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The Psychoanalytic Clinic in Institution: Psychosis

The specificity of psychosis

At first glance, psychosis refutes the idea that speech has an effect on the symptom which had been the origin of the psychoanalytic practice. If speaking of his symptom can have an effect on the said symptom when the subject who speaks is neurotic, nothing of the sort seems to be produced when he who speaks is psychotic. And the same thing goes for what we consider the complement in the effectiveness of this practice of speech, at least to a certain point in the elaboration, to wit the analytic interpretation.

In psychosis, the givens, the coordinates, the conditions of the relation to the Other are completely different. In brief, the symptom there is first of all the symptom of the Other and the encounter with the subject-supposed-to-know is a triggering factor, at least if we refer to what constitutes the theoretical core of psychosis and one of its most commonly found forms: paranoia. The other forms, such as melancholia or schizophrenia, are not more accessible to a practice based on speech, which is structured according to the social bond that the analyst sets up with a neurotic subject.

Thus, Lacan's «Question preliminary» is also a warning, recognizing that speech does not have the same function of «symbolization» in psychosis, a function of substitution or negatation of jouissance by the signifier which it has in neurosis because the status of the Other, as well as that of the subject, is not the same in the two cases. In the first period of his teaching, Lacan puts the emphasis on the difference in the status of the Other, place of speech and language, in the two subjective destinies - - neurosis and psychosis -- even if in his later teachings he will highlight

another status of the signifier than that of its definition which implies a return to the Other. Notably based on psychosis, this change in focusing on a status of the signifier that assimilates it to the real was already present in the «Question preliminary» when Lacan indicated the possibility of the signifying chain passing into the real. For the signifier to pass to the real, it suffices that it be presented in the form of a broken chain.¹

Remember that such an approach to psychosis implies not considering it to be a primitive, «archaic» form of the human condition (as the unveiling of what would be the interior world of the infant at the dawn of his development), but as a form of subjectivity contemporary with other forms, its differentiation lying in other arrangements, other states of the same constitutive elements and dimensions. Thus, it can never be question of conceiving an eventual modulation of psychotic subjectivity in terms of its evolution to neurotic subjectivity. Psychosis can only be conceived of in terms of modifications proper to its own logic.

With psychosis, we encounter a subject who is, first of all, in relation with a bizarre, irregular Other who is especially interested in our subject for reasons that, being enigmatic and obscure, are nonetheless malevolent or perverse. Something is wrong in the Other, contrary to what happens for neurotic subjects. They encounter something that doesn't work -- they don't know why nor what it means -- in their conduct or experience. They question themselves. In psychosis, it is always the Other that doesn't work. This is why the symptom doesn't present the subject with a subjective opacity (on the contrary, the subject feels it is rather «transparent»: one manipulates him, one reads his thoughts, one commands his movements), but as an opacity of the Other.²

This other status of the symptom in psychosis translates into a modification in the nature of the effect of signification as consequence of the foreclosure of the metaphoric function assured by the Name-of-the-father. Without developing the Lacanian conception of the Oedipus complex and the causality of psychosis, this perturbation in the effect of signification is presented in the form of a sort of absolute enigma, present in the world, as a signification that is addressed to the subject, all the more so that it is an empty signification. It is signification reduced to the fact that «it wants to say [ca veut dire],»³ that «it speaks» in reality, when one hasn't a clue what it is saying except that this concerns the subject.

In neurosis, the subject misrecognizes that signification is the finished product of a signifying sequence and the result of a passage through the place of the Other, through the place of the code. He misrecognizes the fact that whatever the intention of signification might be, the effect of signification is dependant on the Other. This misrecognition however has

a correlate: the place of the Other remains mute,⁴ remains the place of the code and not of the message. Signification takes place as a scansion, in itself inaudible since it is not an element of the code, a signifier. In this it is necessarily made-up of the lack. From then on, the signifier is what represents this lack for another signifier. And the lack of a signifier is the definition of the subject; the subject is an effect determined by the return structure of the signifier. This is also why the subject's status is indeterminate. Separated from the real of his jouissance by the paternal bar brought to bear on the desire of the primordial Other, the subject is fundamentally, in language, the missing pole of all determinations. «What am I?», «Am I dead or alive?», «Am I a man or a woman?»: the subject's status is above all a question and not a knowledge.

In psychosis, the rejection of jouissance from the symbolic order implies its delocalized return outside the symbolic. Because it is not admitted in the symbolic as an elided element (as unconscious -- hysterical «amnesia» or obsessional «self-reproach»), the real of the subject, the «primary lived experience of jouissance,» irrupts as a signification in reality with a degree of certitude proportional to the enigmatic void presenting itself in the place of signification itself.⁵ Because it is rejected from the symbolic by the absence of the paternal metaphor, the x of desire is transferred to the real rather than being what lies between the signifiers, between the lines as cause of desire. The subject feels that what happens in the world is a sign addressed to him, even if at first he doesn't know why or what it means. The place of the Other, of language, is imposed on the subject from then on as being crossed by a signification already hostile by the fact of its enigmatic nature. This certitude takes the place of neurotic indetermination and is the counterpart of that which Freud isolated as paranoid «disbelief.» Because jouissance has no place in the subjective system insofar as moment of non-sense on which both metaphor and witticism play, the subject only encounters or approaches that which makes for discontinuity in meaning -- the random, the unexplained or even the literal dimension of the signifier -- as rejected into the real and aimed at him. Due to the foreclosure of the structure of «extimacy,» the subject of jouissance, the object a, is not an empty intersection with the set of meaning, the Other of knowledge, but is an element of this set. In other words, the intersection of the subject with the Other implies an element which is the subject himself as non-eclipsed. Non-sense, rather than being the eclipse of the subject, is situated in the Other as an obscure element which at the same time persecutes him. This is why the psychotic subject faced with an effect of signification which takes place in the Other is first of all in a position of listening or deciphering, whether this effect of signification be in the initial form of an absolute enigma, signs addressed to him by the world, or hallucinatory insults. In place of the «code,» he must deal with an Other emitting messages to which he is the complement or reference.

The structure of this relation to the Other will from then on imply a specific modification of the major effect of signification born by its structure as return of the signifier: to wit, the signification of the subject-supposed-to-know which is the pivot of the transference. The subject-supposed-to-know is a mistake, the spontaneous mistake (of the neurotic) which reestablishes a subject where there is a hole in the place of knowledge: knowledge that does not know itself. It indeed concerns a supposition, a belief, because where one supposes a subject knowing the knowledge in question, there is only a gap. Yet, in psychosis it is the very dimension of supposition or belief that is non-operative because psychosis is about the encounter; the place of the Other, the place of knowledge is not limited to this knowledge but also includes the signification that is the subject insofar as it makes him take pleasure. Rejected from the symbolic insofar as place holder for what is missing insofar as castrated, the subject as *jouissance* irrupts in the Other, in language as one of its elements, as the most precious of its elements pursued with assiduity. Insofar as it knows, insofar as it knows the subject or completes itself with the subject, the Other takes pleasure. And it is as this bit of knowledge which is on the order of waste product of knowledge, but also a surplus of *jouissance* that gives him consistency, that the subject is designated, apprehended, integrated in the very place of knowledge. At bottom, the core of knowledge that really counts since the Other ceaselessly clamors for it...is the psychotic subject with the double face of persecution and megalomania that the foreclosure of castration implies for his position («erotomania» being no more than a delusional avatar, an attempt at interpretation).

What institution for the psychotic subject?

These few reminders of the Freudian and Lacanian elaboration of psychosis' structure already allow us to discern an orientation for the practice that an institution sets up for subjects who, in crisis or after crisis, request or are brought to be admitted there. We leave aside, for the moment, the situation of the psychotic subject who seeks analysis before the crisis or triggering-off, although the theoretical elements that we have evoked are not without incidence on the direction of the cure eventually engaged upon with him.

Beforehand or preliminary to any institutional response, the clinical debate must constitute its conditions of possibility. The first period of a psychoanalytic orientation in the psychiatric field is first of all an opening of a clinical space in the institutional collective that would be both

an interrogation of the theory through the diverse phenomenologies of psychosis and the location of a subjective position which differs from those of neurosis and perversion based on an elaboration of the logic of this difference. An entirely different orientation of institutional practice stems from the importance that the clinical moment holds or does not hold for the collective regarding the therapeutic, as I have already developed elsewhere.⁶

In the first case, before asking ourselves who among us will carry out the psychotherapeutic function, we must first of all question the subjective position and the mode of transference of each subject, and this should be carried out in the frame of a common work on the questions endlessly posed by the clinic of the particular. Such a preliminary attitude will not, moreover, be without repercussions on the very mode of response put into practice, since a position that takes into account the fact that operating from the subject-supposed-to-know is exactly what must be at all costs avoided with a psychotic subject is radically different from a position consisting of the application of a «one size fits all» therapeutic which ignores clinical differences.

The rejection of the unconscious, to be taken in the same sense that Freud used in speaking of an «open» unconscious in psychosis, in other words the ejection of the symbolic toward the real determines an entirely different status for supposed knowledge in psychosis. In psychosis this knowledge is not supposed because it is already in some way realized in its very reference. If in neurosis this reference necessarily has the structure of a void, a question, a supposition, in psychosis any presence of the Other of knowledge is a presence which, by its knowledge, takes pleasure in the very being of the subject, even though the subject himself calls for this presence on occasion. The donation of a signifier at the point where one is missing, whatever form this takes whether educative or interpretive, places the subject at the x of the Other's jouissance. This x is not included in the symbolic and repressed -- thus having the ultimate signification of castration -- but is an x whose «resolution» is the unbarred being of the subject. Such a donation would confirm the existence of the place of knowledge as a knowledge whose jouissance is nourished notably by what happens in the body or thoughts of the psychotic subject.

Any response that makes a proposition on the being of the subject, whether as explanation (the clinical history of many psychotics is marked by interpretations of the type «repressed homosexuality») or as injunction («If you continue like that you're going to become chronic») is a persecutive response because it presentifies an Other whose jouissance is not empty and papered-over by pure supposition, but is furnished by the subject himself. The ultimate knowledge is to be found on the side of the

subject in definitive. This is why the Other of knowledge can be encountered sometimes in the guise of an erotomaniac transference («He loves me»), sometimes in the guise of an alternative self, an aggressive confrontation.

In the case of neurosis, we await the emergence of the signification of the subject-supposed-to-know, which is to say that we wait for a phenomenon of which the subject complains to take the form of a symptomatic manifestation of the unconscious before authorizing the analyzing task. It is rather to avoid such a hypothesis that we must tend when dealing with psychosis. The delusion, the voices, the passage to the act are not «formations of the unconscious» and return of the repressed, but a return in the real of that which has not been «admitted to the interior» as Freud said. Hence the ineffectiveness, if not damage, of the use of an interpretation that refers to «something else,» that plays on double sense, that puts the subject to work deciphering. This amounts to vainly inflicting on the subject the literal dimension of the signifier whose semantic opacity is immediately correlated by the psychotic to his being as object, to his status as reference and refuse of sense.⁷

We try, in the style of presence that orients the institutional response, not to occupy the position of the third, of the Other, but rather to place ourselves on the same side as the subject facing this Other, to be in some ways another Other for him. We try to be an Other who would be both simply witness and support of the ideal signifier that is the subject himself insofar as he poses as guarantee of order and a limit facing the intrusive, unbridled Other that harasses him.

To be the witness «is not a lot and is a lot, since a witness is a subject who is supposed to not know, to not take pleasure and thus presents a void where the subject will be able to place his testimony.»⁸ To consent to this place of witness is also to permit the signifier (exteriorized and imposed in its literality which cannot be joined to other signifiers or addressed) to be heard and rejoin the dimension of speech rather than that of reading and deciphering.⁹

This manoeuvre will inspire from then on the arranging of the collective of «care-givers» so as to avoid placing themselves in the position of exception in the name of one person's knowledge to whom it would be strongly recommended or even imposed on the subject to go talk. With nobody in the position of exception, the subject is allowed to choose the partner he wants as witness. Networked rather than centralized, this might permit a dispersion, a relativation and finally a distancing of the signification of «subject-supposed-to-know» which is a trigger for the psychotic subject. In this way it contributes to the management of the moment of confrontation between the psychotic subject and what, because of the

foreclosure of the paternity, presents itself to him as the intrusion of A-father. Such a disposition of the collective makes the most of psychoanalysis and is less a hierarchical identification of the care-giver than it is the responsibility of each person facing the specificity of the psychotic transference.

Cut off from knowledge -- the very point where language closes around its interior lack -- the signifier can then be limited to the function of identification of an insignia or ideal from which the subject might see himself. Thus he can imaginize himself in relation to the social bond, according to an identification in the margin or in suspension in relation to this same social bond -- retired worker, artist or volunteer therapist, inventor or veteran of the institution, writer or specialist in psychiatric illness -- alternative or sometimes in continuity with a delusional identity or mission.

For this to happen, all educative or rehabilitative projects (on the part of the institution) must be set aside, for they translate into injunctions or advice which not only puts the subject in the presence of his Other's will, but compromises the possibility of a self-elaboration of that which returns in the real for this subject. Why push the subject toward independent housing, a proper job, a love relationship -- or, inversely, hinder him from them if he wants them -- if not in the name of a conception of psychosis in terms of regression or a blocking on the ladder leading to adulthood, autonomy, maturity, in short the Oedipus?

Yet psychosis is a subjective condition that is at the same level, which is «contemporary» with neurosis. They do not differ in the least degree or by the under-development of the aptitudes of normal humans, but by the rejection in the very dimension of the Other of its constitutive lack, of the place for jouissance. It is an entirely different «work» which is devoted to the psychotic subject on the path to a «cure» which is first of all an attempt to reconcile the real of jouissance with the «order of the world» and with ideals, before it can be a social «reinsertion» which could only be a consequence of this reconciliation (the setting up of which one may facilitate, moreover).

Two characteristics of the institutional apparatus will then translate a taking into account of this structure. Firstly, the sweeping away of any pedagogical, readaptive, normalizing therapeutic motives and obligations destined to «make advance,» «make evolve,» or «habituate to reality» -- when aren't these just ways to say accept the law and assume castration! -- to the profit of a few norms inherent to the «hotel-like» functioning of the institution and to a minimal conviviality threshold, simple «rules of the game» (it's like that and there's nothing we can do about

that) and not the expression of an intention that only wants what's good for the subject. Moreover, we know that in this latter the institutional rules rapidly cease to be rules since their application or their suspension is a function of the knowledge of the therapists on the «progress» of the subject: in one case it is good for him, in his state, that he not be awakened at the same time as the others or that he has a sexual experience, or that he be forbidden to leave for the week-end, in an other the contrary is good. This situation, in the long run, emerges as the dimension of therapeutic despotism which gives consistency to the will of the Other and compromises the pacific and soothing virtues of a simple rule. That is why the existence of the rule should be as detached as possible from the enunciation of a single person to the profit of a trans-individual enunciation, that of the collective and the team.

Secondly, it concerns putting a range of «possibilities» at the disposition of the residents -- as much in terms of lodgings as in terms of distractions, occupations or creativity (library, games, newspapers and magazines, diverse hobbies, sports, music, etc.), certainly without excluding what the subject might want to do outside the institution -- so that each might use them as he wishes if it pleases him. This disposition is a possible path to an identificatory ideal or even the embryo of an elaboration of what in *jouissance* is antinomic for the subject to pretending. Thus it concerns not therapeutic activities translating the program of revalidation to which the subject must submit in exchange for shelter, but a series of possibilities offered to the spontaneous work of psychosis.

The work of psychosis

In a structure where it is the subject who deciphers and the Other who is interpreted, what place is left for psychoanalysis? Even for the psychoanalyst, the place he might occupy in the transference is designated, prescribed by the possibilities of the structure. And the manoeuvre which is awaited from him will not be well oriented, except if he has an idea of the structure in which he finds himself placed.¹⁰

Yet, to have an idea of the structure, and thus of the possible places that the partner might occupy in a bond with the psychotic subject is also demanded for the partners that receive and accompany him in an institution. For if it happens, and more often than one might imagine, that psychotic subjects spontaneously or on the advice of another seek out an analyst, it also happens that they refuse to even consider the possibility

of analysis, that they put off indefinitely a first telephone call or that they are gripped by panic the day of the first appointment. In any case, whether they seek an analyst or not, when they reside in an institution, they encounter other partners also.

How do these others think out the orientation to give the response they set up collectively when faced with modalities of psychosis as diverse as the torment and perplexity in facing an invading enigma, inert resignation before a reality foreign to any sense, hallucination, passage to the act?

The social bond with a psychotic subject implies first of all that any idea of modifying the subject be excluded from its presuppositions. For if what modifies the subject is interpretation, in psychosis interpretation emanates from the subject, as Colette Soler reminds us.¹¹ However, even though it is out of the question to aim at modifying the subject on pain of presenting a persecutive Other, it so happens that the psychosis modifies itself. It may happen that the subject takes charge, elaborates, invents solutions destined to treat the return of the Thing, the return of a «beyond the pleasure principle» that is rejected from the metaphoric process of substitution/symbolization. Colette Soler, in a recent article about these solutions, speaks of the «work of psychosis.»¹²

The «work of psychosis» is first of all a solitary, spontaneous work through which the subject attempts to remedy the effects caused by the rejection of jouissance from the symbolic field. In line with the Freudian idea of considering the delusional production up to the constitution of an systematic interpretation as an attempt at curing the psychosis, Soler discerns in Lacan's teachings the range of possibilities for this «work.»

The delusional elaboration

First, having been uncovered by Freud himself and being most frequently encountered in the clinic, is precisely this attempt to reconcile the senseless signs and intrusive phenomena that aim malevolently at the subject in his thoughts, body and genitals with reason and a meaning. This reconciliation produces a lightening of the persecutive and annihilating dimension of what is imposed on the subject without any legality.

Certainly, the subject then exploits the resources of a symbolic and imaginary which do not have the function of negating jouissance, the

metaphor constituting the unconscious. But if this does not reconcile the subject with the common meaning or with his fellows, the elaboration of this «reconciliation» (reconciliation of *jouissance* with the symbolic and imaginary and not negativation -- which is by definition foreclosed) permits the subject at least to distance himself from a passage to the act, from the torment of voices and the distress into which the enigmatic signification aimed at him throws him.

It concerns in definitive elaborating another principle, another law for the subject of the signifier than that which permits the linking of the symbolic and *jouissance* through inclusion of this latter as central void (which corresponds to the principle of fiction, of pretending). Without the function of the exception furnished by the father insofar as name of a pure impossibility (translated in mythical terms by the murder of the original father), the subject invents another law, another modality of the relation language-*jouissance*. At its horizon, it includes, as the delusion accomplished by President Schreber shows, the substitution of a radical new metaphor in the place of the radical paternal metaphor. The signifier of exception will now be the signifier of «The Woman» which the subject is from then on devoted to being as effect of the ultimate signification. The including of «The Woman» in the field of the Other as counterpart of the foreclosure of the Name-of-the-father is only evoked here as theoretical horizon of the success of this substitute metaphor. It goes without saying that not all delusional elaborations attain the same degree of achievement as Schreber does in the final interpretation of all his experience. However, in different imaginary forms the note of this «push-to-the-woman» can be heard at a given moment in the delusional elaboration under construction, even brusquely, as an intuition, an identificatory fascination or a menace. And it is as being a proper symptom articulated to its process and not as a determining cause that homosexuality in psychosis must be understood, Lacan remarked.¹³

The setting up of this substitute metaphor is far from being the case among all the subjects engaged in a delusional elaboration. (Moreover, not all psychotic subjects engage in such an elaboration. Some even remain riveted to a purely persecutive position, such as the young woman who came out of her silence simply to say, «I submit»). For many, this metaphoric substitution remains forever at the horizon of a process which achieves a relative stabilization by means of more restrained solutions.

To resolve the treatment of his exceptional position, one subject would make of himself the holder of a solution for the ambient crisis in philosophy, more precisely, the supervisor of the psychoanalytic milieu. Another would develop an interpretation of his last name cut into the syllables of diverse common names, and later derive the logic of what happened to him from this. One young man wrote a manuscript relating the

war of the «femmunists» against the rest of the universe while covering himself with pseudo-electronic weapons that attracted him, thus gaining the amused interest of the group, who nicknamed him «Gadget.» The doubling of the Other, for example in a regular God conforming to the order of the world and a pernicious God who violates the laws of the universe like the one Schreber produced, can also constitute an interpretation that limits the invasions of the capricious Other.

Another subject, who suffers strange corporal phenomena and is under siege by voices, latched on to the word «electronic» and developed a whole nocturnal activity aiming to capture empty or foreign language waves with complicated electrical circuits. He developed a «secret plan» whose first consequence, very prosaic, consisted in simply proposing himself to repair the electrical appliances of his neighbors. But he would also find a solution to ward against the feminization announced by the voices, who murmured, «Homo! Girlie!» He invented a condition for approaching women: to be dressed in a suit bearing the brand name Sony.¹⁴

In this case, moreover, the delusional elaboration would not be incompatible with the perspective of professional training in electronics. In another case, more modestly, it allows a subject who no longer dared leave the institution to start getting around in town by following a carefully blazed trail marked by the signifiers of stations and places extracted from her construction.

It would be a little hasty to consider these «solutions» or these handiworks as having a symbolic that doesn't include the signification for castration like so many other forms of «substitutes» to the paternal function of metaphorization. One might say that it concerns partial, unfinished, unsystematized modalities of an elaboration on the returns of jouissance which don't really attain the true function of substitution for the foreclosed paternal metaphor except if another «equivalent» is put into place: that by which the subject makes a signifier of the identification through which he could assume the desire of the mother.¹⁵ This signifier -- which doesn't exist -- takes the place of the missing signifier of the father to metaphorize the mother. The inclusion of «The Woman» then covers the hole in the Other by means of the development of another myth of origins in the place of that of the «dead father» which cannot occur to the subject.

The partner's place in this elaboration is at first just that -- partner, witness -- not that of deciphering or interpreting but that of offering to this encoding of jouissance, in the absence of the phallic cipher for castration, the field which makes of it speech, the possibility of a connection with meaning and the imaginary.

This in no way implies pushing the subject along the path of delusional elaboration (although such production may come occasionally as an alternative to a passage to the act, for example, a surgical modification of anatomical sex).¹⁶ Nor does this imply that such an elaboration shelters the subject from an encounter that would unveil his being-of-refuse, nor that it puts the subject in a position to assume social or professional responsibility without «decompensating.» Lending one's presence to support such an elaboration may, on the contrary, allow one to accompany in the sense of orienting its demands along lines of what is bearable. This mode of becoming «The Woman» is not the same when, for example, the erotomaniac interpretation of a patient is oriented toward becoming the woman the company she works for lacks rather than toward becoming the woman of this man there, because in the latter case, we would have to fear that she might just end up striking the object of her choice.¹⁷ The same goes for the subject who would develop two «hypotheses» for what happened to him: one based on a «scientific» model which he called «subconscious,» and the other «felt»¹⁸ and linked to the dowsing his father practices. It would not have the same stabilizing effect if one accompanied him on the path of the second hypothesis rather than the first one.¹⁹

The object and the letter

Distinct from the path of delusional reconciliation with meaning, body image or ideal, another path may be taken by the work of psychosis, a path which is not incompatible with reconciliation, moreover. This concerns the more rare path of an operation that Colette Soler calls the operation of the real on the real of *jouissance*, an operation whose paradigmatic form is the creation of an art object. To grasp the specificity of the operation, it must be noted that the art object must be conceived not as an effect of sense -- a dream, a formation of the unconscious as is often the case in psychoanalysis -- but precisely as an object outside of the dimension of meaning and interpretation. An object, in the radical sense of the term, is not something that takes the place of something else -- characteristic of the symbol -- but something new taking the place of nothing. It imposes itself as real outside any reference to something else. Moreover, this is the same dimension of the object that can be isolated in the signifier itself when one takes away its function of referring to the Other signifier, a function which is its definition in the end. One sees this same dimension of the object when one considers the signifier in its material literality, in what is not pertinent to the dimension of meaning.

The art object is first of all an effect of jouissance, as can already be seen in simply remarking its status and market value. Art begins, remarks Jacques-Alain Miller, at the point where what cannot be said can be shown.²⁰ It is precisely on the order of the dimension that Freud called «sublimation,» being a jouissance that can be satisfied outside of «repression and the return of the repressed,» outside of the phallus. Insofar as it doesn't pass through language and meaning, insofar as it thus makes an abstraction of the Other, the art object is a localization of jouissance rather than its identification to the place of the Other or its return on the body. The art object for the psychotic subject can thus be an alternative to metaphoric treatment through the foreclosed phallic function or through the function of «The Woman.» It substitutes both for the absence of the paternal metaphor and the necessity of a delusional elaboration.

Here we encounter the exceptional solution of Joyce, from whom Lacan would extract the logic while it accompanied him through a radical revision of the conception of the symptom and the articulation of the three registers : real, symbolic and imaginary.²¹ The paradox Joyce presents is to have succeeded with this operation in the very same symbolic element, in literature, which more than any other art comes from the field of meaning. Joyce succeeded in reducing the very element where meaning is effectuated to an outside-of-sense, in producing literary writing as a plastic, uninterpretable, unanalysable object. He makes the register of language, the register of meaning pass to the real, outside meaning. He does not rectify the Other, like Rousseau, but leaves out the Other. He pushes the want-to-say of language up to the real of its letter where it no longer means anything, to absolute opacity: the symbolic becomes real. Where Rousseau is haunted by the enigma, Joyce on the contrary treats the signifier until he renders it perfectly enigmatic, outside meaning.²² At the same time he passes a dimension of paralysis, of impotence, of an obsessive idea into language; in short, he makes the dimension of the symptom, the dimension of the signifier reduced to the letter of jouissance, pass into language.²³

Rather than identify in the place of the Other, as in paranoia, or return in the body, as in schizophrenia, jouissance is localized in this letterification of the symbolic: a strategy of the composition of the enigma²⁴ which one might suppose shelters Joyce from an encounter with the enigmatic dimension of the Other -- since the field of the Other is evacuated as such. It is Joyce who becomes enigma to his fellows.

As exceptional as it is, the Joycean solution -- which I can only rapidly evoke here -- can however clarify other forms of solution, distinct from the delusional elaboration, and destined to treat jouissance in the absence of the operator of its negatation. Wolfson's solution, notable, can be compared to that of Joyce insofar as it also operates on language

in such a way as to evacuate the Other. His first book, *Le schizo et les langues*, is a true enterprise of the foreclosure of meaning from his mother tongue through --

«a translinguistic montage that aims at excluding the from the English language any memory of the Other's tongue. It becomes the object of a simultaneous translation which consists of making heard, in the phonemes belonging to other languages, the way in which the sounds of English are immediately perceived as the phonemes of words from one of four other languages he speaks while the meaning of the sentence remains intact. Thanks to this translinguistic copulation, he creates a confusion of tongues which incontestably has a function of substitution.²⁵

This permits him to substitute the barring of the maternal message, as objective intrusion of the Other in his ears, for the paternal bar on the mother's desire. Through the artifice of writing, the mother tongue becomes indecipherable, outside of meaning, like an object.

However, Joyce's invention of this literature-symptom is not situated in its value as substitute except insofar as it allows the imaginary to link up to the symbolic and to the real. It is insofar as Joyce's writing is published and becomes a work that Joyce succeeds in producing himself as an eminent man, an exception in literature. In other words, he constitutes an ego, a narcissism linked to his writing at the point where his body image was adrift, unbound.²⁶

Passage to the act

The stabilizing effects that can result from a modification in the psychosis according to the two processes mentioned above, however, are only assured within the limits of their accomplishment. This is notably the case when the delusional elaboration attains the «paraphrenic» form: the subject then consents to the jouissance with the Other through an interpretation which attests to a complicity with the Other, all the more so that it is developed from then on outside of any «realism» or care to demonstrate, its being a purely signifying construction. The Other is no longer incarnated in a real person or in a part of reality, thus permitting the delusional certitude to be deployed without repercussions on social behaviors, and gives the impression that from then on it has taken up quarters in the register of the «fantastic.»²⁷

But outside of this extreme form of recourse to the resources of an altered symbolic, the moment of the encounter with the Other's desire

-- with the point of the missing link in the frame of human reality -- is always a risk, even within an interpretation under construction. The encounter with the Other's desire risks really recalling, outside the delusion and ejected from the place of the Other, what the psychotic subject is as object of jouissance. Because separation cannot take place through the intermediary of the paternal exception, the psychotic subject's separation with the signifying chain risks occurring through its realization, through an irruption into action at the moment of this encounter.

There, where the neurotic subject can respond to the enigma of the Other's desire, its lack of guarantee, through the manoeuvre of his phantasm -- at the level of pretending -- the psychotic subject risks responding through a realization of his being object; he exits the stage, goes out of bounds (necessitated by an unheard of act without signifying context) or disappears, eliminates himself. Separated from the Other of the signifier, he is no longer connected to his will to jouissance, but this «unplugging» exposes him at the same time to an internal tearing, to the ripping away of an element that makes a body with the Other. Because in psychosis the object a is not extracted from reality beforehand, the dimension of separation from the object can be realized through acts which attack the psychotic's own body or the specular body of his double. The stabilizing effect which occasionally follows not only is incompatible with the social bond, but may also constitute a limit, more precisely a halt, to the «work of psychosis.»

From this imminence of the passage to the act derives the necessity to on the one hand avoid inflicting on the subject an encounter with the moment in which, to respond with his proper existence, there is no longer any possible ideal or identification in the Other (for this moment is not tempered or mediated by symbolic castration in psychosis) and on the other hand to arrange the possibility of an ever possible «plugging in» to another ideal, place to address himself, or interlocutor during moments when the conjunction of events might expose the subject to translate his status of separation into acts.

In the framework of a stay in institution, it is notably opportune to be attentive to all the moments in which «separation» might be solicited. It isn't rare, for example, that the risk of a suicidal or aggressive passage to the act augments during a definitive or periodical return to the family -- even if the subject cannot imagine living or spending the weekend anywhere else. This is also the opportunity to set up a place to address himself that is regularly accessible, outside the institutional framework in which the subject currently resides, so that he can have a recourse, independent of and beyond the limited period of his stay.

This does not exclude, but rather favors, the formation of insignia and identifications which might be levied on the stay in institution, for example, the title of «former patient.» Without being of the same nature as what is elaborated in the interpretation the subject attempts to give to his real relation with the Other, these can constitute an imaginary beacon which contributes to orienting him in daily life and maintains an alternative pole opposite of the jouissance of the Other which is in question.

- ¹ Jacques Lacan. «On a question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis.» *Écrits: A Selection*. trans. A. Sheridan, Norton, 1977; pp. 182 - 183.
- ² Jacques-Alain Miller. Course given through the Department of Psychoanalysis, University of Paris VIII (1982 - 83). Unpublished; lesson of April 20, 1983.
- ³ *Ca veut dire* (it wants to say) is impossible to translate into English because French makes a distinction between *sens* (sense) which is sort of innate or inherent and *veut dire* (meaning) which is intentional. *Ca veut dire* is «that means» plus an intention on the part of the speaker. For English speakers, *sens* and *veut dire* both have the same status, neither innate nor intentional. [trans. note].
- ⁴ Jacques-Alain Miller. Course given through the Department of Psychoanalysis, University of Paris VIII (1991 - 92). Unpublished; lesson of December 4, 1991.
- ⁵ Jacques Lacan. *Op. cit.*; p. 185.
- ⁶ Alfredo Zenoni. «Clinique psychanalytique en institution.» *Les feuillets du Courtil* #4: avril 1992; pp. 21 - 32. [trans. note].
- ⁷ cf. F. Leguil. «L'instance de la lettre dans la psychose.» *L'imromptu #7* (Secretariat of the E.C.F. at Reims); pp. 64 - 71.
- ⁸ Colette Soler. «Quelle place pour l'analyste?» *Actes de l'E.C.F.* vol. XIII, 1987; p. 30.
- ⁹ F. Leguil. *Op. cit.*
- ¹⁰ Colette Soler. «Le sujet psychotique dans la psychanalyse.» *Psychose et creation*. Paris: Navarin, 1990; p. 28.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹² Colette Soler. «Il Lavoro della psicosi.» *La psicoanalisi*. #6: Roma, 1989.
- ¹³ Jacques Lacan. *Op. cit.*; p. 190.
- ¹⁴ Jacques Borie. «Construction de la realite dans la cure d'un psychotique.» *Actes de E.C.F.* #19, 1991; p. 51.
- ¹⁵ Jacques Lacan. *Op. cit.*; p. 207.
- ¹⁶ cf. for example, F. Gorog. «'Jane,' un cas de schizophrénie.» *Quarto* #42, 1990; pp. 47 - 51.
- ¹⁷ Eric Laurent. «Discipline de l'entretien avec le sujet psychotique.» *Quarto* #28/29, 1987; pp. 18 - 20.
- ¹⁸ The word used here in French is *ressenti* which means both 'felt' and 'resented.' [trans. note].
- ¹⁹ cf. «La clinique de l'objet dans la realite psychique.» *Actes de l'E.C.F.* #19, 1991; p. 99.
- ²⁰ Jacques-Alain Miller. Course given through the Department of Psychoanalysis, University of Paris VIII, (1986 -87). Unpublished; lesson of April 29, 1987.
- ²¹ cf. Genevieve Morel. «Symptome et Nom-du-pere.» *La Cause freudienne* XXI, 1992.
- ²² Colette Soler. «Rousseau le symbole.» *Ornicar?* #48, 1989; pp. 30 - 57.
- ²³ Jacques Aubert, Ed. «Joyce le symptome I.» *Joyce avec Lacan*. Navarin: Paris, 1987; p. 27.
- ²⁴ D. Cremlinger and J.-C. Maleval. «Contribution au diagnostique de la psychose.» *Ornicar?* #48, 1989; pp. 69 - 89.
- ²⁵ Serge Cottet. «Je suis un corps d'officier.» *Actes de l'E.C.F.* vol. XIII: Paris, 1987; p. 12.
- ²⁶ «Joyce le symptome I.» *Op.cit.*; pp. 33 and 48.
- ²⁷ J.-C. Maleval. «L'excellence de la maladie mentale.» *La Cause freudienne* #22: Paris, 1992; pp. 92 - 98.