

CONVERGENCE 2023 Barcelona

"Desire and the Real"

"Language is inhabited... but lack isn't. It can instead reside anywhere. It resides within object a, not in the other space in which the facets of deception unfold". J. Lacan.

Seminar XII.

We know that desire, as a power of pure loss and a way of identification with the lack, primarily relies on the image: it is born and sustained by it. That is how the articulation of desire in demand involves from the outset the validity of the symbolic and the significance of the imaginary.

The first statute of desire, concerning the object of desire, relies on the image, not without the signifier. The mirror is inscribed in the field of the Other; object a appears here as the object of desire, installed by a demand, a residue of a linguistic operation on the Real, in which object a, as the object of desire, carries the mark of the signifier from the Other.

The object of desire is in consonance with the initial dialectic of the signifier in as much as it is sustained by the non-response of the Other.

It is thus the indispensable gap in the symbolic that allows this non-response, which will make room for the subject via the birth of the signifier, determining that subsequently, the subject will be oriented towards the reconquest of an original unknown.

The desire of the subject lacks a common measure with the desire of the Other, although it includes the x of the Other's demand, since "I know nothing about the desire of the Other but its instrument." That is how the function of the phallus arises as a mediator between demand and desire: as the signifier of the lack, it will give desire its support, since "That desire of the Other, which the subject is forced to recognize, is the Other insofar as he is a divided subject of the signifying spaltung" (1).

In the case of this support in the image for desire, it is necessary to emphasize that

here the phallus operates as the signifier of desire and, consequently, it will also be a matter of the structure of the lack involved in the operation of castration as a generator of waiting, interval, and silence. The object *a* will thus arise as an effect of a relationship that, starting from the subject's demand to the desire of the Other, will make the dimension of desire emerge.

The second statute of desire, the one that interests me to point out, will imply a radical shift by placing *a* as a cause, an object that is neither specularizable nor significant. It is the support relative to the Real in loss.

This is a second cut: here desire separates from the demand of the Other.

It is the setting of desire towards the new.

This object is indeed linked to its necessary lack, where the subject is constituted in the place of the Other, that is, as far away as possible... *Urverdrängung*, the irreducibility of the unknown, situates Lacan.

Beyond the image, then, the object is a cause as a pulsional real, residue of *jouissance* for desire.

What can be said about the object as cause? Lacan taught us that it is the object that is behind desire. In principle, this implies that the *a* is considered in an essential precession, that is to say, as an antecedent, which leads us to primary repression, which corresponds to an absence of representation in the unconscious, which will consequently define the relationship between the subject and their desire.

We can then consider the *Urverdrängung* in the sense of an absence of representation.

We search for the subject in another way, not through the means in which a signifier represents the subject for another signifier, that is, through everything related to what allows substitution.

However, while the symbolic separates the subject from the Other via castration, and this possibility of situating it with respect to the Other liberates it, this liberation is not

enough, since the roots of jouissance in the real will only be touched when we undertake the path towards the hidden and its vestiges, shown through what repetition evidences in its turns.

We will seek the subject through that which in discourse barely makes noise. It is a matter of the orography of the real, where it is no longer a question of the image but of the limit of the specular image: of what makes a border on it, what protrudes.

It is necessary to listen to the subject beyond representation: it will be through the object-cause that we will see the core of the jouissance that traps it.

Why this intricate relationship? It is a matter of the incognizable nature of desire, of its real kernel that arises from what we do not know about the Other, what is not linked to either the signifier or representation, what is yet to be said, everything that we ignore about our position as the real, that which precedes us, unknown, that for which there was no answer.

If we talk about the a, it is always a matter of writing. "The subject as much as the Other... cannot suffice as subjects of necessity or objects of love, but must occupy the place of the cause of desire" (2).

The subject as an effect of the cut will have a real of jouissance.

"Desire thus constitutes itself first and foremost, by its nature, as that which is hidden from the Other by structure. It is the impossible for the Other and constitutes itself as the part of the demand that is hidden from the Other, that which guarantees nothing... becomes the veil...the principle of the concealment of the very place of desire, and it is there that the object will take cover."

"On the side of the Other, nothing is certain except that he hides, that he covers something that is this object." (3)

The dimension of desire will arise with the advent of the object-cause as an effect of the subject's demand relationship to the Other's desire.

This is how the demand points to the Other's desire, as desire is directed towards the Other's demand. There, two demands are not confused. As long as the Other demands not to know, desire will emerge as "The intersection of what cannot be said in the two demands" (4).

What emerges as desire is then that which is impossible for the Other, that which is hidden from them, since the Other concerns my desire insofar as it lacks something. If the relationship with the Other is specified by demand, starting from a deeper separation between the imaginary and the symbolic, we can name a desire that will put a stop to the imaginary of the demand in order to enclose the incognizable. It will be a question of situating the enjoyment of the Other as pure real that was not processed, since it is that enjoyment untouched by the symbolic that will become the edge of the image, scripturally. That enjoyment of the Other as pure real that will remain hidden until the operation of repetition shows the proper orography of the real. However, it would still be necessary to clarify that the object-cause indicates that the subject is constituted in the place of the Other but without support in the image, since what is at stake is its edge, letter, testimony of the extraction of enjoyment. The invention of "a" as cause is one of the high-value milestones that Lacan offers us, as one more step in reducing, from the cure that calls us, the deceit that inhabits us as subjects.

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