast this with her statement in the opening pages of 'Love, Guilt and Reparation'¹⁵: 'One always repairs oneself'. We might render this: repair is always narcissistic. From here we might recall the early formulations on reparation, seeing the process as a reaction formation against hateful, destructive tendencies.

Oscar Zentner states in his article 'Of Beauty — Neither Transient nor Everlasting', that love is a sign. If, for Klein, reparative love becomes the beacon to guide psychoanalysis, then psychoanalysis moves from an ethical position to one of moral demand and with it one of prescriptive guilt.

Why? If we define an ethical standpoint in psychoanalysis as one where one does not give up on one's desire, if we further remind ourselves that it is desire which is sustained by the metonymy of signification, and if we concur with Oscar Zentner that love is a sign — he bases his thesis on the reciprocity of love — then we can develop Lacan's formula of signification, 'A signifier represents a subject (divided) for another signifier' and restate it for reparative love as follows: 'Reparation represents a whole good object to a mature ego'.

REPARATION → A MATURE EGO
 A WHOLE GOOD OBJECT

The same thing can be expressed using the neurotic torus; this torus cannot be reduced to a point; it has two axes — a hole must remain in the middle. That hole is constituted by that object which cannot be signified, Lacan's *objet petit a* or Freud's the *Thing*. The repetitive turns of the demand circle around the object in desire, Freud's lost object.

What would happen if things got repaired? That hole in the middle would disappear — we would be left with a sphere. This is exactly what Klein's theorising seems to suggest: an inside and outside, introjection, incorporation, expulsion, projection and so forth. And a sphere is a much more plausible model for the human body! Isn't it? Anyone who has ever studied anatomy or embryology will, I think, agree that even for the human body things are not necessarily as one imagines. The wound that Klein attempts to repair is the hole around which the torus is constituted — the Real. The Kleinian trajectory could then be read : from hole (the yearning for what she calls 'the real thing'), to whole (depressive position) to holy (reparation through love).

Sandor Ferenczi — Mourning in Analysis

Sandor Ferenczi, in 1927, in a paper titled 'The Problem of the Termination of the Analysis'¹⁶ makes a number of observations regarding mourning in its relation to neurosis and to the termination of the treatment.

Analysis must die of exhaustion... A truly cured patient separates slowly but surely from analysis: as long as a patient still wishes to come, he still needs analysis. One could characterise this process of separation such that he has, in the analysis, made himself believe to have a newer, still fantastic method of satisfaction which in reality gives him nothing. Once he has overcome his mourning over this insight, he invariably starts to search for new, more real means to gain satisfaction. Viewed from an analytical standpoint, his entire neurotic period... appears as a pathological mourning, which

was transferred onto the analytical situation, but which was unmasked as to its true nature which puts an end to future tendencies towards repetition.

The analytical abstinence represents, therefore, the actual dealing with these infantile situations where satisfaction was denied.

Let us highlight the following points:

Neurosis represents a pathological mourning of those situations where satisfaction was denied, such as a loss or an absence of the satisfying object.

This pathological mourning is repeated in the transference.

The realisation of this state of affairs leads to what we could then call 'a second order mourning' — Ferenczi would presumably term it a non-pathological mourning — where what is being mourned is the fact that there was 'pathological' mourning.

This second order mourning, then, would be to give up the introjected object, to realise that the yearned for object is an image, a mirage, an ideal; thus to mourn in analysis is to give up that ideal.

So far Ferenczi proves to be right on target. Following this, he turns towards real satisfaction as the goal and outcome of the analysis. When he has suggested a few pages earlier that, towards the end of the analysis 'we need to hold a mirror in front of our patients', going on to suggest links between physiognomy, graphology and body types (Kretschmer) with psychoanalysis, he demonstrates very clearly that, where a preoccupation with reality becomes prominent for the psychoanalyst, he has entered the realm of specular resolution.

With the gradual perfection of the person of the analyst, the number of completely analysed cases will grow, Ferenczi asserts. The

completion of the analysis, with this, becomes a superego demand: an ideal ego striving for an ideal analysis.

What Ferenczi appears to shy away from is the fundamentally traumatic nature of the end of the analysis. The second mourning he describes could be described as the mourning of an idealised, imaginised transference. He recoils from that trauma — an encounter — towards the comfort of the ideal, thus undoing the mourning accomplished earlier.

The Mourning of Hope

When someone comes and sees someone whom he supposes to be an analyst, asking to be analysed, he makes that someone an Other who will understand, an Other who knows. The analyst, *sujet supposé de savoir*, is in the moment of the demand located in the place of knowledge. We know, of course, that the analyst doesn't possess this knowledge as it is demanded of him. The amazing thing is only that this fact doesn't appear to make the slightest difference. Why is that? In order to be seen to have 'the' answer, this *sujet supposé de savoir* needs to be identified with an Other who does not lack. In other words: every analysand lives in hope. In hope that there is going to be a meaning to it all, that his history is going to be his, like a treasured possession, assuring identity and peace with the superego. In one way or another, to seek an analysis is to seek refuge from despair, which we could write as dis-pair, in reference to Plato's Symposium. However, whatever the distress, however tormenting the symptom, in the very formulation of the demand for an analysis lies the assumption of an undivided, non-lacking Other.

If things go well, they go badly; somewhere, at some point, every analysis will result in a narcissistic injury; not an injury inflicted upon the analysand by the analyst, but an injury arising out of the very structuring of the analytic encounter. At some point, there will be a realisation that the *sujet supposé de savoir* doesn't know, producing henceforth the loss of an ideal. Lacan asks, in relation to mourning:

...the *Verwerfung*, the hole of the loss in the Real of something which is properly speaking the intolerable dimension presented to human experience which is, not the experience of one's own death, which nobody has, but that of the death of someone else, who is for us an essential being.

This is a hole in the Real, it is found in the Real, and because of this fact is found, and because of the same correspondence which is the one that I articulated in the *Verwerfung*, to offer the place where there is projected precisely this missing signifier, this essential signifier, as such, in the structure of the Other, this signifier makes the Other powerless to give you your response. This signifier which you cannot pay for except with your flesh and your blood, this signifier which is essentially the phallus under the veil.¹⁸

If the subject is not psychotic, that is either neurotic or perverse, this signifier will have become established and with it an ability of the subject to partake in a Symbolic order, well before entering into an analysis. Lacan says in 1959, in relation to the Oedipus complex:

The subject must explore his relationship to the field of the Other, i.e., the field organised in the Symbolic register, in which his demand for love has begun to express itself. It is when he emerges from this exploration, having carried it to the end, that the loss of the phallus occurs for him and is felt as such, a radical loss. How does he respond then to the necessity of this mourning. Precisely with the composition of his Imaginary register and with nothing else.¹⁹

So, whilst the Symbolic register is firmly established in neurotic or perverse subjects who enter into an analysis, they bring with their transference — which is, of course, not just born the moment they first enter the analysts consulting room — a veiling which belongs to the Imaginary, a certain attachment to their losses; their traumata;

all of which veil that 'loss of the phallus' (a loss that of itself establishes the phallus) Lacan is referring to.

This is the moment for the possibility of a second mourning, a mourning that is particularly linked to the analytic experience as outlined by Lacan.

The German *Trauer* (Mourning) is derived from Gothic *drusian* — 'to fall'. For mourning to occur, something must fall. Something must fall, so love might rise. Mourning as a non-reparative psychoanalytic act leads to the fall of the object as image or ideal, thus moving in the direction of the absolute difference between the object and the ideal, which to obtain, according to Lacan, is the desire of the analyst.

... a desire which intervenes when, confronted with the primary signifier, the subject is, for the first time, in a position to subject itself to it. There only may the signification of a limitless love emerge, because it is outside the limits of the law, where alone it may live.

To mourn without reparation, then, might allow one a certain freedom in speaking: from the mourning of the 'not able to say it all' to the possibility of saying something new.

Mourning the concept, and mourning the act, both run the risk of being subverted. Subverted as a concept by the possibility to broaden its base to the point where mourning comes to mean everything, e.g. life; subverted as an act of mourning as it can occur in a successful analysis, by the very fact that it runs counter to a certain recoiling movement — away from the impossible avowal of the impossible — as we have demonstrated it to occur with reparation in Klein and the conception of the end of the analysis in Ferenczi.

Reparation attempts to reverse or to prevent that fall of the ideal, offering the mirage of the whole, satisfying object — an ideal — which, via identification, allows one to be in love with one's ego.

We have said earlier that every signification produces a lack; some residue, or excess, something that slips through the net of signification. The signifier denoting this lack, this 'not everything can be signified' is S(A) (signifier of lack in the Other) situated at a meeting point between 'the possibility of jouissance' and the trajectory of mourning. Mourning, then would appear as something pointing towards a Real; in this it goes beyond desire and the phantasm, indeed, it comes to its full force where the phantasm — disarticulated — has been mourned. Is this the end of it? I do not think so. Following Lacan, the chain of unconscious signification proceeds from jouissance to castration; in the end, there is the mourning of the phallus, that signifier of which Lacan says we have to pay for with a pound of flesh.

What about the payment, the pain, which is such a regular feature of any mourning? It represents a fraction of jouissance which is spent as part of that transaction. A payment, a sacrifice, a poena — a punishment; something pointing towards castration.

At this point, I would like to return to that short paper by Freud, written in 1915, amidst the horror of World War I, 'On Transience'. He recalls a walk through a summer landscape in full blossom, full of beauty. He is walking in the company of two friends, one silent, the other a poet. The poet acknowledges the beauty, but cannot bring himself to enjoy it, as he knows that winter will arrive and destroy it. That beauty, the poet argues, possesses no value, because of its transience. Freud tells us that he is unable to convince his two companions of what appears unassailably clear and logically founded to him: that transience, by limiting the supply of that beauty in the dimension time, increases its value. A flower, he says, is no less beautiful because it only blooms for one night. Beauty lies in the enjoyment, not in the everlasting. His friends' refusal means to him that they are not prepared to accept the mourning, the pain of anticipating the loss of what could give them joy.

The poet and Freud, whose name signifies nothing else but 'joy' (*Freude*) represent two possibilities for man: the refusal of pain and with it a giving up of that measure of enjoyment, of beauty; or

the work of mourning, constitutive of a desire that puts a limit to jouissance.

Notes

1. Darwin, Charles. *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, Reprinted from the Authorized Edition of D. Appleton & Co., The University of Chicago Press, 1965.
2. An elderly patient emerging from a guilt laden paranoia of several years duration says in her analysis: 'My history, that's me,' thereby reminding us that where the structure is psychosis, an 'Imaginary restitution' might constitute cure, while in neurosis, it represents inhibition or symptom.
3. Freud, S. (1915) *Vergänglichkeit*, GW X, pp.358, S. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1973.
4. Freud, S. *Trauer und Melancholie*, GW X, pp.428, S. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1973.
5. Freud, S. *ibid.*, p.429.
6. In: *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book I, Freud's Papers on Technique 1953-1954*, p.291, Jacques-Alain Miller (ed.), translated by John Forrester, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1988.
7. For more detailed discussion see J. Mullen, *Papers of the Freudian School of Melbourne*, 1987, Sublimation in the Reverse in the Treatment of the Psychotic Thing and L. Riebl, PFSM 1991, Object, Ego & Death.
8. Lacan, J. Desire and its Interpretation, seminar held on April 22, 1959, p.28, transcription and translation Cormack Gallagher, private

copy of the Library of Psychoanalysis of the Freudian School of Melbourne.

9. Klein, M.

Mourning and its Relation to Manic Depressive States (1940), in *Love, Guilt and Reparation and other Works 1921-1945*, pp.344-349, Virago Press, London, 1988.

10. Klein, M.

Some Theoretical Conclusions Regarding the Emotional Life of the Infant (1952), in *Envy and Gratitude and other Works 1946-1963*, pp.61-93, Virago Press, London, 1988.

11. Klein, M.

A Contribution to the Psychogenesis of Manic Depressive States (1935), in *Love, Guilt and Reparation and other Works 1921-1945*, pp.262-289, Virago Press, London, 1988.

12. Klein, M.

Early Stages of the Oedipus Conflict (1928), in *Love, Guilt and Reparation and other Works 1921-1945*, pp.186-198, Virago Press, London, 1988.

13. Klein, M.

The Psychoanalysis of Children (1932), Virago Press, London, 1989.

14.

Wiedergutmachung — literally to make good or whole again. This was the same term to be used some 13 years later to denote financial recompense to victims of Nazi persecution paid by Austrian and German governments (see Jorge Thieberger, *The Concept of Reparation in Melanie Klein's Writings*).

15. Klein, M.

(1937), *Love, Guilt and Reparation and other Works 1921-1945*, pp.303-343, Virago Press, London, 1988.

16.

Das Problem der Beendigung der Analysen — Paper held at the Xth International Congress of Psychoanalysis in Innsbruck, 1927, in Sandor Ferenczi,

Schriften für Psychoanalyse, Band II, Fischer Wissenschaften 1972 (pocket edition, 1982) Frankfurt am Main; editor Michael Balint (all quotations are the author's translations).

17. The preferable translation for German *Versagung* would appear denial – in the sense of forbidding or interdicting – rather than the commonly used frustration.
18. Lacan, J. Desire and its Interpretation, Seminar, 22 April 1959, p.13, transcription and translation Cormack Gallagher, private copy of the Library of Psychoanalysis of the Freudian School of Melbourne.
19. *ibid.*
20. Lacan, J. The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, Seminar, 24 June, 1964, p.276, Norton, New York and London, 1973.

Beyond the Pleasure of the Symptom

David Pereira

The clinic is the Real inasmuch as it is the impossible to support.

J. Lacan

In proposing a problem for any theory of general economy, Georges Bataille writes that:

We lie to ourselves when we dream of escaping the movement of **luxurious exuberance** of which we are only the most intense form.¹

For Bataille:

it is not necessity but its contrary 'luxury' that presents ... mankind with their fundamental problems.²

It is this 'luxurious exuberance', this 'excess' — that which Bataille nominates as the 'accursed share' — which functions as the cause of agitation in civilization; in the Freudian theory, the discontent at the heart of civilization. What is at work here is an excess whereby even 'the luxury of death is regarded ... in the same way as that of sexuality, first as a negation of ourselves then in a sudden reversal — as the profound truth of that movement of which life is the manifestation.'³

The problem which Bataille defines without delimiting it is that of what to do with this excess? How (to translate Bataille's thesis) to translate this excess? How to situate this accursed share?

This is a problem with which the symptom gets caught up, and one to which a Lacanian clinic does not remain deaf. This is to say that, in separating itself from the closed field of need and its satisfaction, where good wishes can sustain a charitable practice, a practice claiming to be Lacanian ought not retreat, through the cunning of charity and good wishes, from the problematic field of desire and its excess.

It is clear that for Bataille both sexuality and death carry this dimension of problematic excess. In something of each is carried the accursed share. We are placed here, then, at the horizon of the Freudian endeavour — sexuality and death.

It is at this point of the horizon of the Freudian theory that Lacanian theory and in-deed, that is to say, in act, that the Lacanian clinic advances. In light of Lacan's contribution one might translate this excess, this 'luxurious exuberance' of sexuality and death that is at play in the accursed share, as jouissance. Jouissance — this word and at the same time, refusal of the word; this concept and refusal of the concept; this which refuses translation.

On this subject, Lacan, in 1966, had the following to say:

Consider, however, that which is at the same time the least known and the most certain fact about this mythical subject... this fathomless thing capable of experiencing something between birth and death, capable of covering the whole spectrum of pain and pleasure in a word, what in French we call the 'sujet de la jouissance.' When I came here this evening I saw on the little neon sign the motto 'Enjoy Coca Cola.' It reminded me that in English, I think, there is no term to designate precisely this enormous weight of meaning which is in the French word 'jouissance'... If the living being is something at all thinkable, it will be above all as subject of the jouissance; but the psychological law that we call the pleasure principle... is very quick to create a barrier to all jouissance... The organism seems made to avoid too much jouissance... All that is elaborated by the subjective construction on the scale of the signifier in its relation to the Other and which has its roots in language is only there to permit the full spectrum of desire to allow us to approach, to test, this sort of forbidden jouissance which is the only valuable meaning that is offered to our life.⁴

The question which continues to insist is: what to do with this jouissance? — that which is beyond the pleasure principle. How to give it place? To translate it?

We would be myopic in our view and fall well short of an answer were we to situate the problem as one of translation from one language to another. Such a position is characterized by the 'there is not an adequate translation in English of this word' as the impasse to which the translator is drawn.⁵ If we follow this we would locate the possibility of our jouissance in the French language — as Other — and produce for ourselves only a symptomatic signification of jouissance.

From the side of the clinic the problem is not in translating from French into English or from French into any language for that matter, but the problem of translation which is inherent to the operation of language itself. This is to say, how excess and abyss are placed or situated in language. It is only by addressing ourselves to the question of how to place, how to translate *jouissance* — to examine the way in which that which refuses translation functions — that the full spectrum of language and desire may take into account that which is beyond the pleasure principle.

We have perhaps already marked the trajectory of an answer in situating the question in relation to the field of language. From this perspective it may be possible to treat the question of the translation of *jouissance* outside of a certain idealizing tendency. Locating ourselves within the field of language we may note that the excess in relation to both sexuality and death is a function of the very operation of language. For Lacan it is the signifier that is the cause of *jouissance*, cause of the excess.⁶ This is quite important for us in attempting to situate a 'beyond'.

The subject is produced and re-produced in the relation of signifier to signifier. But there is something more than this, something produced by the very production and attempts at re-production which exceeds the linguistic rendition of the libidinal myth. From within the field of the signifier, something beyond is produced. The subject of signifying activity bears a relation to the a-cursed share, to excess, to *jouissance*.

This a-cursed share, for Bataille, does not find refuge in any delimitable 'thing', in any empirical object. It is an excess which declares the object to be a 'nothing' — the 'nothing' of pure expenditure. The a-cursed share appears, then, as a rendition of Lacan's object *a* — that which in the last term, the object as Real, lacks form. In this, lack and excess overlap inasmuch as what lacks, properly speaking, is form. The object as Real exceeds form. As we continue to note, it is the means by which this excess is situated that comes to have a certain importance.

This excess may be situated as a product of that operation of language which is to the limit of language — that face of language which resists the closure of signification in moving to 'signifiante.' In this the excess affirms the fundamental lack in language, whereby the play of excess and lack show language at the service of the death drive. An operation of language which forces upon itself an encounter with its limit, its impasse. An excess and impasse inherent to sexuality, leading Lacan to state the impossibility of the sexual relation — this is to say that absence of complementarity, specularity and harmony, which always produced an excess; and an excess of death which led Heidegger to situate death as the 'possibility of utter impossibility'.⁷

This point of excess, of impossibility, situated at the limit point of the operation of language, is the impasse of the pleasure principle that in the Lacanian theory and practice is the Real. From this position Lacan states that the clinic is the Real insofar as it is impossible to bear. This Real, this impossible, to which the pleasure of the symptom puts a limit.

To turn then to our particular question: how does the symptom deal with *jouissance*? How does the symptom translate this excess of sexuality and death? Having conceded and situated the existence of a beyond let us, before rushing too quickly beyond, therefore missing the small matter of what is along the way, let us dally awhile with the symptom — take some pleasure from it.

Implicit in what has been proposed thus far is that the symptom produces its pleasure precisely in curtailing the excess of what is beyond the pleasure principle. The symptom undertakes to resolve something of this excess in a common or poorly spoken way; but, it should be added, not entirely successfully.

Lacan notes that:

It is clear that those with whom we deal, the patients, are not satisfied, as one says, with what they are. And yet, we know that everything they are, everything they

experience, even their symptoms, involves satisfaction. They satisfy something that no doubt runs counter to that with which they might be satisfied, or rather, perhaps, they give satisfaction to something. They are not content with their state, but all the same, being in a state that gives so little content, they are content. The whole question boils down to the following – what is contented here?⁸

What we may conclude here is that the pleasure and satisfaction in the symptom is an alienating pleasure inasmuch as it situates jouissance as Other. In the face of that in language which produces an excess in its movement of 'signifiante' – that movement which produces a relation to its own impossibility in the midst of its production – the symptom retreats, producing a signification which maintains a concentric and enveloping economy of desire – positing a 'something' in the place of the 'nothing' of pure expenditure, pure excess. In this movement, in locating jouissance as Other, leaving for the subject an alienating satisfaction, the symptom attempts to translate the proper name of jouissance into the common name pleasure. Such is the general effect of translation which is at play in the symptom.

The pleasure of the symptom constitutes itself as a failure to avow the excess of death and sexuality beyond the pleasure principle. That is, a failure to avow jouissance other than as Other. Out of this failure is born the pathological subject as 'raw subject of pleasure'.⁹ A subject born of the short-circuiting of desire which, in the symptom, confirms itself as submitted to pleasure 'whose law is to turn it always too short in its aim'.¹⁰

Too short in its aim, in falling short of the 'nothing' of the object, the symptom attains its pleasure by giving Imaginary form to what lacks form – to the 'nothing' of the object. In this it endeavours to bind and contain the excess at the level of a common name. This is to say, as a delimitable, nameable thing; to forestall an encounter with the excess, the impossible. As Bataille so nicely writes:

Where we think we have caught hold of the Grail, we have only grasped a 'thing' and what is left in our hand is only a cooking pot.¹¹

A consistent object comes to occupy the place of the 'nothing' of the object as Real. By virtue of this, the excess of the 'nothing' of the object fails to function, as does the jouissance linked with this excess. There is produced by the action of the symptom, as submitted to the law of the pleasure principle, a version of jouissance, a translation of jouissance which, in situating it as an ideal, as a common name, makes of it a universal – pleasure.

Here is born a certain idealizing tendency in relation to jouissance which situates it as an 'outside' rather than a 'beyond'. To elaborate on this: as outside this jouissance is given over to the Other, is situated in relation to an Other whose existence it supports. This is to say that the symptom finds an uncomfortable pleasure in supporting an ideal and universal jouissance as jouissance of the Other. As Lacan notes:

With our jouissance going off the tracks, we look to the Other to mark its position.¹²

Therefore the symptom, in maintaining the Other in place through supposing a jouissance of the Other as absolute and universal, impedes an encounter with a hole in the Other from which arises the excess of death drive – of jouissance as an operation of language which moves to its limits, to its place of impossibility, to what is beyond the pleasure principle.

For Lacan:

The pleasure principle is even characterized by the fact that the impossible is so present in it that it is never recognized in it as such.¹³

Not recognized insofar as 'beyond' and 'impossibility' are situated as 'outside', as Other.

Let us examine more closely, then, how jouissance — the excess and impossibility carried by death drive and sexuality are symptomatically situated.

A man comes to analysis because of sexual problems. He is unable to have an erection when he is with a woman. He wonders whether he is homosexual. Indeed there is an endless backwards and forwards in his deliberations concerning his sexuality — an endless deliberation which impedes his act. He speaks of several horrific encounters with vaginas, even pictures of which he recoils from in horror. He is able to find some satisfaction in homosexual encounters but, equally, disappointment.

Castration anxiety we might say, pure and simple. But perhaps we need to say a bit more. What is castration for this man?

Over the course of the analysis the idea of a perfect sexual act, a perfect enjoyment, takes shape. This comes to be situated in relation to the heterosexual act, and as such as always Other. That is to say, not an enjoyment of which he can take possession.

One day he produces the idea that it would be terrible to have sex with a woman and it not be perfect; that is, to still be disappointed. Such a structure pervades more than the field of his sexuality as carnal activity. It pertains to almost any act, any taking possession he might engage in — a painting, a piece of furniture, a car, a house. In this one sees the way in which his symptom, his impotence, short circuits the 'impossible' of sexual relation — because of the horror it produces in him — rendering it as an 'unable' of the sexual act. The alibi of inability — his symptom — functions to impede an encounter with the impossibility that is embedded in the act, the excess in the act — the act of bedding a woman in which he sees himself losing possession of himself. He reassures himself — uncomfortably — in the homosexual act; penetrated as it is, for him, with specularly and reciprocity — there are no surprises.

A dream. He dreams of being at university studying physiology. He is asked a question by the lecturer — a woman — about why

hair which is cut will grow at different rates. He produces an answer which he felt did not address the question but nonetheless was considered correct. His answer: that when it grows it will be longer.

The answer, as he produces his associations, as he continues to talk, moves in at least two directions. The first: it will be longer speaks of his translation of impossibility as insufficiency. If he waits, it will be longer, it will grow and intercourse will be possible. With this he speaks of his Oedipal alibi. His insufficiency, in turn, translates an impossible as possible — he just has to wait; and of course he is very good at waiting.

The second line of his associations, constituting a weave with the first, locates the answer as addressing the question of how he situates jouissance — his enjoyment.

When it grows, it — the penis which does not grow, for her — will be long(her). This is to say, it will belong to her. We find in his symptom, arrived at through his associations, a play on words which situates its excess as Other — as belonging to her, perhaps even this famous Woman of whom Lacan speaks. A 'her' who he locates in his history as a mother who, through his childhood and into his adolescence, would check on the growth of his penis. Whose penis you may well ask? A mother to whom he gives over his enjoyment — giving phallic form to the Other's enjoyment, making it palpable.

In the movement through which the impossibility of sexual relation is produced as 'unable' — the common name of impossible — the possibility of sexual act and jouissance is rendered Other — in being made possibly possible. Thus, to repeat, impossibility and the excess of jouissance finds its symptomatic refuge in 'inability', an 'inability' sustained by the Oedipal alibi.

His deliberations — the backwards and forwards between homosexual and heterosexual — similarly attributes intention and object in order to secure a non-realization of the excess of the Real of sex by the ejaculations of the pseudo-sexual spring which attributes a carnalized sexual meaning to everything. One sees the way in which

his symptomatic impasse 'exudes the fiction that rationalizes the impossible within which it originates'.¹⁴

A little later into the analysis, but not longer into the analysis, another dream. He dreams of having lost part of his penis. With the part which remains however, he enjoys. He refers to this part of a penis with which he is left as 'my' penis, and notes that he has not been accustomed to bringing together the word 'my' with penis, or indeed anything which he apparently possessed, other than his ailments — my-opia, mi-graine — both of which require of him that he not see, not avow a beyond.

With this dream and its images of castration, there is an Imaginary rendition of castration — the turning of castration into a common name. More than that, however, it situates him and the Other of perfect sex as lacking. The 'being shorter' contests his Oedipal alibi. With his taking possession, with his 'my' — the 'my' through which he makes particular his jouissance, the 'my' through which he authorizes himself in the sexual act, declaring the absolute jouissance of the Other to not exist — he accedes to his castration. With the fall of that little object, that little piece of penis, he paves the way for that possibility of sexual act which is founded upon the impossibility of sexual relation; a point of lack and excess where he might situate his production, his invention in the field of sexuality. Paying his Symbolic debt, there is the possibility of not situating, at his expense, jouissance as jouissance of the Other. The encounter with impossibility produces the possibility of a liberation from the de-liberation which rendered his desire symptomatically concentric.

To consider now another case, one which reeks with the stench of death. A woman comes to analysis because of what she says is her fear of dying. It follows her everywhere and she sees its forms in almost everything: the night, the different, and eventually in the words she hears herself uttering. Her life is an excess of death. The most dominant thought is that of her 'insides rotting.' Surprisingly, but then again not, she finds herself drawn to cemeteries and to butcher shops early in the morning, where she finds the carcasses being cut. A hobby of hers is to find dead animals, take them home,

place them in her back yard and watch them decompose, charting the course of their decay. In this she finds pleasure.

What we might hear here is the excess of death turned into imaginable putrefaction. Death coming to have the common name — decay. Putrefaction lends itself as imaginable object in the face of the excess which is situated in relation to the 'nothing' of the object — the 'nothing' of death. With this, the possibility of utter impossibility, with which we earlier noted Heidegger characterize death, is turned into the possibility of a possibility. Death is brought into a concentric economy within the bounds of the pleasure principle via a deliberation or a rehearsal of excess.

Now, as we noted earlier, one of the forms in which she eventually comes to situate death is at the level of her very utterance, her speech. For a time in the analysis she says very little, she remains largely mute. In an Imaginary way, as the common name mutism, she brings death into the session. With this common naming, however, she actually impedes her encounter with death as excess, maintaining it as Other, rather than as the excess at the heart of the operation of language to which her speech may take her. Beyond the attribution 'mutism', beyond the law of the pleasure principle, death as her 'ownmost, non-relational, unsurpassable possibility' and as such 'distinctively impending'.

Heidegger also makes a distinction between *Verenden* — perishing and *Sterben* — dying.¹⁵ Only man as a speaking being, in being caught up in the movement of language to excess, dies. Her muteness, like the images of perishing, of physical death and decay, arrests the *Sterben* in the operation of language. It functions as the barrier which stops her 'before the unnameable field of radical desire';¹⁶ the field beyond putrefaction, the field of the death of the ideal — an underwriting of the fact of castration as written over the Other. It is such a movement that leads Lacan to characterize language as displaying itself best in the service of death drive.¹⁷

Her lack of speech is a common translation of the lack at the heart of language, a lack which situates the excess of death. Situating

death through her muteness she recedes from that face of language which moves to the excess of death drive, and situates herself as subject of the symptom, subject of pleasure.

These cases illustrate the means by which the symptom turns *jouissance* — the excess of sexuality and death drive and what is beyond the pleasure principle — into a common name by positing a nameable object — a translation of *jouissance* which produces an arrest. An arrest in the operation of language as 'signifiante' — as a metonymic movement which supports radical desire — producing rather, a signification as the concentric movement which affords the symptom its pleasure. In situating the excess of *jouissance* and death drive as 'outside' rather than 'beyond', the symptom supports a *jouissance* as *jouissance* of the Other. In this way, castration, as lack in the Other, equivocates by making Imaginary the Symbolic of the Real.

How, then, might it be possible to non-symptomatically make one's way in relation to *jouissance*? How to properly translate what is beyond the pleasure principle? What is required for that particular and proper translation in which *jouissance* could be situated at the level and language of eccentric desire?

In order to free that excess which finds refuge in the symptom, we introduce the subject to the language of his desire. This is to say, language in its movement of 'signifiante'. While the arrest of 'signifiante' — being trapped within the endless vacillation between homosexual and heterosexual — carries with it a fixity which posits an object and intention, the movement of 'signifiante' is a working of language to its limit — it speaks — perhaps even being well spoken.

In this, the goal, as Lacan states it, is that '*jouissance* avow itself and precisely in this — that it may be unavowable'.¹⁸ Such an avowal of what is unavowable is a translation which particularizes *jouissance*; situating itself as that limit point of the pleasure principle which tips beyond. *Jouissance* functioning in its particularity — as a proper name, as that which condemns us to the necessary and

impossible task of translation in any language. From this perspective, translation is inherent to the operation of language rather than an occasional operation on language. *Jouissance* therefore as the product of the operation of the language of desire, displacing the pathological subject as subject of pleasure. Beyond the poorly spoken of the symptom, beyond the way in which the symptom handles language and the excess arising from its operation, is the well spoken of language; a well spoken which makes of *jouissance* a particular.

Such an operation of language is conceived of well by Derrida in commenting on the writing of Joyce. He notes that the Joycean project — bringing together language and joy:

would make the structural unity of all empirical culture appear in the general equivocation of a writing that, no longer translating one language into another on the basis of their common cores of sense, circulates throughout all languages at once, accumulates their energies... (and)... discloses their furthestmost common horizons.¹⁹

The translation of *jouissance*, the translation of the excess of death and sexuality may be situated then as a perpetual translation which retains movement in desire. A meeting of *jouissance* and language as a writing; placing enjoyment in relation to the lack which feeds the excess in language, as distinct from placing it as Other. In this submission to language as perpetual translation there exists a freedom which Husserl has situated as the capacity for re-activation that belongs to every human being as a speaking being. This is a paradox of submission, only through which is it possible to reach a 'beyond', a meeting of *jouissance* and language which inscribes a freedom from submission to the ideality of an absolute *jouissance* of the Other.

Thus, beyond the pleasure of the symptom which keeps in play a concentric and common translation of *jouissance* as *jouissance* of the Other, is the *jouissance* of language.

The operation of translation of *jouissance* constituted in this way is a twisting free of the pleasure of the symptom, of the common naming of the symptom. A twisting free which locates a beyond of the pleasure principle at the very point of the recognition of its limit, its exhaustion, its impossibility — the point of the Real which constitutes the freeing of the excess bound in the symptom. Such a twisting free is what liberates the excess of death which is trapped in the symptom as a deliberation on putrefaction and decay which renders death a common name. In the same way, such a twisting free is a liberation of the excess of *jouissance* as a product and beyond of the act; liberated from being given over to the Other and situated as 'outside' as distinct from 'beyond'.

The properness or 'ownness' of *jouissance* and death come then to be situated in a way through which what is beyond the pleasure principle is constituted as belonging to existence, not as outside existence. Not as possible of the possible — the path of de-liberation, but the possibility of sheer impossibility — a movement to what is beyond the pleasure of the symptom.

From this position there is no *jouissance* or death in general. The twisting free produces *jouissance* and death as particular — as proper names — carrying the necessary and impossible task of translation as perpetual translation. It is only in and through this task, rather than as *a priori*, that the clinic is the Real inasmuch as it is the impossible to support.

Notes

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From Transference to Structure: The Presentation of Patients'

David Pereira
and
Luis Riebl

'In 1988 I was working for the ABC and one day realised that there was a flaw in the system. I sacrificed my job.'

In this way a young man describes what we suppose to be the onset of his psychosis — giving epic form to what is operative through the structure with his words.

Where is this heard? To whom is it addressed? Who speaks?

Since 1989, the Freudian School of Melbourne in conjunction with, initially, Mont Park Psychiatric Hospital, and more recently with

Larundel Psychiatric Hospital, has been conducting Presentations of Patients. These presentations are conducted within the psychiatric institution with the co-operation of patients, staff and analysts, members and students of the Freudian School of Melbourne.

The Presentation of Patients represents an encounter between two related, but nevertheless different disciplines: institutional psychiatry and psychoanalysis.

A patient of the hospital who has agreed to participate is brought to meet and speak with an analyst of the School in front of an audience whom he faces; an audience composed of psychiatric staff, members and students of the Freudian School of Melbourne. The audience undertakes to remain silent.

Before the patient arrives a minimal introduction is given — usually by the treating psychiatrist or registrar. The patient comes in and speaks with the analyst. If things go well, a listening is produced. Once the patient has left — having had the opportunity to say or not to say whatever he felt he could — the audience will say what they have heard. What follows this, sometimes for several meetings, is a discussion of what is heard — both from a clinical and theoretical perspective — whereby the treating staff have an opportunity, if they wish, to address the question of the possibilities for treatment. In this way, the Presentation of Patients follows the direction given in Lacan's 'On a Question Preliminary to any Possible Treatment of Psychosis'.²

What is the logic that founds this exercise?

We suppose, more often than not, that the patient who comes, comes with a psychosis. We suppose. In this we constitute our transference to him as a supposed subject of psychosis.

The problem of how to advance in the field of psychosis may be conceived of as a problem of transference. It is to this question of transference that we address ourselves in the Presentation of Patients. It is on this basis that it will be possible to understand the logic

of the scene and the limits of what is possible. Where do we begin with this question of transference? Not with the patient, nor with the institution — though each of them bring their own — but with the supposition that the analyst brings; the supposition that the psychotic knows something which may be brought into discourse. That is to say, that there is something in the psychotic's speech which may enter the field of discourse. So, there is our starting point — a point of transference. Psychosis may be that point of a coincidence/overlap of transference with the desire of the analyst which situates the transference of the analyst at its limit.³ It is precisely from the position of this overlap that we found the psychoanalytic listening to proceed.

What is a psychoanalytic listening?

We have already begun to speak of this. A psychoanalytic listening, in the Presentation of Patients, is to listen to the position of the patient in relation to his utterance and, in this, to unveil something of the structure. Structure is understood as the particular relation of the speaker to his utterance. In this way one may examine the position he takes in relation to his-story. To listen, amidst the sea of equivalence, for those moments of prevalence — good fortune as well as the quality of our listening will determine the number of those that will have been heard.

A psychoanalytic listening is one that will allow the speech of the patient to lodge itself in such a way as to allow an examination of the logic that grounds that speech, without recourse to a 'that's nonsense', 'mad', 'formal thought disorder', 'delusional', 'illogical', etc. Therefore, to state it again, to listen for the structure as given by the relation of the speaker to his or her utterance.

In this way a psychoanalytic listening distinguishes itself from a psychiatric listening. A psychiatric listening as one which attempts to make use of the psychotic's speech in order to demonstrate the pre-eminence of psychiatric discourse; that is, to confirm the existence of phenomenological categories of psychopathology. Be clear here, however, that this is not a reference to 'the' psychiatrist

but to the discourse of psychiatry, which accords 'the' psychiatrist a place in a societal order.

To come back to the Presentation of Patients and psychoanalytic listening, the question we are faced with beyond content, beyond the so-called 'meaning behind', is, in the face of being spoken, how is it possible to situate the psychotic's speech? In moving further with this question let us now turn specifically to the position of the audience and of the analyst in the Presentation of Patients.

These are firstly questions of transference. This time, however, a question of the limits and particularity of the psychotic's transference. A transference to what, or whom? The specific way in which the analyst and audience are situated is a product of the fact that it is supposed in psychosis that there is a transference to an Other, but not transference love, as a means of subtending as Imaginary the Symbolic of the transference to the Other. That is, in psychosis the Imaginary veiling is in failure, consistent with what Lacan notes as a deficiency of the Imaginary function in psychosis.

The audience, as silent, functions as support of the Other and therefore supports a transference as transference to the Other. In other words, it gives this transference form and place, it supports it. The audience therefore supports, as Other, what founds the logic of the speech of the psychotic, the place in relation to which listening and the possibility of meaning are produced. This transference, as Symbolic, is brought into play, or localised, between the patient and the analyst as an Imaginary transference, producing a resistance which is constitutive of the possibility of a discourse.

This function between the audience and the analyst illustrates how, in the face of the silent discourse of the Other, the patient can speak and address himself to an other.

To ask again, then: How, in the face of being spoken — spoken by the Other (which so often is, for these institutionalised patients, the discourse of psychiatry as it eclipses the possibility of hearing

the subjective positions within the patient's speech) — is it possible for the patient to speak?

This leads us to the question of the position of the analyst in the Presentations? Lacan notes that the unveiling of a structure:

can only be at the price of complete submission, even if it is knowingly, to the subjective positions proper to the patient, positions which too frequently, are strained through having been reduced in a dialogue towards the disease process.⁴

Through such submission, the analyst allows for what is nascent as discourse to emerge and be heard as such. The patient avails himself of the analyst so that his speech might be heard as discourse in the place of the Other, the audience. It is at the level of the audience, when the veil of the analyst — that is, the transference of the analyst — crumbles in favour of his desire that the structure may be unveiled.

The analyst's desire here is that which has sustained the possibility of situating a psychoanalytic listening as distinct from a psychiatric listening. In this, the desire of the analyst marks a difference; a maximum difference, between the object, taken to be the subjective position of the patient in relation to his speech, and the ideal, here psychiatric nosology and phenomenology.

However, in relation to this desire, the analyst ought to be mindful of the transference brought by the institution. There is always something that operates as insupportable in a psychiatric institution. This 'insupported', as we have already noted, refers itself to the speech of the psychotic, echoing and ricocheting through the corridors of these institutions, failing, for the most part, to be heard as discourse, except alienated as a part of psychiatric discourse. That is, what is nascent as discourse seeks its support, and anyone called to listen will experience this lack of support. In this way, the Presentation of Patients offers the opportunity for that which lacks support to become discursive.

We have talked so much about psychoanalytic listening. What did we hear?

The patient who introduced this paper, is introduced by his psychiatrist with an interdiction: 'Do not ask about my sexuality'. In the institution, the psychiatrist has to wear the weight of the interdiction. The very knowledge of psychiatry functioning as an interdiction which addresses itself to what is not able to be supported as discourse. When the patient speaks, he gives an account replete with sacrifice and reconciliation, notably in relation to his deceased — not dead — father. Through sacrifice he offers himself in order to produce reconciliation, to rectify the flaw in an unnamed Other. An Other, despite being unnamed, which comes to be situated as god, father, humanity. He waivers around the question of whether he reconciled things with his father before the latter's death. The date that he gives for the onset of his psychosis coincides with the date of the death of his father. Thereby, he overlays the onset of his illness with this death; both of these 're-counters' are heavy with sacrifice and reconciliation, whereby he constitutes himself as a gift to the Other.

While speaking of his mother and her temptations — she constantly requires him to succumb to her gift of chocolates — he trembled, anxious and raptured. The possibility of a 'no' in relation to his mother's demand is unable to ground itself. Although the chocolates are what he is offered, he situates himself much more in relation to a demand to be the gift. To come back to the original interdiction — to make a gift of his own sexuality in favour of his mother's enjoyment. In another moment, towards the end of the Presentation, when asked about his plans for the future, he smiles. A knowing smile, enigmatic for us, which bore some relation to a house nearby, where we later learned might reside a possible love. His smile perhaps represents the possibility of an Imaginary transference, a veiling of his own, the thing that he is able to keep from the Other, the 'no. I don't want your fucking chocolates!'

In this moment, the moment of the smile, he is no longer the gift, the present of the Presentation. He keeps a 'something' which has

the possibility of being constitutive. A smile evinced because of the Imaginary of the transference, a specular phenomenon in which an object — a precious object — finds some reflection. Weber's points to the importance of the future anterior as contrasted with the Hegelian present past as operative in Lacan's conceptualization of the mirror-stage. It is this constitutive future anterior — this 'I will have been' — that we see in play in the smile. In this he refers himself, and momentarily constitutes himself in relation to his unfolding story: his-story as his telling as distinct from his alienating history.

It is on this distinction that the Presentation of Patients hinges — in the face of his history, to hear what is new in his-story.

Notes

- 1.
2. Lacan, Jacques.
- 3.

This paper is the product of a considerable number of meetings held at Larundel Psychiatric Hospital. The crucial contribution of participating patients, staff, administration and members of the audience is herewith gratefully acknowledged.

On a Question Preliminary to any Possible Treatment of Psychosis, *Ecrits*, A Selection, Tavistock Publications, London, 1977.

The point of crossing over between transference and the desire of the analyst has led others to note its importance in the formation of the analyst. 'The presentation of patients is at the same time the presentation of the analyst' in Luis Maria Bissier, Marta Erramuspe and Christina Marrone Presentation/Unveiling in *Papers of the Freudian School of Melbourne, On Transference*, pp.247-54, (Oscar Zentner ed.), Melbourne, 1987.

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Seminars and Interventions of Jacques Lacan

The Works of Jacques Lacan
An Attempt to Outline the Impossible

Oscar Zentner*

I will speak, if you allow me to do so,
a Lacantonade.

Jacques Lacan

We will endeavour to clarify the place that the Seminars of Lacan occupied, Seminars which were spoken and sustained with a minimum of writing. He reserved the function of a true saying for the psychoanalytic discourse. The product was the unconscious as a writing which is not known and which operates in the gap between the master signifier and the knowledge of which the object *a* is its cause.

*Analyst, The Freudian School of Buenos Aires.

The saying is not the writing, yet the Seminar of Lacan did not cease to create writing to map the Real. A Logic based in the instance of the letter in the unconscious was well qualified to be the science of the Real. The attempt to circumscribe the part of truth that pulsates in the Real, its incantation with the supreme good and/or the beautiful, is time. The pulsation of this time is the mute presence of the object *a* with the absence of a saying, like the silence of Ajax in *The Book of the Dead* which is great and more sublime than any words.

The saying is not the voice. And to be loved — because you love me, of course — by one or another is not the same. The saying that the object *a* implies, is all those things that I wrote... a very different thing from the exhibition of the voice.

To be loved is no guarantee of being listened to.

There is no desire to know; there is, instead, attribution of that desire to the Other, and this is what is called transference. *In extremis*, there are situations when the horror of this desire of the Other is conducive to mental anorexia as a way of withdrawing the body from the desire to know of the Other. Hence Lacan's admonition in his Seminar:

...and if I do not tell you, it would not be sufficient for you if I only write it. But anyhow, I can give you a small proof of what can be written, because without this reflection on the writing, without that which makes of the saying to become a writing, there is no way for you to grasp the dimension with which unconscious knowledge subsists...

in the Real.

This unconscious knowledge is a Real of the impossibility of the sexual rapport. It is knowledge because there is a logical possibility of producing writing out of that saying. There is a difference between

a 'true saying' and the science of the Real, the difference that exists between Psychoanalysis and Logic.

The principle of contradiction — either/or — which, as Freud already told us, doesn't work in the unconscious, finds its writing in the impossible and is exactly what has been advanced by the Real of the letter. This logical writing, what I call its *ink*, lacking as it lacks in verification, cannot be demonstrated, it can only be displayed in the split moment of what is a short lived opening before it closes up again.

All unconscious knowledge with which we as analysts displace truth is an invention we produce to make up for the lack of sexual relation. This lack is the very thing that is opposed to anything provided with sense. It is from this angle that Logic gives us the advantage of being able to use the letter as the discrete trace empty of any sense, which allows us to write, precisely, that the Real is without sense. Whilst the drive allows for the possibility to invent, to create; the instinct is the carrying out of a known knowledge characterized by the absence of inventiveness or creativity.

Regarding the nonsensical of the letter, let me give you the example of a living Slavonic language. Russian, one of the branches of the Indoeuropean languages, received its alphabet basically from the invention of two brothers: Saints Cyril and Methodius, sons of a Greek governor called Leo. The story goes that:

One day Cyril heard that the Slavs living in Greece were after baptism reverting to heathendom, as they could not understand the Church service: and therefore he set himself to compose an alphabet to meet all the requirements of the Slavonic speech with its many sounds. His letters he took principally from the Greek alphabet, some from Hebrew, some Armenian and some from Coptic. Having made his alphabet, Cyril, with the assistance of his brother Methodius, translated into Slavonic the necessary books of ritual, and these were used amongst the Byzantine Slavs, and thence probably

spread to the Bolgars (then a Finnish tribe) who were converted in the year 861.

Conversely, as analysts, we receive the truth of the analysand which is *Not-All* and we lend, with our interpretation/invention, the possibility of a writing. For to have access to the Real of the analysis, the analyst should hear the *Not-All* of truth — fantasm, symptom, complaint — that the analysand presents as posed in reality. The analyst can only hear them when not vacating his place by referring back to the sense of that reality, when he goes, in spite of reality, against sense. Being as it may that the Real is what comes back always to its place, this place doesn't facilitate knowledge, and posits itself as impossible.

For the analyst, the lack of symmetrical relation container/contained showed by the letter as real web of the unconscious, offers itself as an enigma, whence the transient character of the deciphering of this letter in its discrete meaning. The fate of psychoanalytic knowledge, although invented and dated since Freud's work, has in turn to be invented again by us — this knowledge has always stood between science and religion. Because truth, by remaining unassailable to the invention of knowledge, is always in danger of yielding to sense, of being reclaimed by religion. The other path, the nonsensical, is the only one that science opens and offers to the possibility of a Real. The transit of more than 40 years of Lacan's work has to be measured here: to transform the *irrefutability* of psychoanalysis, already mocked by Freud's 'Heads I win, tails you lose', into the possibility of *refutability*.

Surely, transference is the *subject-supposed-to-know*, but writing is another matter; it is *knowledge-supposed-subject*. The former is what allows an analysis to operate and the latter is what qualifies the possibility of a transference to the writing, the re-direction of transference into the transference of work. It is in this formula that we can condense the teaching and transmission of Lacan. He invented a new discourse in the field of Psychoanalysis but he was aware of the transience of this discourse as well.

Regarding the longing for the transient, for what has been lost or for what never was, we are told by Chaucer in *The Canterbury Tales*:

... And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn, Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.

The reader will remember also Joyce in the opening pages of the *Ulysses*, expressing the desire to Hellenise the English language; and, finally, the other great writer of the twentieth century, the Argentinian Borges, who expressed a similar desire in his nostalgia for the Latin.

A true saying of desire was at play from the start concerning the transference of work in psychoanalysis. If success were to be measured by numbers, the fact that today, contrary to yesterday, there is almost no one who doesn't mention Lacan, surely we have succeeded. However, remembering Freud's reference to his International, we also make his words ours:

...but the struggle is not yet over.

We adhere to these words because the analyst, even when he is Freud or Lacan, knows that the moment of opening of the unconscious is limited, before it closes itself up again. This is why all acquired knowledge on the unconscious is perishable and has to be perpetually re-invented.

The reasons for the delay and the disputes around the publication of the Seminars of Lacan are manifold and, in order not to repeat what is already common knowledge — though not commonwealth — we refer the reader to the following rigorous texts: M. Safouan's *Jacques Lacan et la question de la formation des analystes*;¹ E. Roudinesco's *Jacques Lacan & Co. — The History of Psychoanalysis in France*² and *Le Transfert dans tous ses Errata*³, the latter, with the proceedings of the Colloque organised by *l'Ecole lacanienne de psychanalyse* in Paris on 15 and 16 May 1991. This reference is fundamental for an appraisal of the clinical and theoretical consequences of the different approaches, for the controversy

surrounding the teachings and transmission of Lacan as well as for the establishment and publication of the Seminars.

We also underline the unavoidable task of a critical reading of the Seminars of Lacan as they were recorded and transcribed. This spoken transmission, though difficult, possesses his unique style. This style is co-extensive not to what is taught but to what is transmitted. There is currently present an ongoing attempt amongst post-Lacanian '...to expurgate Lacan's style from his Seminars'. But, surely, to produce a new totemic mass would only prove that psychoanalysts once again, through foreclosing the lack in the Other, create a new religion. This foreclosure renders them unable to make use of the teachings of Lacan in order to work beyond them. A mass, as the perpetuation of the absence of mourning, can be demonstrated in the lack of *Tuché* and the excess of *Automaton* in the psychoanalytic movement, both in relation to Freud as in relation to Lacan. This repetition is translated in the belief to resolve, dogmatically and *a priori*, the problem of the difference between teaching and transmission.

Lacan the analyst, not the person, was responsible for the foundation of a new discourse that created a different way for analysts to work institutionally together. This new way consisted basically in not separating analysis into therapeutic and training. All analysis was a training analysis insofar as, in principle, it didn't decide who was to be an analyst and who was not. He invented a way which was at once a return to Freud as much as his own advancement of the theory and practice of psychoanalysis. That his work was not appreciated and was resisted was hardly surprising. It reminds us of Goethe's words written somewhere between Verona and Venice:

One gets small thanks from people when one tries to improve their moral values, to give them a higher conception of themselves and a sense of the truly noble. But if one flatters the Birds with lies, tells them fairy tales, caters daily to their weakness, then one is their man.

Lacan's work extended from 1926 to 1981. Even if this bibliography were exhaustive — which it is not — it would never be complete because nothing is *All*. It only sustains itself, therefore, in the *Not-All*. The scope of the written and published essays, together with the published and unpublished Seminars, is in itself of such an importance and controversy that oftentimes the problematic of teaching and transmission subjacent to it, passes unnoticed.

Freud's definition of educating, governing and analysing as the three impossible tasks, is very well known and frequently repeated. Moreover, it is a favourite quote. But is the consequence of what is repeated known? To start with, what does impossible mean? The Universal English dictionary says that impossible means:

1. Not capable of being done, not feasible: an impossible task, 2.a. Not capable of existing or happening: an impossible circumstance, event; b. expressing, dealing with, what cannot exist or happen: an impossible story, account. 3.(colloq.) Intolerable, insufferable, not to be endured; not reaching a recognized standard: an impossible person.

In the main, non-Lacanian analysts use the concept according to definitions 1. and 3.

But a few are, however, aware of the other way, the way travelled by Western thought more than 2,000 years ago, as outlined by Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*: the category of the Impossible — Chapters 12 and 13 — to develop the relationships of four predicative modes to express logical consequences: Possible, Necessary, Impossible and Contingent. Freud's knowledge of Aristotle was far from being negligible. This is why, beyond the definition given by the dictionary, Impossible in Psychoanalysis has a very precise connotation: it is what *does not cease not to be written*, it is the Real, which is characterized by lacking reality. The analyst should not confuse the fantasm with the unconscious. The former organises reality, the latter in its status of *either and or*, is the way the Real forecasts itself. Freud was adamant on this point, explaining the

fantasm as a mixed formation of unconscious origin with secondary organization.

Herein, before declaring the profession as Impossible, underscoring the reach of the concept and inscribing it prematurely in the Real something can only be Impossible, that is to say Real, when by reaching a limit it provokes a change of discourse. To be clear, it was a prerogative of Freud to state Psychoanalysis as Impossible and for a reason, too. Freud, via his *Project for a Scientific Psychology*, after exhausting all neurological and psychological value capable of giving a valid account of the clinical enigma of the hysterics, arrived at an Impossible. He confronted the result of the limit of his knowledge by inventing something unknown before, and with it he opened the lock of a new field of discourse and established *Psychoanalysis*. This new discourse was a Real hole in the Symbolic grid of the science of his time and in the way scientists and their societies were organized. Therefore to repeat the word Impossible is to confuse the invoking of principles with the reaching of a limit. This status cannot be established dogmatically *a priori* as a way of receiving the secondary benefit of being taken for an analyst. For precisely, it is primarily the analyst who is not exempted from giving proofs that he has reached, *a posteriori* and in the singular of each analysis, an Impossible. To misquote Candide: to invent without reasoning.

This is the Real that Lacan outlined in the following aphorisms: *the clinical work is the Real Impossible to sustain, the analyst does not authorize himself if not from himself, and in the unconscious there is no sexual rapport*. Three Reals, three Impossibles and consequently three changes of discourse, at the clinical level, at the theoretical level and the institutional, respectively. Therefore, a declaration of Impossibility from the beginning, out of ignorance or not, is to foreclose in the main, the question posed by Psychoanalysis about the invention of knowledge.

The fate of Freud and Lacan, as founders of a discourse, was to become one of the knots of their creation. The use they made of what we call psychoanalytic logic was not *Psycho-logic* as the

balanced note of what the centred man is, but the *ink* with which the unconscious is written. Lacan reformulated the unconscious as being the condition of Linguistics and of Logic, as the discourse of the Other, structured logically as a language, and finally as the Borromean knot formed by the Real, Symbolic and Imaginary.

Without exception, Logic always begs the question by asserting what it cannot demonstrate if not logically. For this reason, the notion of truth, of adequacy and so many others, are only the way in which the subject organizes that fragile consistency called reality. I think that this is one of the many reasons why in his last Seminars Lacan, avowing the limits of the symbolic language and Logic, went even further with the introduction of the Borromean knot. This knot of the Real, Symbolic and Imaginary served him to display, to show the Real as an existence which cannot be demonstrated. Many are known to have expressed their *Angst* of the Real; Wittgenstein, to name one, who left the traces of this *Angst* through his dictum: 'What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence.' We have proposed for Psychoanalysis, as I wrote in another place, that: what cannot be spoken about should pass into writing.

Lacan insisted that his Seminar was his analysis and that there he always spoke as an analysand. Our friend, M. Safouan, synthesized the problem of the death of and transference to Lacan, in the opening of his book, *Jacques Lacan et la question de la formation des analystes*, with the following beautifully moving words:

When our father or our mother die we tell Buddha, but when Buddha dies, who do we tell?

Gide, whose brush with analysis finished in failure but whose unquenched desire, no longer symptom but *sinthome*, went on to create and to write, lent us these not unfitting words for our task ahead:

A good teacher is constantly concerned with teaching his disciples to get along without him.

A point, we add, in which *a posteriori* the Real of a psychoanalytic teaching would become also the Real of a psychoanalytic transmission.

This bibliography may for the reader be a beginning.

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Mise à jour 1988 de la Bibliographie Des Travaux de Jacques Lacan

Joël Dor +

Avertissement (*)

Pour l'utilisation générale de cette mise à jour, se reporter à l'ouvrage initial (pages 15 et sq.).

La réactualisation bibliographique qui suit, vise à corriger un certain nombre d'erreurs qui s'étaient glissées dans l'édition originale. Par

(*) Cette mise à jour de la *Bibliographie des travaux de Jacques Lacan* (InterÉditions, Paris, 1983) a été réalisée en accord avec l'éditeur, que je remercie.
+ Analyst, Centre de formation et de recherches psychanalytiques, Paris.

Papers of The Freudian School of Melbourne

ailleurs, elle recense les éditions inédites à la date de la publication de l'ouvrage (1983), et des rééditions survenues dans de nouvelles publications.

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Notes

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Published and Unpublished Seminars and Interventions of J. Lacan in English

David Pereira

I. Unpublished Seminars and Interventions of Jacques Lacan Available in English Through The Library of Psychoanalysis of The Freudian School of Melbourne.*

1938 **Family Complexes in the Formation of the Individual**

1956-57 **Seminar IV. The Object Relation and the Freudian Structures**

*The Library of Psychoanalysis of The Freudian School of Melbourne is a collection of psychoanalytic works — including seminars and interventions of Lacan — in English, German, French, Spanish and Portuguese, housed at Janet Clarke Hall, The University of Melbourne. It is open to members of the School and participants in Seminars and Study Groups of the School.

1957-58 **Seminar V. The Formations of the Unconscious**

1958-59 **Seminar VI. Desire and Its Interpretation**

1960-61 **Seminar VIII. Transference**

1961-62 **Seminar IX. Identification**

1969-70 **Seminar XVII. The Reverse of Psychoanalysis**

1971 **Liturerre in 'Litterature' 3, 1971, pp. 3-10**

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The Lacanian Discourse

Interview with Isidoro Vegh

Dr Isidoro Vegh is a Lacanian psychoanalyst and founding member of the Freudian School of Buenos Aires. Dr Vegh was recently invited by the Freudian School of Melbourne to participate in the Second Australian Psycho-Analytic Congress on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the death of Freud, and to give a series of seminars in Melbourne. Jane Hopper, a social worker and member of the Freudian School of Melbourne engaged in the process of formation as an analyst, spoke with Dr Vegh a few days before his return to Buenos Aires.

JH I want to start with a general question, in terms of the history. Why has there been such a strong psychoanalytic movement in Argentina?

IV It is not an easy question, many times I have formulated it to myself. I think that there are various reasons. There is one that is intrinsic to the very development of psychoanalysis. In Argentina, psychoanalysis began in the 1940s, actually in 1940, when a branch of the International Psychoanalytic Association was established in Argentina. And also, very precociously, we had in the Spanish language a version of *The Complete Works of Freud*. Today in the French language, there is not a version of *The Complete Works of Freud*. In Spanish we already have three; the last recently appeared in Argentina three or four years ago. That is to say, there is a reason already intrinsic to the movement itself of psychoanalysis — a development that is already 50 years old and that is expanding. And I do not deny, not withstanding all my criticisms of the variants of the International Psychoanalytic Association, the function of pioneers, of those who founded the first psychoanalytic institution in Argentina.

Now, beyond that, it is possible that there are other reasons. For example, in the city of Buenos Aires, together with its surroundings, half of the population of all Argentina is gathered. In the city of Buenos Aires, in a meeting of people like us, almost 100% of them are sons or grandchildren of Europeans. That is to say, that they are marked by a difference of languages, and by the mourning of a migration. I think that that is another of the possible reasons.

Then there is another more recent one. Argentina, unfortunately, in the last years resembles more, due to its economic and social situation, what is called the Third World. There are fewer possibilities to work in technical branches or in branches of high levels of sophistication. Psychoanalysis, and all the variants of the field, appear for the young people as a possibility. There are some answers.

There is another one that coincides with psychoanalysis. There is a tradition that is more than 100 years old, that is the development

in the field of culture: this, I believe, also gave a possible base for the insertion of psychoanalysis in the social milieu of Argentina.

JH Speaking a bit more specifically of Lacan: Lacan in Paris in 1980 says that he is transmitted 'over there' (meaning South America) in writing and that his person does not act as a screen for what he teaches. Could you comment on this?

IV The history of psychoanalysis gives account, gives many proofs, that proximity with the master does not ensure loyalty to his teaching. Jones with Freud is an example, and in our days some disciples of Lacan concerning his teaching are another.

In any case, I think it would also be a mistake to suppose that the phrase of Lacan's would guarantee that through the reading of his writings loyalty to his teachings would be ensured. It is true that the relationship through his writings has its advantages. In some ways it allows us to remain apart from a certain group psychology, which makes of Lacan, instead of a psychoanalyst, a master/leader. But this brings other complications that we cannot deny.

JH I would like to ask you something about the founding of the Freudian School of Buenos Aires: when and why was it founded?

IV The Freudian School of Buenos Aires, of which I am one of the founding members, was founded after several years. When some young psychoanalysts did not want to accept the standard directions of the International Psychoanalytic Association. These directions seemed to us foreign to the spirit of psychoanalysis. We were working the seminars and writings of Lacan and thinking again of practice. This culminated in the decision of founding a Freudian school. That was the origin.

JH Could you say something of the work of the School?

IV Well, the Freudian School of Buenos Aires was the first Lacanian institution to be introduced in Argentina and I think that

without exaggeration it fulfilled a function — it continues to fulfil it — of transmission and reflection of the work of Lacan.

JH Are there other Lacanian groups in Buenos Aires?

IV Yes, there are other groups; some are a reflection of divisions that subsist between disciples of Lacan in Paris.

JH What are the relations between the different Lacanian groups and the School?

IV With the majority there's a cordial relationship. Only with some groups the relationship is impossible, in so far as its members — it seems ridiculous but it is like that — are forbidden to relate with people who don't belong to their own institution.

JH Are you talking about the International Psychoanalytic Association?

IV Of the Lacanian International. The one that was founded by the son-in-law of Lacan, Jacques-Alain Miller.

JH What about relations with the International Psychoanalytic Association?

IV Well, as I sometimes say jokingly, we have recently seen 200 years commemorated of the French revolution and there is still a monarchic party in France. I think that the International will continue to exist, even though history might pass through another place.

JH I've heard you comment on several occasions in the last two weeks during your seminars, on the teaching of psychoanalysis in universities. What do you think about universities as places of transmission for psychoanalysis?

IV The problem is when the psychoanalyst adapts psychoanalysis

to the program of the university. In that case, psychoanalysis is lost; although many *universitaires* (academics) may be won.

JH What about the teaching of Freudian and Lacanian theory in so-called related disciplines such as the visual arts or film studies? Certainly in Melbourne, in most universities, these theories are studied in post-graduate degrees in these areas.

IV If we wanted to say, in an elaborated form, what is psychoanalysis?, we could answer that it is a theory that founds a practice, concerning *jouissance* and the whims of the subject's desire. Art, for example, in principle, is something that offers itself, but to which the public — the listener, the spectator — attends only because he likes it. To interrogate that taste is a way of approaching a reflection of psychoanalysis and art. With some care. Psychoanalysis does not want — nor can it, at least not from my perspective — substitute what is specific of art. Psychoanalysis is not an aesthetics. That does not impede that in a specific field of psychoanalysis, we might ask ourselves and propose some answers concerning the *jouissance* that art proposes.

JH From what I understand you to be saying, psychoanalysis does have something to offer these disciplines.

IV Perhaps. I say 'perhaps' because when I had the great pleasure of meeting Borges, a great Argentinian poet, I arrived at the conviction that he didn't need to learn anything from Lacan or Freud. He knew it already; it was put in act in his work.

But in the times in which we live, in a century in which the artist cannot any longer be naive concerning the instruments he uses, it might be that psychoanalysis is of some use to him.

JH Perhaps, then, literature and art can be of some use to psychoanalysis?

IV It is true, and this is the difference between Freud and Lacan concerning what we call post-Freudianism. In post-Freudianism there

was an abuse of psychoanalysis in which it claimed to close the interpretation of the work of art. Instead, both in Freud and in Lacan, there's a disposition to go to the work of art, to receive what the work of art anticipates for us.

JH What does going beyond Freud mean in the practice of psychoanalysis?

IV Not to produce the religion of the unconscious. The unconscious is not all.

JH Speaking about the end of an analysis: what can one expect from a Lacanian analysis that one couldn't expect in a Freudian analysis?

IV Freud in some ways complained that at the end of his analyses, both with a man and a woman, there was a feminine position against which the patient rebelled. For the man he called it the castration complex, which meant that the male patient would not tolerate a passive position before his analyst, because an analysand confused this with the feminine position. In the case of the woman it was called penis envy. She did not tolerate not having it, and disappointed by not receiving it from her analyst, she put forward a protest that made a limit to the analysis. What one would have to ask oneself is if this double protest of the man and the woman, put in the place of analysands, is not the answer of an analyst who does not cease to be always in the place of the father.

That is to say, that in the Lacanian proposition, it is attempted that the analyst be able to detach himself from the position of the father, to occupy another function which would be, moreover, instead of the idealised place of the father (rather like the place of the saint), the place of debris.

JH Are we talking here about the analysis of a neurotic?

IV Yes, we are talking of the analysis of a neurotic.

JH I know that you work in a psychiatric hospital in Buenos Aires, as well as in private practice. Therefore, you must be very familiar with the psychotic. What can psychoanalysis offer the psychotic?

IV Before offering something to the psychotic, what the psychoanalyst has to do is accept what the psychotic has to offer him. And the first thing that the psychotic offers him — if the analyst listens to it — is a structure that the analyst cannot cover with his knowledge on neurosis. The psychotic structure is a structure: it is not a degradation of neurosis, it is another structure. To recognise that structure, like the attempt to do so since the teachings of Freud and Lacan, is already a first step to doing something with that structure.

JH In terms of being a psychoanalyst and working in a psychiatric hospital, what does your work entail?

IV It is not easy to work as a psychoanalyst in a psychiatric hospital, because a psychiatric hospital does not cease to be a hospital: that is to say, an institution built according to the models of the medical order. And the psychotic, for a psychoanalyst, is also a subject although he might not be a subject like the subject of neurosis. Instead, in medical discourse, the symptom for the physician is constituted as a symptom, with the condition of the exclusion of the subject. This poses from the beginning a difficulty of structure. That is to say, we have to have the audacity to postulate the creation of other institutions that still don't exist, that way I hope we may be able to create in concordance with what the structure of psychosis claims.

JH So from your experience?

IV In my experience what can be done in a hospital is limited. In general, the experience finishes when certain limits of the medical order are touched. A typical example: Friday arrives and the question of whether or not the patient should leave the hospital over the weekend arises. I am speaking of the psychotic. Then the person in charge, a psychiatrist (a physician) and who speaks from medicine,

says: I prefer him not to go out because there is a risk to his life and to the life of others. And it's alright that he says that because for a doctor the first thing is life. But the psychoanalyst says: Yes, there is a certain risk, but it is the same risk of desire, and for me the first thing is not life — of course I am interested that the patient should live — but for me the first, in order of importance, is not life but desire. And desire always implies a risk of death. Then there, already, the fight begins.

JH A question just came to mind about psychoanalysis and psychiatry. Here, usually, the few psychoanalysts who work in public psychiatry work as psychotherapists. Is it different in Argentina?

IV Well, at this moment in Argentina, I personally direct a team that works in a hospital in a service of psychotic patients, and we try to do something more than psychotherapy. Inspired by certain propositions of Lacan, we try — and I say it like this because we think it in this way — that is we accept that we don't have everything sorted out concerning psychosis. There are lines that we are trying out. We try with particular psychotic patients to construct, that which Lacan called the *sinthome*, which is a structure that in the Real allows the psychotic two efficacies. To put a limit to his delusion — in more rigorous terms to refer his delusion to infinity — and, on the other hand, to be able to produce a social link. That *sinthome*, to say something more for those who are not in our field, implies something of what Lacan called the artisan. And in order to advance a little bit further in that, one would have to think of the artisan as this was in mediaeval times.

JH We have talked about psychoanalysis and psychiatry and the difficulties of the two working together. Do you think that psychoanalysis has something in common with the anti-psychiatry movement?

IV The movement of anti-psychiatry undoubtedly has its importance; especially in denouncing the penitentiary system to which the psychotic was subjected. Its principle value was mainly in the 'nos' that it proposed. The problem is in what it did not affirm

in a positive way. Because to believe, as Cooper says, that to be psychotic is a fantastic trip, is a neurotic phantasy. There are three phantasies that are typical of the neurotic: he thinks that the whore has *jouissance*; he thinks that the beggar rests; and he supposes that the psychotic is happy. This is what the neurotic supposes in so far as he has never talked with a whore, with a beggar or a psychotic.

JH It reminds me of when I used to read Laing and wondered what I was missing out on not being psychotic.

IV Go and tell your grandmother!

JH With psychoanalysis and the psychotic, how do the limits of the setting affect the practice?

IV Well, here there is a complicated problem. First, because this issue of the setting is already questionable for neurosis. For anyone who would have experience in treating psychotics — psychotic psychotics — to pretend that the psychotic would fulfil the demands of the setting, is an indirect way of confessing that one does not feel like working with him, because a psychotic does not tolerate that famous post-Freudian setting. And besides, that setting is not in agreement with the structure of the neurotic, let alone the structure of psychosis. That is to say, that it would be very simple to suppose that it is a psychiatrist who disturbs the setting. That is an extra problem. The most serious problem is that the post-Freudian psychoanalyst, in reality, never knew very well what to do with the psychotic. And even though recognising the merit of the Kleinian theory, in terms of not receding before psychosis, the fact itself of wanting to treat the psychotic as if he were neurotic, raises the analyst into really authoritarian positions: that is to say, in the imposition of the setting, that quickly places the analyst in the place of a lethal god.

JH So what is the importance of the setting for psychoanalysis?

IV You should ask the International Psychoanalytic Association!

Because from my perspective, the only thing that I would rescue from what is called setting, is no more than what Freud taught us: Freud who never doubted in carrying out a session in the train, or on the slopes of a mountain: it is that the analysand associates without concern for the other of his associations, and that the analyst listen without prejudging the value of that which he hears. It is what is called in the psychoanalytic theory, free association and suspended attention. That is what defines if there is or is not an analysis.

Notes

1. The editor wishes to acknowledge the publisher's permission to reproduce this interview which was originally published in *Agenda*, 7/8, 1989.
2. This interview was translated by Maria Ines Rotmiller de Zentner.

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