

O, a, S1, S2, Body, as Determinants of Transference

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If we want to represent the variants of the experience of the transference with Lacanian mathemes, clearly we must start with the status of the Other and of the object *a* in their respective relationships. Not only the type of alterity manifested by the Other in the structure, but also whether or not the young subject enters a discourse – based on the master signifier S1 that represents the subject or not (if he does not enter a discourse) – all depends on whether or not he is connected with the S2 of the Other.

Four cases of figures, defined on the basis of the Other and the *a*, correspond respectively to the normal structure of infantile neurosis, to psychosis, to autism, and to a fourth, retardation (*débilité*).

I. The Normal Structure of Infantile Neurosis

$(O + a) \Phi \emptyset (O - a) \Phi (I + S_1) \Phi (S_2 + S) + (-\Phi) = S(\emptyset)$ and Sa .

1) $(O + a)$: Developing the formula means trying to write the sequence that goes from the mythic Other, non-divided insofar

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as it is the bearer of the object $(O + a)$, to the division of the subject between his relation to the lost object in the fantasy and his relation to the Other of the signifier marked by lack $S(\emptyset)$. This trajectory develops via a passage that is bound up with the specularity of the mirror stage.

At the beginning, two objects come from the Other: the voice and the gaze. For the baby, it is (*ça*) “that speaks about him” and “that looks at him, or concerns him.” In a first moment, these real objects, the voice and the gaze, come from the Other. But in a second time, after a few days, the situation will be inverted either by the cry of the subject or by its untroubled gaze, as well as by the breast *qua* object of satisfaction. This inversion poses the infant’s lack as that which passes through the demand, $S D$. This demand is the demand made to the Other for the object. For that reason, the Other responds by its presence, not only to the drive beyond the need, but also by its word, making a call of the infant’s cry. When play enters the picture, the fall of the object installs it in the knot created by the relation of the body and *jouissance*, making of the object “a condenser of *jouissance* insofar as it is stolen from the body by the regulation of pleasure.”¹

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This cannot happen between the mother and the child except through the process of transference, a process which is clearly indissociable from the creation of meaning. This process goes all the way from the precocious entry of repetition into the signifier up to the repetition of what is linked to it by *jouissance*. And this part of the subject’s being that is the object *a*, its part of the real, will never yield its whole place to the signifier, since this object causes his or her desire. The subject’s being comes from there.

The child must be first assured of this division at the level of the Other. But in a *first* moment, however mythic it may be, this division is not assured. For that very reason, there is no prior Other one might designate as a place of the signifier from which the *a* would have already fallen. By contrast, if it has not fallen, this proves that it is separable from the Other. It is in this sense, then, that we write that there is normally $(O + a)$.

Nadia shows this at two points in her treatment. She is visibly astonished the first time she grabs my finger and discovers that it is not separable from my body. This surprises her, despite the fact that she has already experienced a completed separation from my voice, since I speak to her. She has also

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experienced a completed separation from my gaze which she so ardently sought the first time she saw me, and about which I made much ado.

We may recall the second time, the scene of December 5th, when she clasped her hands on my bosom as if she wanted to remove the object which she supposes that I carry. At that moment, *her* signifier, in the form of the jaculation “mama,” intervened the first time.

Does that mean that we can only situate the Other’s loss of the *a* at this moment – i.e. when Nadia says “mama?” That would mean setting little value on the signifiers Nadia had already heard through my voice and would especially indicate a confusion of these signifiers with my voice; that is to say, a confusion of the signifier with the real. And, as we shall see, this would be not to even raise my voice to the level of an object in the field of the Other, but to take it into herself as the psychotic does.

On the other hand, in its logical function, the *a* — as voice — empties the object of its substance; that is to say, it opens the passage of the real to the signifier, at the place of the Other itself: We go from $(O + a)$ to $(O - a)$, that is to say, to \emptyset .

This \emptyset is doubly determined, then: On the one hand,

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it is determined in the real by the separable character of the object. And on the other hand, after the fall of the object, it finds the place of the signifier as Other. This is what we have called “The Birth of the Other.”

Because the signifier makes a hole in the real of the Other by the demand, an Other, perforated by virtue of the signifier, succeeds the Other, bearer of the object. We have seen that the signifier starts out in the cry and goes all the way to the demand. Two registers are concerned in the here and now, then: the real of the object and the symbolic of the demand. The symbolic of the demand, beyond communication, guards against the danger of encountering an unbearable real hole of the Other. Such is the prefiguration of a lack; that is to say, the prefiguration of what will be at stake in castration under the form of the phallus where there is passage from the *jouissance* of the object to the signifier of *jouissance*.

As for the imaginary, that is to say the body, it will find its reckoning when the child, confronted with this perforated Other, proposes himself as an object to fill it up. It is then, and only then, that the child structures his Other in its alterity, while making himself the *enforme* of it, the shape, as Lacan says, of any object *a*, imaginary *enforme* of the subject's body in which

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the fantasy will participate later.

Nadia also illustrates this point on January 16th when, after touching all the objects in her session and having bumped into each one of them, and still not satisfied by them – and this, under my gaze – proposes herself as an object. She falls at my feet so that I can pick her up, offering herself not only to my gaze, but also to my grasp. The mirror that she claims at the end of the session signs this double adherence of the specular experience of the subject and his or her Other.

2) (O – a): It is with (O – a) that the adventure of the mirror can begin.

From the libidinal point of view, the prevalence of the gaze over the voice is structural here, a prevalence that carries with it a new distribution that develops out of the R, the S, and the I, not without – that is, if the experience of the mirror can take place and take on all its fullness – the gaze's already having been put to work in the whole prespecular phase.

In this prespecular phase, it is not his own image that the subject encounters, but the image of the small other, of its fellow-man, namely, the image of the Other reduced to the dimension of *i(a)*. There, the reaction of the small subject is

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split between fascination, and aggression or rejection. These are complimentary reactions since the small subject risks being dispossessed of himself there at that point by becoming the object of his own gaze, right up to meeting his double. We will see this in retardation.

In this particular case of the gaze, Nadia will still show us that the path is dual: *Either*, she sees the other child being fed and seemed to wait to be fed herself with impatience. She is not waiting to be fed, however, but waiting in order to turn away by closing her mouth when her turn comes. It is only later, in lowering her eyes, without the gaze, that she accepts being nourished passively. The object, in this case, is not the food, but the gaze which must fall for her to be able to eat.

Or, on December 10th, on the contrary, she is fascinated by a nurse's bouncing a child on her knees and she hallucinates an oral object, as attested to by her loud sucking movements. In this way she manufactures an object that can satisfy her since it does not really implicate the libidinal object and because the satisfaction is very limited in reality. She shows that the libidinal object implicated here is still the gaze when, under my gaze, opposite me, she throws herself backwards in her bed while holding her foot out to me. Thus, her foot func-

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tions as a metonymic piece of body in place of herself which ought to fill me up in so far as object of the gaze of the Other.

A month later, there was no doubt that she was looking for this gaze-object when she begged to stop in front of the mirror. By making me pick her up, she offered herself as the object to fill up my lack, in the same way she tried to see her whole self, with the toy sailor she was holding, in the specular image. She wanted to see her whole self, with this sailor, in the specular image.

This step of Nadia's aims, doubtlessly, even too realistically, at annulling the lack that makes her miss the essential function of the image; i.e. the function that provokes jubilation.² Nadia will not attain that except in the fourth mirror, fifteen days later.

The first three mirrors are Nadia's own decomposition, in three times, of the discord between the imaginary of her body image, which produces the effect of a capture on her, and the empty place of the subject where she has to lodge herself under the form of the signifier.

In effect, at the time of the first mirror, if she sees the unity of her body cut, she neither sees her object, the sailor, nor her Other that I am. We can say that the imaginary capture

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dispossesses her, not only of her object *a*, but of the gaze of her Other, and that that involves the fall of my image, by the same token, one might say, as a non-specularizable real.

It is immediately after this first mirror that the step she had just made in the imaginary makes itself explicit, a step, Lacan says, that cannot proceed except from an other order, since her gaze that reveals itself there carries only a moment of anxiety with it. However, even if there is no jubilation, Nadia's transformation, from the day before, leaps out to the eyes of everyone: She has lost her face of a little old lady and has the face of a child of her own age, which says to us that what she encounters anticipates, in its effects, what she has yet to say about the object and the Other.

As for the object, starting with her session on January 17th, the progress she makes is in the signifier itself. She flings her bottle away, saying "a-no," "a-no." Or again, then, she puts her cookie under a plate and alternatively withdraws it and puts it back, all the while punctuating her signifiers – "a-no" (*pas*), "a-doll" (*pou*), "a-tea" (*thé*), "a-that" (*ça*) – where the primitive, private *a* flows out of the "a-no."

As for her relation to the Other, if she makes herself object of it, it is as object of the semblant, since she throws

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herself on the ground. But this time, she gets up alone. Or, if she holds her body as if she wanted me to take her, she, nonetheless, refuses to let me take her, all the while laughing.

Moreover, at the following session, she attacks me directly on my body, hitting me, wanting to bite me or plunge her finger into my eye, with everything interspersed by brief caresses and accompanied by the signifier "ma-ma-ma." She attacks the other children violently as well.

There has, indeed, been a fall of the object. But Nadia remains stuck in the imaginary aspect of this, putting it into continuity with the real of loss, unbearable as such. Insofar as her signifier reduces itself to the S_1 without the effect of the S_2 of the Other — that is to say, placing her outside discourse – these conditions cause her to suffer very severely in her body: with otitis, Whitlow.

Eight days later, in the second mirror, Nadia will introduce the cleavage between the real and the imaginary. She shows some interest in her image there, by verifying that I am indeed close to her, in reality. She is then free to be interested in my image and her gaze goes back and forth from her image to mine, and from my image to me. This occurs in the privileged time, as Lacan stressed, when the infant in the mir-

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ror turns around towards the real of one carrying it.

There, one understands how — despite the non-specularizable character of the object *a* in the real – a new stage, that of the imaginary, organizes the specular image, while clothing the object *a* with an image $i(a)$. Philippe Lacadée has cited Lacan as saying: "Thus, the $i(a)$ by which the ego and its narcissism imagine themselves, functions to make a chasuble for this object *a* which makes the misery of the subject. This, because the *a*-cause-of-desire can be at the mercy of the Other, thus giving rise to anxiety when the opportunity offers itself."

In this instance, it is demonstrated that the passage from the real to imaginary consistency is necessarily developed by the Other, this mirror of the Other of the optical schema, which is no longer only the carrier of the object, but also opens the way to the clothing of the object by the image $i(a)$.

At the level of the Other, then, first, there is the participation of the image. Its trace is very precociously affirmed when the child's ego is engendered by the insidious capture of the image by a fellow-human on the imaginary axis aa' . But at the same time that this happens to Nadia, she experiences a language explosion after the first mirror which creates the specificity of her relation to the big Other, this time as a place of the

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signifier. This combination of the two axes (the imaginary and the symbolic) in the relation to the Other proves very well that there is discord between the image and the signifier: "Even if everything is structure, not everything is a signifier."

But especially throughout her sessions after the second mirror, Nadia shows her relation to the object, on the one hand, and to the Other that I am, on the other.

First she tears up the object on me, my glasses, breaking them. She hides the object-bottle with a cloth, to the point of turning it over while putting on the cloth, keeping only the cloth and pushing the bottle away without hesitation. She takes hold of a spoon that she uses to explore the exterior world, to baptizing all the objects around with it. Then she throws it and makes her shoe come off; that is to say, she removes an object from her body. Let us also note that she uses the spoon to get her face dirty with porridge, smearing me too, biting me on the cheek as if she wanted to absorb me before gluing her dirty cheek against mine, thereby creating an intimate relation at the surface of our bodies. In this way Nadia achieves a true work in the transference onto the object that she negativizes and symbolizes, all the while marking me on the surface of my body by smearing me. She, thus, creates an association of

our bodies, as close as possible. This is in counterpoint to the alienation, and to the process of separation already engaged by the fall of the object, and to the lack which affects me as well as her.

The third mirror will be only her profound disillusionment which leads her almost to tears when she looks at my image and turns away from it to come into my arms that she no longer wants to leave. It is as if she were refusing the separation that sends her to the mirror and which she had hoped to avoid by smearing the two of us with porridge. And this, despite my stating that there were two of us.

Starting the next day, however, this disillusionment produces an effect since she opens her session with the signifier “mama” that she had not said for practically a month, all the while looking at my face intently. At the same time she touches both my eyes for a long time, trying to find the lost object there. In that way, she clearly demonstrates the division between vision and the gaze, basically saying what the nature of the gaze is when she explores the wall of the room up to the window where she looks at the outside world. But then she speaks a running patter of jargon which is the response of the Other of the spoken word, after the return of her signifier

“mama.” 3) ($S_1 + 1$): If Lacan left development and psychogenesis up to psychology, it is because the relations of causality are not linear and, as well, that the precession of the effects of an encounter – like the changing of Nadia’s appearance the day after the first mirror – that the subsequent (*Nachträglich*) effects of elements which are already there for the subject, who is, thus, in a certain suspension, are the logical times, and not the chronological ones, of the structure.

One could say that this is the case of the encounter with the mirror. In general, as Lacadée stresses, the jubilation comes immediately, proving that the image covers the lack inherent in the mirror. As we have seen, this is not the case for Nadia. The accent remains, rather, on what precedes the image before she covers it, that is to say, there where there is nothing to be jubilant about.

In following her case, one sees that if she has departed from the Other, bearer of the object, it is only on the prespecular mode, with the goal of obtaining this coveted object in the mirror for herself. To her surprise, her impossible grasp of the object on the Other resolves itself in the signifier she articulates, “mama.”

One can say that in this case, in the prespecular period, this signifier has a function analogous to that of the image in the mirror. As to the pacifying effect that results from this shows, it is a question, here, of covering the lack. Is this already jubilation? In any case, it is not the covering of a symbolic lack, but of an impossible real.

Can we point to this “mama” as an S_1 , a master signifier? If we stick to the definition of the S_1 as what designates the subject at a place prior to its emergence as a speaking being, without the value of the representation of the subject as long as there is no other signifier, the S_2 , we see that this S_1 , because it addresses itself to the Other, already implies an S_2 . That is to say, this S_1 can represent the subject in relationship to an S_2 , based on the fact, certainly, that on December 5th Nadia renounces the impossible object. To be sure! But insofar as it is real, it is no less there. This is to say that it *ex-sists* or dwells outside the signifier.

There are several ways to apprehend this S_2 which is from the Other. Nothing prevents its referring itself to the real of the object, given that what we have just seen of the mutation of the real in the signifier; that is, the real continues to *ex-sist* there. My voice can do the work of S_2 . Moreover, my call,

“Nadia,” on December 10th, intimates to her that she has renounced the object she had hallucinated. And I say it to her, that her object is not there where she is looking for it, but there where I am speaking. The *jouissance* is evidently present in the aura of the real where the scene takes place; hers, certainly, but also mine which takes the form of my call, to which, as we already know, she responds by holding out a piece of her body to me, her foot, while at the same time fiddling around with my ring.

The signifier is there, its pair S_1 - S_2 , but one cannot say that it is not plugged directly into the real which has stopped making itself the subject of conversation since at each instant the object can come back and cause the signifier to fail. It can even make it disappear, as Nadia’s “mama” disappeared for a month. Nadia is doing so badly during this period that I think she needs my real presence in the form of her gaze and my voice. And, in their absence, she needs to smear the feces of which she makes herself an envelope, both externally and internally.

Based on that, Nadia introduces the mirror, which is to say, the imaginary. Not that she waits for it as such, in her place, but rather, she waits for the realization of her funda-

mental fantasy from it, $S a$, that is to say, refinding the object in question since the beginning of her debate.

Evidently, it is a failure, as we have seen from the first three mirrors, because she cannot see the image of the object there, neither hers, nor mine, because it is specularizable. It is only in the fourth mirror that the process of “logification” of the relation between the image and the object will take place (Lacadee).

Let us remember the development of this fourth mirror. She lays claim to the mirror after the experience of smearing the surface of our bodies and the walls of the room where she has her sessions, a surface whose topological character she shows to be a surface with an opening (*trouée*), whether this be the hole of the eyes on my body or of the window on the wall.

Before the mirror, she looks at her image, at mine, turns around toward me “in a call of the gaze to be the witness which decants, verifies it – the recognition of the image, of the jubilant assumption where, doubtless, she already was.”³ In effect, Nadia is jubilant this time when she returns to her image which she touches while dancing around, shaking the mirror as if to verify that at least her image will not fall after the fashion of

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the object she had sought in vain in the first three mirrors, and which links jubilation to the covering of a lack by the image. This is the case for her image, at least, because she touches mine in a precautionary way before immediately turning around and taking refuge in my arms, all the while turning a gaze toward our image. Can one say, then, that she, at least, got over the step of clothing the object a by an image $i(a)$ which gives an imaginary consistency to it since it is weighted down by the object?

But the status of the Other still remains ambiguous, in this imaginary register. Not only is the Other split between its image and its real, it is also the bearer of the object that will create a source of anxiety. This is why Nadia was so determined, of course, to veil, to reject, indeed, to destroy the object, even before this fourth mirror, anticipating what she will do next so that what the $i(a)$ lacks affects the Other too, no longer in reality, but imaginarily, under the form of the $(-\Phi)$.

Here, once again, we must take up the detail of the continuation of the mirrors. To sum up, we can say that the essential thing that happens in encountering the mirror is subjective division. The advent of the image culminates in $i(a)$ by the way of the intermediary of the mirror in O which founds

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the ego and its narcissism. The ego takes pleasure in itself and makes itself lovable via its narcissism, but leaves to the subject – subject of the unconscious which has no image – the symbolic part of a signifier which represents it for another signifier, in the field of the Ideal of the ego, beyond the mirror.

This is what Nadia will bring into play by using more and more signifiers, but not without isolating one of them, the word “*cuillère*” (spoon), while presenting the object that corresponds to the mirror, once, as if to conclude between the image and the signifier on this subjective division.

This division would require a longer development, but let us remember that in its advent for Nadia, the reference is to the hole that she establishes, first topologically, on the surface of the body of the Other — hole of the mouth-voice, hole of the eyes — on the surface of the wall — the window —, hole with its edge, at the limit, at the frontier of the surface without the hole of *jouissance* — the joining of the bodies — a frontier, then, between the real and the signifier where Lacan incarnated the function of Φ .

This Φ anticipates and founds the division which leads to these two results for the subject, one being the relation to the object that causes its desire — insofar as it is lost – which is

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written $S a$, that is to say, the fantasy, and the other, the relation of the subject to its Other insofar as it desires via a lack which is no longer the real object, which has fallen, but the signifier of the *jouissance* $(-\Phi)$, a signifier that the Other, $S(\emptyset)$, is lacking.

The real and the signifier are indeed implicated in this profound division which results in subjectivization.

II. Psychosis

$O + S(a) (I + S_1) [S_2 = 0 + \Phi = 0]$

There is no $(O + a)$ at the beginning because, if there is an object in psychosis, it is not separable, in the sense that separation means an overlapping of two lacks.

The Other of the psychotic is absolute. That is to say, it must not in any case be incomplete since his very presence and existence are in play in the real. The psychotic is there, or not there, like Schreber’s God, with his propensity to withdraw himself, “to empty the places.” That is what the psychotic fears above all. At each instant, he runs the risk of finding a gulf opened before him, of which his howling gives a sign of the acme of his panic and suffering. Then, in order to avoid the catastrophe, the futility of a world without Other, the psychotic proposes himself to complete the Other by making himself

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the object of the Other's *jouissance*, without which this Other would not exist.

There is no longer (O + *a*) to separate. There is (O + S(*a*)) to unify.

But the psychotic is also in language — or, rather, in *lalangue*, that is to say, in what is prior to language and serves any other purpose except communication. And he finds himself fragmented in real pieces of the body, or in products of the body, which also responds to his intention to complete the Other by not letting these pieces fall as objects *a*. Psychosis is the price to pay for avoiding “letting oneself be dropped” by the Other.

But why, precisely, is the sex organ the object in cause in what is principally owed to the Other, as is attested to by Schreber's submersion and the mutilation of the “Wolf-child,” as young as he was? It is because, if everything is real for the psychotic, he is not any the less in language. His difference is in the register that is implicated. What he lacks, then, is the symbolization of the hole and the consistency of the imaginary, since the real does not delegate them to him, as is the case for the *a* in the specular image. It is in this way that the signifier finds itself confused with the real for him and that the phallic

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object in question, as the signifier of the lack-in-being, must, in this case, be really cut. The Φ , whose frontier, as we have seen, is between the signifier and the real, is dominated here by its real slope which deprives it of its function, which is written Φ_0 .

From this mutilation, we thought we could deduce what, from this real object, arrives at creating an excess in the psychotic subject. The desire of the Other remains on the axis *ala'* in the “increasing disaster of the imaginary,” where the ego and the object face one another, “the ideal and the reality, a couple which interests the subject in the field of eroticized aggression that it induces.”⁴

In other terms, the subject, at the place of the signifier of the Father of primary identification, finds himself having improperly incorporated the organ of One father which he must, then, restore to the Other.

(I + S₁) Let us write this as we wrote it in the preceding sequence, save on this point; here, the prevalence of the real replaces the symbolic that is not there, and the real Other “interposes itself for the subject between the narcissistic *jouissance* of his image and the alienation of the word where the Ideal of the ego takes the place of the Other.”⁵

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If the signifier S₁ appears — “the wolf” of Robert, for example, — it is in place of a sign for someone and not as a signifier representing the subject to another signifier that is not there: S₂. This absence of the S₂ leaves the psychotic outside discourse, that is to say, outside the representation of the subject by a signifier for another signifier whose major effect is the localization of *jouissance*. This is, indeed, why the psychotic is delivered to a *jouissance* without brakes and the reason his whole body can become entirely an erogenous zone, as well as his organs (Eric Laurent).

If the object *a*, insofar as it is lost, rules the relations of the body and *jouissance*, the psychotic takes the place of it in reality in order to make himself the object of the Other's *jouissance*, as we have seen. On this basis, he makes himself “One,” “One” signifier, “One” of the real body which proposes itself to his Other so that his Other also be a real “One” in place of the I(deal). In *Seminar XI*, the S₁ by itself is, for Lacan, the name of the holophrase, on the slope of the signifier. There can, thus, be several S₁s there, referred to *lalangue* and not to the logic of the signifier. We have called this the “delocalization of the Other” which does not find its place again by a signifier, but by a countable *jouissance*.

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However, the appearance of the signifier “wolf” shows a progress in the analysis because it is the single condition that allows the key-signifier of the psychosis (S₁), delivered in and by the transference, to be replaced by signifiers of the Other — which find themselves once again re-situated — in a “construction in analysis,” signifiers which make a rough sketch of a ternary — “mama, Robert, water” — that is to say, not only S₂, but a third term. We know that the equivalent of fantasy which appears, then, as a “penis-faucet which gives milk” gives a sign of the irreversibility of the foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father, which is then poured out to the reckoning of the real, that is to say, of the One Father.

The S₁, not-known in ordinary life, horrifies the subject, to the point that he constructs his delirium in order to defend against it, or he may well be tempted to self-destruct. From there, one runs the risk of the intervention of the entourage, namely, of the analyst — the adaptive incitement to work, or interpretation — which congeals the S₁ in the I(deal), at the place of the Other, as a commandment.

From the side of the real of the object, the voice, far from falling, is itself the expression of the subject. “It sonorizes the gaze,” as Marie-Jean Sauret recalls it, citing Lacan,

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who links it to the “push-toward-the-feminine,” (*pousse-à-la-femme*), that is to day, always an object in excess, the real _ of which the psychotic must get rid.

We remember that the gaze, in its fixity, was particularly worrisome for “the wolf child,” and at the same time, in its strange mobility, it was a gaze one could not fail to link to the voice which was only a cry for him. Besides, this cry did not address itself to anyone and could only make a

call by way of the signifier of a response to the Other, which, not only, did not come, but in which Robert, at the beginning, was totally, but especially *really*, closed — but not closed as the subject habitually is to “the presence of the signifier in the Other, since ordinarily it persists in the state of the repressed, and from there, it insists in order to be represented in the signified by its automatism of repetition.”⁶ There is no repressed of his pure, isolated, signifier here for Robert, nor any repetition.

The unbalancing of the relation to the Other, or to take up Lacan’s terms again, “the vain appeal to the paternal metaphor in the symbolic,”⁷ has the effect of reducing the relation to the Other to only a relation to his fellow-being, as Robert shows in the short instants when he addresses to me looks of adoration, approaching his eyes with mine, almost to the point

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of contact. This is what is left of his experience of the mirror for the psychotic, that is to say, to make of the Other his double. This is what Lacan calls “the lethal gap of the mirror stage” where the psychotic subject is taken into a dialectic of being, which does not exclude the negative of its violence against this Other who confiscates him — in place of $S(a)$. In analysis, Robert tells us exactly what it is a question of insofar as the unbearable gap he meets in the mirror is concerned, a gap that he wants to fill up by his mark on the surface of the mirror, an impossible mark which sends him to the feminine insignia he is going to look for. This gap is only the real of the elision of the signifier (-o).

III. Autism

$O [S(a) = 0] [(I + S_1(a)) - [S_2 = 0, \Phi = 0]$

The autistic also has an absolute Other, but to an excessive degree, one can say, because this Other is without a separable object. The autistic finds no place to dwell in the Other: $S(a) = 0$.

There are two consequences of this: One towards the Other that the autistic tries to penetrate, to divide, in a step that has led us to evoke the Sadian fantasy, with its will to divide the Other in order to try to make a place there.

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The relation of the autistic to the Other is the inverse of that of the psychotic, then, who must continually fill up his Other in order to protect it.

The second consequence, concerning the autistic’s own place, concerns objects: Lacking a reference to an object that would be separable from the Other, he cannot separate himself from the Other, and confuses himself with these objects, in horror. He is an object among others. One encounters Marie-Françoise at the brink of a convulsive crisis before her plate of rice that she cannot touch, since she would eat herself.

This relation to the Other and to the object creates the specificity of autism. A point in common with psychosis, however, is that since there is no S_2 , the autistic is as completely outside discourse as the psychotic, but the absence of a separable object on the Other reduces him to being only one signifier, one single one, the S_1 , which makes of him a pure subject of the signifier: With the exception, however, that the signifier is real and functions like an object.

The objects of the Other, especially the gaze and the voice, make of the Other an intrusive presence against which the subject defends himself at the same level as the gaze and

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the voice: Their eye is like a wall, and if they are not blind, it is completely evident that they are not gifted with the gaze. As for the voice, the mutism called psychogenesis is a major, and practically constant, sign of autism. Inversely, autistics seem deaf to the word of the Other; in the absence of a call or any demand whatever, the social link is reduced to nothing.

This does not mean that autistics have not entered into language, but, that in the absence of any relation to the Other, “as the name indicates,” Lacan contends at Geneva, “autistics hear themselves, they hear many things. That opens, even normally, onto hallucination ... They even articulate many things...”⁸ He adds that they are “verbal subjects” posing the question, properly, of knowing “where what they have heard comes from.”

One can also pose the question of the status of this word closed in on itself, which does not circulate. It is probably at the place of the object that the subject keeps for himself, because it is not a question for the autistic, contrary to the psychotic, of addressing the least supplementary *jouissance* to his Other, already complete and absolute, as far as it is still possible for there to be an Other completely One in *jouissance*.

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IV. Retardation

$O (i(a)) : (S_1 + (i(a)))$ the double $\ddagger (I + S_2) [\Phi = 0]$

If “man thinks feebly and especially if it is as a retarded person that he goes madly into a triangle,” he is tangled up in what?⁹ He is tangled up between the murder of the father and castration, that is to say, between the real, the symbolic, and the imaginary.

1) $O(i(a)) (S_1 + i(a))$: Our formula writes this fixation at the imaginary level of the mirror, not in a mediation of the accession to the symbolic lack ($-_s$), but in the position of the image. Neither the Other, nor the subject are cut into by the fall of the object. The enigma x of the signifier from the right side of the mirror, that is to say, from $i(a)$, is replaced by the imaginary capture of the image of O . There is a above these vases of the optical schema, simplified.¹⁰

"Man finds his house in a point situated in the Other, beyond the image in which we are made, and this place represents the absence where we are. Let it reveal itself for what it is: the presence, moreover, that makes of a place like absence the queen of the game. The absent place seizes the image which supports one and the specular image becomes the image of the double, with what it brings along of radical strangeness."¹¹

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If the retarded subject is also in the One on the plane of *lalangue*, the One of S_1 isolated, it is not the S_1 of psychosis, nor of autism; that is, it is not disengaged from the real. It is an imaginary One which plays, as we have just seen, on the image of the Other as his double, and not as a result of the topical regression to the mirror stage of the psychotic, a lethal regression which takes place in the real.

In the case of retardation it is a question of the imaginary which does not rejoin loss in the symbolic, but also does not go beyond the truth of the One of the body, of its double, and so this subject remains without access to phallic signification [$\Phi = 0$].

The subject of the unconscious has no image and the retarded person does not go beyond the reflection of the body. "If speaking being shows itself as devoted to mental debility, it is a fact of the imaginary. This notion, in effect, has no other basis than the reference to the body. And the least of the suppositions that the body implies is this one: What represents itself for the speaking being is only the reflection of its organism."¹²

2) $(I + S_2)$ or $I(S_2)$: As for the relationship to knowledge, Pierre Bruno cites Lacan on mental retardation in his article

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"Beside the Plaque:"¹³ "I call mental retardation the fact that a being, a speaking being, is not solidly installed in a discourse. This is the price of retardation. There is no definition that one can give him except what one calls a little to the side of the template, that is to say, that he floats between two discourses."¹⁴ And Pierre Bruno deduces from it that the feeble-minded distinguish themselves by a sustained resistance, sometimes genial, against anything that could contest the veracity of the Other of the signifier, in order to better provide themselves with the doubts that assail them concerning the Other of the Law."

Put another way, after this place of the S_1 , the retarded subject puts in the place of the Other, the $I(\text{deal})$ of S_2 , his only resource, in the tangled mess we have taken up again from Lacan, between the imaginary murder of the father and the symbolic of the castration.

Mental retardation, as Lacan stressed, is a very frequent component in the middle structure, in addition to the three destinies of the infantile neurosis, of which Freud says: Either it is cured, or it evolves into an adult neurosis, or it yields before religion. Lest the Other of the retarded subject's signifier be put in the place of God, the S_2 of religion would determine

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the affair on the basis that the retarded one take the place of the signifier lacking to the Other $S(\emptyset)$, for his mother-God, in order to make her "everything."

We are in the signifier, without foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father, but the Name-of-the-Father is included in the Other. The place of the retarded one is that of the obscure signifier of the enigma about which the mother cannot, or does not want to know anything, that of her incest with her own father.

Notes

¹ Jacques Lacan, "Enfance aliénée," p. 306.

² Phillipe Lacadée, "Ce qui fait discord."

³ Jacques Lacan, "Remarque sur le rapport de Daniel Lagache," *Écrits*, (Paris: Seuil, 1966), p. 678.

⁴ Jacques Lacan, "D'une question préliminaire à tout traitement possible de la psychose," *Écrits*, pp. 577-578; *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan, (New York: Norton, 1977), p. 217.

⁵ Lacan, *ibid.*, p. 572; p. 212.

⁶ Lacan, *ibid.*, p. 557; p. 200.

⁷ Lacan, *ibid.*, p. 571; p. 211.

⁸ Jacques Lacan, "Geneva Lecture on the Symptom," *Analysis*, No. 1 (1989), pp. 7-26.

⁹ Colette Soller, "Hors Discours: Autisme et Paranoïa," *Les Feuilletts du Courtil: Institution pour Enfants*, No. 2 (1990), pp. 17-19.

¹⁰ Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire (1962-1963), Livre X: L'Angoisse*, unpublished.

¹¹ Lacan, *ibid.*, the session of November 28, 1962.

¹² Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire (1974-1975), Livre XXII: R.S.I.*, unpublished, the session of December 10, 1974; cited by Eric Laurent, "La Jouissance du Bébé," *Analytica*, no. 51.

¹³ Pierre Bruno, *Ornicar?*, no. 37 (1987), pp. 38-65.

¹⁴ Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire (1971-1972), Livre XIX:... ou pire*, unpublished, the session of March 15, 1972.