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The Part Played

The notes Lacan addressed to Jenny Aubry are above all known for the distinction they make between two possible positions for the child: the child's symptom representing the truth of the familial couple and the child realizing the presence of the object a in the phantasm. From this point of view they are valuable in the differential diagnostic between psychosis and neurosis. Note that Lacan returned to this premise on the relation between the mother and the child in the case of psychosis. He no longer refers to a holophrastic gel between two signifiers, but refers to the object of the phantasm. If the reality of the child is thus tied up to the desire of the mother, in a sort of continuity between recto and verso without any distinction that would be made by cutting, it is not to the register of the signifier that Lacan sends us, but to the bubble of the phantasm in which the subject and object are confused. The resolution of this take no longer plays on the operation of separation, in other words, by putting into play desire as the effect of the signifying chain, but in regard to the phantasm. Lacan indicates this in the text of his closing speech given at a conference on the alienated child: the value of psychoanalysis is to operate on the phantasm. From then on, it will be exteriorizing the object a which offers a possible exit while at the same time authorizing the advent of a subject. If the analyst is required here as partner, as an exteriorization of the object a, the second note to Jenny Aubry, in introducing the question of the checkmate of communal utopias, refers us also to the dimension of the institution.

This allusion, in effect, is about the installation of institutions referring to psychoanalysis and even to Lacan's teachings for certain of them. I won't spend much time on this point, but would rather make the most of an hypothesis. If Lacan came back to the operations of alienation and separation in his seminar on the logic of the phantasm, it was to make a

substitution. For a strictly signifying cause of the subject, which obligated him to define an ordinary operation, he substituted a cause by alienation in the phantasm coming from the analyst's desire put into act. Lacan thus extracts himself definitively from all reference to the concept of development. The two operations -- alienation and truth -- are extracted from the analytic experience, and it is the end of analysis which permits the deduction of a new logic concerning the cause and advent of the subject. Thus we are dealing with the analytic experience from the strict point of view of the cure. What is important is no longer the extraction of the subject outside of the signifying chain, extraction that confronts the subject with the desire of the Other. What is important resides in the act of the analyst who, due to the construction of the logical consistency of the object a , diverts any possible identification of the subject to the object. Yet, to clarify this possible identification which, moreover, would need to be specified, Lacan returns to the question of the institution.

In referring to the checkmate of communal utopias, he critiques an institution founded on his teachings, certainly, but in privileging only two registers: those of the symbolic and the imaginary. We know what institutional psychotherapy owes to his thesis. We also know the uses made, in certain striking institutions, of his theory of the signifier and signification. I propose to you a reading of his notes to Jenny Aubry with the closing speech, which seems evident, but above all joined to Seminar XVII. In effect, it is the master discourse which founds all institutions, and it isn't enough to refer to psychoanalysis and analytic theory to subvert this.

One might here make the same reproach of Lacan that one makes of Marx concerning the surplus value. In establishing the master discourse from the analytic experience, the analytic theory can reinforce this latter so as to normalize it and prescribe its uses. Ego psychology and the theory of strengthening the ego confirm this. In addition, to indicate its impossibility is not enough to frighten off the postulant who is trying to make it work to the point of confining himself in the delicacies of impotence. This would simply be to swallow the lure on the manner in which psychoanalysis subverts the master discourse. This is not about starting a revolution, but about elaborating a knowledge that trims as close as possible to the structure. What makes the difference resides in considering *jouissance*.

That is what Lacan's taking up the institution again means. The articulation $S_1 \rightarrow S_2$ designates the structure at stake in any institution. But Lacan, at this point in time, no longer indicates the beyond in calling on desire alone. He returns to the question of separation, no longer as cause of the advent of the subject, but from the point of view of the

object. From then on, the separation to which the institution is dedicated does not produce the subject, but what he calls segregation. In other words, if the truth of the master discourse consists of the division of the subject, this latter remains radically unperceived in resting below the bar. The subject is in this way dispossessed not only of his goods, but also of the knowledge that he might elaborate from it. He is reduced, from then on, to the object such as the master discourse produces. The discourse of modern science, because of its acceleration and the mutation of the master discourse into the capitalist discourse gives us the measure of this production: the subject is reduced to being the object that he is sworn to consume and remains at the mercy of the objects produced by science's knowledge in the real, objects that invade his space.

In Lacan's retake on the question of the institution, one must see a critique of Freud's Civilization and its Discontents. In spite of his description of the return of the Ideal under the auspices of the ferocity of the Superego, Freud keeps faith in the progress of a civilization founded on science. He is constrained to, certainly, but to not give way on what constitutes his relation to science, this being his love affair with the truth. Lacan, on the contrary, counters civilization, sustains the residue of the conjugal family insofar as it authorizes a transmission concerning the relation to jouissance. We do not see there a familialism, no belief in the virtues of the family. We read rather a structural reduction attempting to discern what remains outside the signifying structure, which is to say the designation of the unfathomable decision of the being, the ineffable choice of the subject as to his relation to jouissance.

Lacan, here again, designates this point in calling on a desire that would not be anonymous. The desire of the mother is thus the structural operator from which one can locate the subject's position in relation to jouissance, in psychosis as well as in neurosis. Paternal mediation, for its part, operates the distinction between two structures. We note only that this articulation that Lacan effectuates between the institution and the residue of the conjugal family supposes another articulation for a little clarification: the articulation between the analytic discourse and the analytic institution, in other words the link between intension and extension. If this articulation clarifies in extension the question of the institution, it seems to me that one must draw the consequences for an institution referring to the teachings of Jacques Lacan. From now on, the ways which regulate, in act, the relation to segregation as well as the subject's relation to the desire of the mother must be posed as beacons of the analytic orientation for an institution. To introduce you to such a localization, I will call on a clinical case study.

On the demand of the psychiatric sector team, the occupational home of Nonette admitted a young man of 28. The function of admission characterized this demand; the institution welcomed him to separate him from a family in perpetual conflict because of his presence. The father rejected him while the mother seemed to monopolize him. Disputed object in the conflict between the mother and father, he was also the object of a conflict between the institution and the family. The precedent institutions were only good for receiving him when the family could no longer bear his presence. His admission in CAT¹ as well as a stay in the psychiatric hospital were doomed to failure for reposing on only the arbitrary of the family. If the dimension of treatment seemed non-existent for this family, it existed for the sector team, who proposed that we continue to follow this youth for his treatment, gladly leaving us sole charge to admit him. We see thus that the request which presided at his admission was reduced strictly to what Lacan indicates as the dimension of segregation: «What can we do so that the human masses vowed to the same space, not only geographical, but occasionally familial, remain separate?»²

In wishing to conserve the part played by a treatment correlated to the discourse of science, and in confiding to us this young man, the psychiatric team only proved once again that psychiatry is no longer in a position to respond to the question of segregation, and the psychoanalyst fills-in for it, due to Freud's act. I will not insist on the way in which the question of liberty returned at diverse occasions in the treatment of this young man, except to highlight that it is a fact of structure. The claim made in the name of liberty is more sure than segregation. They go together and are never separate. After all, it is in the name of liberty that this young man's father justified a most arbitrary relation to the law; a liberty that didn't extend to his son, whom he restrained because he didn't want the boy to end his days in prison. The institutional treatment thus consisted not in separating the people, but in regulating this young man's presence at Nonette, and that with a psychoanalytic treatment in view. It wasn't a question of separating the son from his parents, but rather that this son adhere to the rule common to all: to be at Nonette from Monday morning to Friday evening.

To hear the father's discourse such as it was spoken by his son, one grasps the impossibility of his living in a place outside of the family when this is considered as leading to no good: «You aren't going to pass all your time writing, my poor boy.» All exterior places were tagged by the father as swearing his son to an infinity without a precise goal. All relation to work was thus sent back to a sterile activity in which his son was the object of an obscure and derisory will. The father thus made his son bear all the weight of a paternal imposture, a son he rejected as soon as the mother monopolized him: «You're well-off at Nonette...shut up...you're a

poor handi-capped person, you're well-off at Nonette. Stay there.» The rejection by the father, marked by an imposture tinted with whiffs of nit-picking, left this young man in the grip of a mortifying alternative: to be the object of a mother who fulfills all his needs, or to incarnate the waste localized in the institutional clinker.

Confronted with this choice in the real, the presence of a brother having very early assured him that he would not be the phallus the mother lacks, having returned once again to Nonette after a prolonged stay with his family, he gazed at his member, foreign body around which the drive couldn't make the tour. An appeal made to phallic signification returned in a passage to the act: he leaped from a window to go home and reassure himself with his mother. After a stay in a psychiatric clinic, he came back to the seraglio under his mother's surveillance, a suspended time which his mother evokes as atemporal, saying, «He was well-off. The masseur was there. He had everything. I took care of him.» Having heard in this return home a request coming from the other, she rediscovered the child she hadn't had before and lost herself in the beatific contemplation of satisfying the needs of her son.

It would take nothing less than an ultimatum for him to return to Nonette. From then on, the treatment would consist of creating a symbolic mediation between the institution and the family through the nomination of a guardian. In fact, this solution was seen to be inadequate at first. The father designated the rival brother to this position, in order to keep control over the situation. This designation would have considerable effects. The guardian, brave boy curled up between his mother and his wife, didn't occupy a phallic position except in showing himself castrated. The identification of the paternal function in the fraternal rival returned in the form of a fight between father and son. The son then refused to ever return, wanting to smash his head then kill himself, father, mother and the rest of the family. The appeal to a symbolic mediation thus returned in the real of the most deadly imaginary rivalry, necessitating another displacement of this function.

The designation of a guardian exterior to the family would transform the rivalry into intrusion and give rise to an unsystematized delusion of persecution. This was translated into the intrusion of the parents in the institution in order to see their son. The son responded by, from then on, refusing to see them, preoccupied as he was with killing them. Their death was situated on the level of the construction of the delusion and could only be pursued far from a presence which would push it to short-circuit in a passage to the act. Presence was thus eradicated in order to make his parents purely beings of discourse, reducing them to what endured of

their function. This latter was not reduced to the symbolic, to be correlated with the voice and the gaze.

The designation of a guardian exterior to the family would produce as always a repetition of the scene of beatific contemplation. In unveiling the real of recent events, it nonetheless presented itself as a screen memory. Coming to Nonette with one of her sisters³ to see and hear her son, the mother heard the scream of another youth while in my office. This clarified for me the foundation of the scene of beatific contemplation. She said, «They're hiding something from me. It was him screaming; it was my son. I want to see him.» In effect, that was what she saw. Leaving my office, her son crossed her field of vision, turning a brief instant to fix in a scream that he hurled at her before parting, leaving her nonetheless satisfied. This exit, no longer from the institution, but from the scene in which he was captivated as object in the phantasm, reduced him to a pure cry worthy of Munch. Without the fascinated other responding by transforming it into an appeal, it would sign his entrance into a delusion already present, certainly, but which from then on would be constructed in the institution.

A certain number of people in the institution, chosen for a signifying trait deduced from the discourse of the Other, would in this way surface as persecutors as soon as he found himself left hanging or left alone by the intervenants of his group. Even the subjective position of the intervenants as to the question of castration would be at stake insofar as an appeal to the father was on the program. In other words, at this point, it is not only the analytic reference which serves as guide in the treatment, but indeed the position of each one as to his/her jouissance. The scattered signifiers of this young man's childhood were thus gathered, lined up, ordered by signifiers taken from the institution. One might say, rather, that these signifiers reordered themselves, articulated themselves, staged themselves setting out from encounters with jouissance, signing themselves as creation in the delusion. We would thus rediscover how the families of Schreber and Flechsig had been in relation since the dawn of time. Finally, we concluded that this subject, facing the jouissance that he would localize in the Other, had chosen in a first period the path of passage to the act, which is to say, aggression. In that, the response didn't suit us. In effect, if he was desperate to kill the Other, he was not yet to be considered as already dead, even if he envisioned this death as possible from then on.

What lesson can be drawn from this case? We have seen the succession of three modalities of the symptom corresponding to three ways to situate jouissance. The object as left-over, such as it appears in segregation, remains a constant question to be linked to the conditions of the discourse of modern science and capitalism. This is what is at stake in an institution referring to the teachings of Lacan. This wager is measured in place of the

institution in the social field. Gather the left-overs, certainly, but to put them to work from this position conducts us quickly enough to interrogate in a practical way the master discourse at work in our institutions. It isn't in dialecticizing separation afterwards that we have taken care of the question of the familial bond.

It is in setting out from a desire concerning the treatment, and in not giving way on this desire or, in other words, the conditions necessary to a possible treatment, that it was possible for the position of this young man to be reduced and clarified, regarding the truth of the familial couple as well as concerning the part played by the mother's desire. Putting into action a desire that isn't anonymous, this reduction allowed him to operate a separation in relation to a simple position of waste. These are the two structural operators which put to the fore the question of constructing his position in relation to *jouissance*. Yet, it is at this point that the analytic discourse is no longer conceived of as strictly a relay for the master discourse. If clinical knowledge on the psychotic structure permits the operation of an appeasement by avoiding all appeals to the father or phallic signification, the constitution of an address for the compulsory try-out of the psychotic necessitates for each of us the invention of an unprecedented desire, even if it is oriented by this knowledge.

It is no longer in setting out from the subject and speech, but setting out from the unveiling of the place of the object and that of the subject that a return can be operated, making the product veer to the cause. Yet, it is at this point that the institution can only construct itself rigorously from one point: that there has been the analyst, and this in act, for each one at the very heart of the institutional apparatus. We know how Lacan's School responds to this question -- with the pass and nomination to A.E. [Analyste de l'Ecole], which is to say, analyst of the School, of the experience of the School.

If only the analyst can authorize himself, he can't authorize himself by the institution. This can offer a box for the subject-supposed-to-know. It concerns an effect of suggestion due to signifying articulation. The analyst from then on is instituted by the Ideal and only holds his insignia from the father. From then on, if the transference in the cure is only due to the grace of the analysand, the analyst cannot escape from this take on the institution except in substituting an exposed knowledge for a supposed knowledge. In this way, he commits the act of returning the product to the cause, and indicates the orientation of each one in the institution. Going beyond the logic of the all to the logic of the exception, the path is cleared for a logic of not-all in which each one is held to expose, afterwards, the effects of his/her encounter with the psychotic so that a knowledge of it is deposited.

- ¹ The CAT (Centre d'Aide au Travail) is a French agency that aids handicapped individuals toward the goal of gainful employment. [trans. note].
- ² Jacques Lacan. «Discours de cloture des journees sur les psychoses chez l'enfant,» *Enfance alienee*. Denoel:Paris, 1987; pp. 297-298.
- ³ My sister (ma soeur) and massage technician (masseur) are pronounced identically. In this linguistic ambiguity, one finds a suggestion of the pieces at stake in the mother's unconscious.