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### *Logical Time and Jouissance*

I would like to discuss Lacan's text of 1945, which in French is entitled "Le Temps Logique et l'assertion de certitude anticipée" and I would like to translate this title as "Logical Time and the Assertion of Anticipated Certitude" [(1966)197, (1988) 4]. I will begin by giving you the essential structure of the logical sophism that Lacan develops.

This text is centered on what modern game theorists call a prisoner's dilemma. In this particular problem, there are three prisoners in a jail, and the authorities need to set one free. Thus, they decide to subject the prisoners to a logical game that puts at stake the prisoners' freedom and thus their lives.

The director of the prison states that he has three white disks and two black disks, and that he is going to place one disk between the shoulders of each subject in such a way that the subject cannot see his own disk, but he can see the other's. The director rules out all forms of communication between the subjects and all possibility of a prisoner's being able to mirror himself. Thus, the Imaginary is essentially excluded. The director continues by informing the subjects that the first one who determines the color of his own disk must exit from the prison and declare his color and then must give a logical explanation for his divination. The first prisoner who fulfills these requirements will be set free.

The director then secretly gives each prisoner a white disk and he leaves them to determine the solution to the problem. To analyze this logical dilemma, Lacan first establishes the givens for each subject. First of all, there are only three possible combinations of disks. 1) three whites; 2) two whites and a black; 3) one white and two blacks. Lacan then names each subject by a letter A, B, and C, and he calls prisoner A "The Real Subject" [(1966)199; (1988) 6] and subjects B and C the other subjects of reflection. Furthermore,

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Lacan divides the sophism into three logical times, which I will translate as the 1) instant of the gaze or look; 2) the time for understanding; 3) the moment to conclude.

In the primary time of the instant of the look, each subject sees two whites and therefore the first possibility (two blacks and a white) is excluded for each subject. Thus, each subject makes the same *logical exclusion*. However, we also find out that nothing has been resolved and that the problem remains and thus one needs time for understanding. But before we enter into this second time, let us point out that in the original instant of the look, what is important is that which *each subject doesn't see*, that is, the excluded black disks. Lacan calls this *initial evidence* "the given of the problem" [(1966) 202; (1988) 9] and he connects it to an original interdiction, 'that is the combination of three blacks.

All of the knowledge or rather non-knowledge that is received in this initial time, must be formulated on the level of *the impersonal pronoun* 'one.' Lacan gives the phrase "to be in front of two blacks, one knows that one is white" [(1966)104; (1988)11] and adds that this phrase is related to the Real un-known of the problem, which is the *ignored attribute of the subject himself*. I will call this ignored attribute the Name-of-the-Father or the phallus, and I will attempt to show how Lacan is already formulating the logic of *foreclosure*.

For in this time of the Real look, the subject is without a signifier to localize his ex-citations and his perceptions. Lacan calls this subject the noetic subject [(1966) 207; (1988) 14]; it could be God, a table or a wash-bowl, thus it is the Freudian thing, that we can call *the it (id)*, the subject in his stupid and *ineffable ex-istence (S)*.

This Real subject is taken in the negation of foreclosure that Freud developed in the concept of psychotic *projection* and which Lacan articulates through the axiom: that which is rejected in the Symbolic returns in the Real. In order to illustrate this, Lacan gives the example of the Wolfman, who has rejected the symbolization of castration and thus hallucinates in the Real, that he has virtually cut off his finger. Freud argues that in projection, the subject perceives an 'internal thought or representation' as an *external perception*. This formulation allows Lacan to state that the object (*a*) of an hallucination is the voice or the look, that returns in the Real. Thus, in this primary time of the look, we have the elaboration of a logical exclusion that must be labeled foreclosure.

This foreclosure, is itself attached to the *fundamental* phantasm of the subject. In the case of the dream of the Wolfman, where suddenly his window opens and he sees, in an instant, the wolves

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that look at him; he is in a state of anxiety and division because he does not know what the Other desires of him. That is to say, that the anxiety of the look is caused by the indetermination of the desire of the Other. For only the phallus or the Name-of-the-Father can determine one's desire.

What I am attempting to do here is to show you the logic of several of Freud's central concepts. Thus, there is a primary form of negation which is called foreclosure, projection, or primary repression. It is related to the fundamental phantasm and the primary process of hallucination.

### **Time for Understanding**

Let us now move onto the time for understanding, which is the second logical period. In this time, each subject observes the behavior of the other two subjects. Remember, this time is structured by the binary choice between two possible combinations (two whites and a black or three whites). Lacan argues that, in this time, each subject reasons: "If I was a black, the two whites that I see, would not hesitate to *recognize themselves as*

*being white*" [(1966) 205; (1988) 11], Lacan calls this an intuition where the subject objectivates something more than the givens of the game. This time is defined by the meaning that it gives and the limit that it sets in the termination of a movement. That is to say, the hesitation becomes a signal of the inertia the subject recognizes in his specular other. For each subject is divided between the unconscious fear of "if I was a black" and the desire to be the first to leave. The hesitation shows the subject is caught between a coming and a going that re-presents two opposing forces.

The subject in the time for understanding is caught in an obsessional structure where, on the level of his narcissistic ego (where narcissism and cognitive speculation are one), the subject imagines and anticipates what the others are thinking and seeing. Lacan declares that this subject is undefined except for his reciprocity, which is shown by the mutual suspension of an action. He calls this level of reciprocity, subjective transitivity, in order to connect it to the mirror stage. For this subject only recognizes himself through the attributes that he discovers in an other. This relation of reciprocity therefore locks the subject into a game of specular rivalry that is dominated by jealousy and can only be undermined when the subject affirms himself as an "I."

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However, let us not lose sight of the other side of the obsessional discourse that Lacan will later call the symptom of doubt and hesitation. For if the subjects don't act, it is because they know that the others are looking at them, and they are afraid of the possibility that they might have a black disk. Thus we must ask what is this black disk in the time of understanding?

We can begin by stating that his disk of difference represents that which the subject can't see or understand but causes a certain amount of anxiety. We can also attach it to the anal object of loss and sin. Lacan, in another text, gives the example of a blocked writer who is in face of an empty white page and in his anxiety imagines himself to be a piece of shit for the other. But if we want to think of the hesitation on the level of the symptom, we must combine these two approaches and see how this doubt is in itself a re-action to the anxiety that is caused by the anal object. What does the subject see when he becomes fixated on a stain, of something that he has spilled or left behind? Let us think of Lady Macbeth and the stain that she tries to efface. This stain represents not only the trace of a crime, but also the impossibility of effacing a fault. This impossibility is most evident in the obsessional discourse, where the subject is always trying to correct some wrong that has been committed long ago. In *Hamlet*, we see this connection with the death of the father and the debt to the father. This connection is also made in Freud's Ratman case where a scene of the subject's debt is ultimately connected to a scene of the father's debt.

Of course Freud connects the Ratman's fear of this father's death, to the Ratman's unconscious desire to rid himself of his father's influence and interdictions. This structure repeats the classical Oedipal situation where the love for the other is interdicted by the law of the father, and thus the subject desires to kill his father and sleep with his mother. In the case of the Ratman, this structure is manifested by the phrase, "If I see a woman naked, my father will die" [162]. The father who stands for the third term that breaks up the specular relation with the other is repressed and re-returns in the obsessional symptom. The thought "if I was a black" is a pure idea that attempts to anticipate the worst possible situation. In this structure we have the clear opposition between the narcissistic demand for peace, love and understanding, and the unconscious desire to affirm the death of the Other.

This desire for the death of the Other must be seen as a symptomatic localization of ex-citation and a result of the repression of the rejected object. We must think of this symptom as being auto

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erotic and autistic; that is, cut-off from the relation with the Other (signifier). For the symptom rejects the desire of the Other.

## The Moment to Conclude

Let us turn now to the third logical time, which is called the moment of concluding. Here, each subject concludes that he must be a white because he sees that the other subjects hesitate and, thus, they must be in front of two whites. This subject must now act in a hurry in order to beat out the Other subjects who must be coming to the same conclusion. Each subject thus uses the same logic and affirms with equal certainty that he is a white.

Lacan calls this act of certainty a subjective judgment that is motivated by a certain state of anxiety and urgency. The subject can only act in a moment of haste when he moves beyond his fixated specular relation with the other. We have here the generation of the social "I" or I-deal, beyond the mirror stage, and Lacan relates this certitude of the I to the temporal tension of a logical necessity. For the fear of the Other pushes the subject towards his conclusion and this fear, in turn, is derived from a state of competition in which each subject must anticipate his own certitude. Lacan calls this anticipation of certitude the fundamental form of a collective logic and, at the end of this text, he sends the reader to Freud's *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*.

In this text, Freud declares that the essence of every social relation is taken in the structure of hypnosis, love and transference. The difficulty of this third logical time is this: it is removed from our normal reference to the intentionality of the subject. Instead, we are dealing with the intentionality of the Other. A central question that one can pose to Freud is why the subject gives up his comfortable relationship of narcissism and specular identity for the affirmation of his I-deal in the structure of castration and the principle of reality. In other words, why does the subject leave the secondary state of the Imaginary in order to affirm himself in the Symbolic order? How is heterosexuality possible?

The answer to all of these questions circles around the Lacanian notion that one's desire is determined by the desire of the Other. Thus, in the discourse of the Master, we find that the essential relation of language, that is the articulation between signifiers, is taken in the relation between the subject and the Other. I would like to argue that this structure is the structure of the *pere-version* (the

movement towards the Father or Nom-du-pere). For if we turn to Freud's text on the fetish, we find out that in the perverse act, the subject identifies with the position of the father in the act of castration. We might ask, at this moment, what is castration exactly, and how it relates to logical time? I will say that castration represents the desire and the intentionality of the Other. This desire demands a subjective sacrifice that reduces the subject to the level of a blind and helpless object.

The pervert identifies with the law that he enforces and the object that attempts to resist that law at the same time. This law, in itself, represents a political order that can only be enacted through an act of violence or transgression. Thus, the sadist is both the source of a law and the one who transgresses that law. Lacan makes this same argument in his text on The Family, when he states that the Father represents the enforcement of the primary law against incest, but he himself transgresses that law in his relation to his wife [50].

Furthermore, the Name-of-the-Father or the phallus re-presents the determination of the desire of the Other through its relation to the incestuous cause of desire. Everyone desires what they cannot have - the mother - except for the Father who only desires what he has, the phallus. In this sense the phallus and The Woman are the same thing. They both stand for a signifier of sexual ex-citation. Of course, Lacan will later state that there is no signifier of jouissance and thus the Other does not exist.

But the question still remains regarding how and why one affirms oneself to be a man and to have the phallus. I believe the Lacanian response to this question is that the subject has no choice, or rather that his choice is forced.

With the sophism of logical time, the subjects, in the final moment of concluding, affirm their I-deal and state: "I am a man because I am afraid to be convinced that I am not." In this phrase we have an echo of Lacan's statement in "Kant avec Sade": "Thank God for Poland, for without Poland the Polish people would not exist" [767]. This political i-identification with the Other is based on each subject's putting the same object in the place of their ego-Ideal. Thus, in the sophism, the object (a) - the black disk - that causes haste (and hate) is placed in the same position as the I-deal, which says I am white. That is to say, in hypnotism and in the structure of perversion, there is a confusion between the object (the black disc) and the Master signifier (the white disc).

## Logic/Jouissance

What I am trying to do here is to read "Kant avec Sade" into the structure of the moment of concluding. This articulation between the hypothetical imperative of Kant and the black fetish of Sade, unites the two central elements of Freudian discourse together. These are language and libido, or the signifier and jouissance. In fact, I think we could change the title of one of Freud's best known texts Civilization and its Discontents, to Civilization and jouissance. Thus, between the discourse of the unconscious in the moment of concluding and the object of the drive in the instant of the gaze, we find the fundamental dialectic of Freudian theory

## The Fourth Logical Time of Analysis: object a

This dialectic can never be resolved, but it can be dis-solved. Thus, with Lacan, we begin to see the articulation of a fourth logical time that is centered on the Interpretation of the object (a). This object is taken as the cause of the discourse of the analyst, and it is seen by Lacan to be a complete reversal of the discourse of the Master. Lacan articulates this reversal in the Four *Fundamental Concepts*, when he states that analysis is like an upside-down hypnosis. For Lacan argues that hypnosis is based on the conjunction between the I and the (a) and that the end of analysis is based on a separation between the two. That is to say, the analyst must become the object (a) for the analysand at the end of analysis, but an object (a) that is detached from all forms of I-identification with the master signifier. Thus the beyond of identification, as the creation of distance between the (a) and I, is the same as the traversing of the phantasm. This separation is only possible if the analyst's desire isolates the object in relation to the drive and this isolation can only occur if the analyst refuses all forms of I-identification.

Perhaps our sophism lacks this moment of reversal for it ends in the subjective assertion of the I of identification. "I am white." But any careful analyst, will know how to look for the object which is both excluded and included by the discourse of the Other, which in this case is the object (a) as gaze and black disk. For Lacan will call the gaze an ink-blot that is anterior to the looking subject but represents the initial scene of the world that is to be seen. If Lacan has left the black disks in the text on logical time on the side, he attempts to re-constitute this object in his later work.

Thus we find in the "Seminar on 'The Purloined Letter,'" Lacan's attempt to isolate the role of the object (a). The object is a letter, as opposed to a signifier, which Lacan defines as that which represents a subject for another signifier. Furthermore, this object is the obstacle to every discourse as well as its material referent.

In Lacan's addition to this text, he formalizes what he calls the overdetermination of the Symbolic function in four logical times. He indicates that the fourth time relates to the first time and tries to account for what is excluded by the second and third times. "One can demonstrate that to fix the first and fourth terms of a series, there will always be a letter, whose possibility will be excluded by the two intermediary terms . . ." [49]. Lacan continues by calling this excluded letter, the "*caput mortuum*" of the signifier. That is to say an unusable residue whose contour is continually repeated. We have here the Freudian drive that always turns around the object that it simultaneously excludes and includes.

Lacan attaches this structure to the object of the drive, because it represents the impossible relation between the Real subject of *jouissance* [the first logical time] and the Symbolic Other of civilization [the third logical time]. This non-relation between the subject and the Other is most often hidden by the second time of Imaginary understanding.

Lacan's sophism of 1945 thus articulates the logical movement from the Real [the instant of the look], to the Imaginary [the time for understanding] to the Symbolic [the moment to conclude]. By placing the object *a* into this structure as a fourth logical moment, we can read this text as Lacan's pass, where he attempts to determine a logic for his own end of analysis. That is to say, by equating the position of the analyst with the excluded-included object or black disc, we find that the end of analysis is centered on an interpretation of the presence and desire of the analyst. For it is this presence, which is contained in and yet exceeds the Real, the Imaginary and the Symbolic.

The question of the end of analysis, then becomes the question of how one can exit from the prison of language. Lacan's solution to this problem is centered on his logic of exclusion and his theory of separation. For it is the door of the Other that the subject must cross in order to become the object of analysis.

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