

## You cannot choose to go insane

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We have countless heard and repeated the phrase by Lacan:

*“qu’y renonce donc plutôt celui qui ne peut rejoindre à son horizon la subjectivité de son époque”*, i.e. better give up psychoanalysis if one cannot unite to one’s own horizon the subjectivity of today. What we now have to live with is an ongoing affront to the speaking being’s narcissism, where the rapport with the lack needed to produce a subject is staggering.

What might have been the outcomes of enduring such a dire sequence - a pandemic, a world war threat, a peak of neoliberalism gone wild - on the so called border line pathologies where, as the invitation to this Congress states, that *verges on irreversible fringes*? And at another planetary time, the one of Heidegger’s Neo-Nazism, defined from a different position in this society of performance where, past everything else, Arendt’s *animal laborans* is?

I will focus on my book *“No se vuelve loco el que quiere”* (Letra Viva, 2011 - You cannot choose to go insane), on what we have named narcissistic non psychotic conditions. It is important to note that a concern for this kind of cases is already present in Freud, who pinpoints very specifically: severe neuroses not amenable to transference love. Not too long ago, at a convening of *Lapsus Calami*, an important publication by *Convergence*, we witnessed a conversation between Roland Chemama and Anabel Salafia. Freud taught us: they are **refractory to transference neurosis** such as we conceive it within the neuroses framework. In *“Beyond the Pleasure Principle”*, Freud teaches us that the apparatus may lack the screener needed to constitute the anti-stimulus barrier of a person who has experienced highly traumatic situations: war neuroses, severe anguish neuroses. Protection against external stimuli

fails, and hypertrophic levels of excitement enter into play. As noted at the beginning, we wonder what happens during periods when exogenously caused excitement levels are able to penetrate the weak barrier such cases exhibit, cases where we also know that the function of the ghost will fail because desire does not hold. And to stay with Freud, in "*Neurosis and Psychosis*" (1923), he discriminates narcissistic neuroses which make up major psychoses from neuroses which do not. Freud's above posit enables us to refer to narcissistic non psychotic conditions.

Transference attains specular levels that resemble a true battle. This is why Freud's 1919 text *Zur Psychoanalyse der Kriegsneurosen* accounts for the manner in which the Ego is embraced by the drive, and how the former, taken up by the drive, hampers the loss- of-the-object relation. This internal war, in our opinion, is reinforced by the external war unfolding these days, because the history of traumatizing experiences which these subjects brandish as the truth, is reinforced by the ill-fated horizon of our times.

Which essential form of lack is at play in these cases? It is the *Versagung*, the unsatisfied demand turned unbearable, reduced barely to a need. The narcissistic disturbance undoubtedly affects how the imaginary is registered, then what we hear is an imaginary reduced to the specular, shattered almost.

What place would then remain for object a, knowing that it is not specularizable? What place for desire? How could an intervention from the symbolic ever produce a hole? A few days ago, a patient wrote to me "*...my father has a disease, I have to take care of him, I'm an ass, the one ass that has to do that, there's no one else, and my mother is in hospital (they are separated). Every one of you is to blame*". The enjoyment of the Other consists and exists. In our message exchange (remainders still of pandemic whatsapp conferencing) I tell her that I do not accept her *every one of you is to blame*, as this text was clearly meant for the many analysts in her history; she answers "*Excuse me*", and she goes on to explain about her parents; on saying good bye, she

adds “*Thank you for having listened to me, I love you*”. Working on the frustration of enjoyment creates a transient passage to the frustration of love, transient because it will be repeated. There is a very pertinacious temporary stasis.

As a result of my long-standing clinical experience with children, in these cases I am able to hear that a lived experience of pain too early on, repeats itself without a successfully operating, to say it shortly, primary defense - borrowing the *Project's* terms. As Anabel Salafia rightly analyses, taking the *Project* and her article “*The denial*” (1925), it may be concluded that instinctual dis-intrication accounts for the failure of structural denial, and that this absence-distance of the Thing is relative. Which allows us to suppose that *Bejahung*, the primordial affirmation, is also fragile. As well as is the relation of the I to the Ideal, a first seal, first signifier mark, the assent sign of the Other which will ensure the production of *Einziges Zug*, a unary trait. All of the above is not rid of consequences related to what Lacan will define as *enforme of a* in his Seminar *From an Other to the other*, since this *enforme of a* will determine what he poses as the malicious effects of the imaginary. The *enforme of a* accounts for the place of *object a* which the subject has occupied in the Desire of the Other. Instinctual substitutions are reduced to objects of the oral and anal demand, i.e. voice and gaze, objects of desire, taking up the most extreme forms of the Super Ego, and becoming fixed in that modality. In certain cases, having been shit in the parental desire, may be almost common place. This is what early rejection is all about when it may not be elaborated, which Lacan takes up in his *Conference on the Symptom*, despite the belated inscription.

When the *Versagung* is disturbed - the lack shaped as frustration, the minus phi which is an operational and libidinal reserve and which makes the phalus become a metaphor under the aegis of the Ideal- it is also affected in its operation, and then in turn the bodily image is impacted. The same patient: “*I am shit, I can't go on vacation, I have*

*no husband, no children*"; object a, which should be in the flower vase hole, is full of shit.

It brings to mind how the *Project* ends, where Freud places the possibility to detect logical errors in the function of the normal Ego, something specifically identified in these patients, who frequently place themselves as an exception or otherwise belonging in that statute Hegel denominated *kind-hearted men*, or the *beautiful soul which cannot stand world evils*. In these last two paragraphs of *Project*, Freud wonders how it is that those logical errors do not allow us to cope with displeasure and then the *Not des Lebens*, urgency of life, is disturbed; and, of course, also the *Nebenmensch*, that is to say, the relation to the other that one harbors inside. In *Terminable and Interminable Analysis*, Freud tells us that the normal Ego is an ideal fiction and that the abnormal Ego is, unfortunately, not a fiction". Truth, as a fictional structure, is achieved. I cite the work of Solal Rabinovitch, initiated in *La folie du transfert* and in *L'Ange, le fou, le savant et le psychanalyste*. The analyst is responsible for the analysand's desire. The non forclusive Name of the Father, with a cut resulting from some intervention, will perhaps allow a better naming of things from the symbolic, farther from the Thing. Attenuating the imaginary, making a symbolic mark there so that the specular will not invade it, is a serious obstacle because the Subject Supposed to Know has not been constituted, in most cases; however, the analyst's body is definitely involved in the cure. Silence, the maximum abstinence, or the setting of a limit from the symbolic operate on the real of "*in those terms, I cannot listen*", the phallic enjoyment implies a prohibition and, perhaps, this is how a *bien dire* is produced, which we may assume supportive of desire from a different perspective.

It is the law of the word which is at stake, given that at this point signifier logic stumbles. It is the law of the word, articulated with the Tables of the Law, that will consent a different knotting, where we presume that the knot or the braid will enable, if

there's luck, for just moments, a new imaginary. Which is no small achievement; the question is the word of the Thing.