

Iteration of the Symptom: Of the One of Jouissance

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At the end of an analysis one encounters remnants like condensed words that are being repeated. To say the same thing in an analysis is to come up against the real while at the same time wanting to move past it. In my analysis I often stumbled upon encounters with the impossible and I always sought to overcome them. Thus, the question of the body and of the anxiety related to what the body expresses as painful symptoms always underpinned my analysis. The body was the site of an irreducible, opaque jouissance. The body was that which resisted analysis, that which could not cross a zone; it was a bit like the "occupied zone" of my childhood, an incomprehensible signifier. The body stayed in the occupied zone, prevented as it was from crossing over to the other side and reaching the freedom it was unable to enjoy. This is why the following sentence from Lacan's lectures delivered at American universities speaks to me: "Man could say that he is a body and this would be very sensible," and further: "On the other hand, man does not stress that he is a body, but rather that he has one. And this body, he adds, is treated with indifference; man treats his body like a piece of furniture; he packs it on board a train and he happily enjoys the ride" (Lacan 1976: 49). So there were the bodies packed on death trains, and there is the body that one has; the body that manufactures symptoms so that one becomes alive, and the live body one leans upon to feel that one exists.

One etc...

Iteration is an etc. Lacan says in his Seminar *Le Sinthome*. There is a repetition inherent in the symptom that is written as "dot dot dot." It is not a word that is being repeated, but rather a symptom that iterates. Iteration is an action that repeats a process. Each time the event is being repeated it is as though it was the first time. It is being repeated with regard to the identical. Jacques-Alain Miller has dubbed it "*semelfactif*," which means one single time.

At the AMP congress, Eric Laurent called "rumour" the way a mother kept blaming the birth of her child for her suffering. This rumour left a trace in the infant's unconscious and

affected its body. In "Or worse," Lacan says: "knowledge affects the body of the speaking being in that it fragments its jouissance—cutting it up so that fragments of it fall and produce what I call object a" (Lacan 2001: 550). The illegible knowledge of the mother's speech had affected the subject's body, fragmenting its jouissance along the way, thereby cutting up the body and fixing jouissance on the oral zone since it was precisely that which was traumatised at the very start of life. Thus I consider that maternal speech, injurious as it may have seemed to me in my analysis, turned out to be the vector of a fragmented jouissance—a jouissance that became fixated in one single locus of the body—on a rim—the oral zone. The mother's master signifiers settled down there to make up the subject's "lalangue."

In the course of one memorable session, the analyst's interpretation "you are an addict" named one form of addiction, the writing of the drives that iterates and does not stop analysing itself, a loop tying back this addictive rapport to speech, a jouissance endlessly reiterated in the analytic session. It was indeed related to maternal rumour. The addiction to speech came to say the jouissance of speaking beyond meaning. This addictive jouissance is articulated to the mother's lalangue as the echo of her words—words forever identical and beyond meaning. The only thing left was the resonant trace of her words that never ceased being repeated in the analytic setting.

The analysis has consisted of giving signification to the maternal message beyond meaning, in deciphering it until its fallacious truth could be heard. Analysis has reduced this message to its soul, of which Lacan says: "the soul of the symptom is something hard, like a bone" (Lacan 1976: 60). Despite the stop-gap produced by this interpretation, something remained impossible to name, and it concerned the body in its real dimension, the body-parasite whose symptoms became fixated on the margins of non-meaning—like a writing that cannot be read, a writing that ignores knowledge and which is not addressed to the Other.

At this point in time of my thinking about the difference between the maternal rumour as real cause of oral jouissance and the sinthome as "wrenching off," as mode of enjoyment that came to be written from the paternal sentence "if it's a girl

we'll throw her out the window," I single out maternal rumour as having imprinted the trace of jouissance on one of the body's rims.

The beyond meaning of the paternal sentence

It is an enigma that I never worked on during my analysis. But what precise status can one give to this mechanism? It is not repression, because I've always known this sentence. No sense could be made of it. It has thus remained empty, neither forgotten nor remembered, like a letter that one does not want to open for fear of not being able to ascertain what it contains. It has remained a blank letter—impossible to read. It has not been communicated to the Other; it has not been possible to historicise it in the dialectic of analytic discourse. It has remained fixed, and as such it constitutes a defence against the real. This reveals that the status of the paternal sentence is different from the status of the maternal rumour which the subject has not ceased to want to analyse, understand and symbolise and which has been granted a response in the transferential unconscious. Here, there is something like a hole. The sentence has remained outside of its own historical dimension.

J.A. Miller speaks of the "inhistorisable" in his course on the "leave in French" in his seminar about the "Uns du laps" (Miller 1990: 14). He argues that from the moment we try to explain the theory of the unconscious as expounded in the later Lacan, a theory which does not hinge on hysteria and history, but rather on psychosis, everything changes. He bases his argument on Lacan's commentary on Freud's Verneinung, with particular reference to the Wolf Man's hallucination of the cut finger. A hallucination is a phenomenon that escapes history and the historical, subjective, and semantic refashioning of truth. It puts into question the primary dimension of historicisation, pointing to a breach in historicisation. In order for it to be historicised, one element must have been symbolised. Primary historicisation is only possible if there is primary symbolisation. Drawing on the letter of Freud's text, Lacan concludes that what returns in hallucinations is a content that has not been symbolised, something that has escaped primary symbolisation, and which is therefore, in the light of Miller's paper and this analysis, unhistoricisable. Where history supposes that there is some

primary symbolisation, negation takes the form of repression whereas the real is the consequence of the operation of forclusion. On the one hand we have the mechanism of neurosis and on the other, that of psychosis.

In that same text, J.A. Miller draws attention to the opposition that Lacan makes between remembrance and reminiscence. There is remembering when an element is brought back together with its symbolic articulation whereas the feeling of unreality "corresponds to the immemorial forms that appear on the palimpsest of the imaginary." (Lacan 2006: 327) "Immemorial forms" means here that we are not in the register of memory, but on the contrary, in something that is already all by itself. These immemorial forms appear "when the text, leaving off"—outside the symbolic text—"lays bare the medium of reminiscence" (Lacan 2006: 327). This means that the subject is then unable to elaborate any truth from his or her experience. Remembering is situated on the side of signifying networks, of chains brought about by the symbolic whereas reminiscence is left blank.

This difference between remembrance and reminiscence opens up an interesting reading of the paternal sentence. It became frozen outside of time, the trace of a real that was impossible to say—as if it had been written on a parchment that has disappeared without any trace. I am not saying that there was forclusion of the paternal sentence, but I nonetheless use this compass towards the real in order to say that it has been maintained in a zone between repression and rejection. It is therefore akin to some immemorial form, in its unreal guise, withdrawn as "one all alone." It is the signifier "throw out" that found resonance in the body of the subject. I had never made the connection between this signifier and the sense of my body falling, an experience I'd had as far back as I can remember, but this enabled me to do so: once the sentence was put into context, it obviously came to resonate with the symptom in the body. In a way this sentence is a response from the real. It became inscribed in the body and not on the rim of the body as I was able to show with the maternal rumour. In this case the whole body was affected. The sensation of falling, of vertigo which necessitates that one seeks in oneself the inverse movement that enables a freedom from it, that is form primary ejection;

I have called this "a wrenching out from the real" (Bonnaud 2012: 112).

This wrenching out from the real suggests how the paternal signifier "throw out the window" has functioned as S1 in the body through pure resonance in the body. This body is then an object that was allowed to, or made to, fall; it was ejected—ejected from its own body as having. This wrenching demonstrates that we have a body because one can lose it. We have it all the more because we fear being let down by it. The experience of this particular sinthome is that of the body that gives way; a sensation that leaves the subject on the brink of the hole.

Thus if unconscious knowledge is a lucubration sourced from maternal language, the real unconscious is marked by an event of the body. The one partakes of fallacious truth right to the bone while the other of the sinthome as iterating has no meaning and cannot be crossed. It is a jouissance that puts into brackets one's whole life. The sinthome is not the return of the repressed; it cannot be appeased with truth or meaning. It is a jouissance that is produced in the body and that excludes the Other of truth. The body, in this example, is commanded by its own jouissance.

| When Lacan reduces the sinthome to "Yad'l'Un," he draws attention to the real as iteration, as kernel, as centre, as that which remains of signifying articulation. He meant that there is not—the body. This is why Lacan suggested that the Other of the signifier is the body. Beyond the signifier there is the body and its jouissance. Analysis enables us to seek its real causality and to get a glimpse of it. For the real cannot be resolved. It can be demonstrated, which is not of the same register. To demonstrate this is what guides my work as analyst of the school. It is some symptomatic remnant, for psychoanalysis is a knowledge about this bit of the real which is the body as parasite—its little apparatus—which accompanies my lucubration.

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