

Psychosis and the Signifier

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The Identificatory Logic of Psychosis

It first appears that there should be no motive, no reason to psychosis, as by definition it is unreasonable. However, we come to see, when we take a closer look at its phenomena, that they do not happen in disorder. In fact, they are arranged with great precision. Therefore, it is impossible to say that there is no reason to madness. Instead, we can say that the reason of madness differs from normality. But then we must confront the question: What is normality?

I assume that the definition of "normality" is the same in the USA as it is in France. Although it is true that one country's ways and habits may seem abnormal to the inhabitants of another country, this does not change at all the definition of the concept "normality."

The person is "normal" who is without any exceptional character, the one who looks like everybody. Sticking to this definition, it is very probable that we would not find a single normal person in this assembly. After all, everyone is different, nobody is like the other. One can suffer as a result of this difference and think that each of the others is like one another. In this way, normality appears like a dream, a bad one.

You may remember Woody Allen's film, *Zelig*, which means "happy" in German.¹ As a name, it reminds us of the manner of being of President (Judge) Schreber. This interesting film proposes a certain recipe for happiness, a concentrated happiness in which the question is precisely that of being normal. The hero of the film is obsessed with normality. When next to a Scotsman, he turns into a Scotsman; when seated next to a priest, he immediately starts praying. When shut in a room in the company of fat people, he rapidly gains weight, and so on.

¹ *Editor's Note:* Pommier is here associating the proper name, *Zelig*, with the German noun "selig," a noun which has figured significantly in discussions of Schreber and about which there has been some dispute regarding the connotations of the word in German. For instance, while it connotes happiness it also has associations with death in that it is used to refer to the "dear departed."

Thus understood, normality's happiness consists in identifying oneself with those immediately around. Although we are thus tempted towards a certain ideal, as towards a norm, the truth is we do not know what it is.

We try to be normal but, luckily, it does not work! In spite of our efforts, we remain different from the norm. If we succeeded, we would disappear at that very moment in our distinctiveness, our difference. That is, what makes our existence specific is our abnormality. As strange as it may seem, the symptom of uneasiness, of what does not work in our life, is also our freedom. What makes us suffer also guarantees our existence. This is why we care for our dis-eases, we love our miseries. And this is why, in the course of psychoanalysis, there is what Freud called the "negative therapeutic reaction." The symptoms, which are products of the unconscious, may be difficult to cure because the patient cares for them, because he needs them to exist.

These symptoms do not occur by accident but precisely when something happens in our life which alienates us, that is, which compels us to support an external norm. It is not necessary to follow a psychoanalysis to realize that many minor diseases such as headaches, sore throats, or stomach aches are directly caused by worries about one's social life. What is striking, however, is that when such symptoms appear, one never recognizes immediately what has provoked them, precisely because their role is to create a screen, an alienating screen. The symptom thus makes you free at the moment you suffer alienation. For instance, if your stomach burns, you may not remember that fifteen minutes before, your wife, or somebody who looks like her, just had a fit of temper against you. This is one thing that can be learned quickly in analysis: the link between the symptom and what has provoked it. If the symptom is the sign of separation, that is, of existence itself, analysis will never succeed in eradicating symptoms; it can only displace them.

Normality consists in answering a desire that comes from outside, that is, the Other's desire. This presents a fierce predicament because it is finally impossible to know what truly is the Other's desire and what are the criteria which allow its fulfillment. It is thus impossible to be normal. Normality is never complete because, on the one hand, you cannot fully determine the Other's desire, and, on the other, when you think you have guessed right, it is impossible to fulfill that desire completely without disappearing in your different existence. That is why trying to be normal makes people naughty, or evil. People who tend toward normality are most often fierce, and even more fierce when they attempt to disappear in the Other's desire, wanting nothing but disappearing, dying in the Other's desire.

The "death drive" that Freud defined in the second "topique" (topography) describes this eagerness to disappear. The death drive thus has close links to normality, to what imposes itself on us from outside. This idea can take us far, for the first thing that imposes itself on us from outside is language. The mother tongue is at first a foreign language, and it requires something from us which we

do not understand at all. Indeed, our desire for normality comes from this foreign language that we do not understand. It comes from the desire to conform, for love, to a demand that we do not understand. Thus the first encounter we make after birth is with the death drive.

If conforming to the Other's desire is impossible without dying, and if this impossibility is that which is encountered with the mother tongue, and the mother's love, then the desire to conform to what she asks can draw us toward a love of language which is madness.

Here, I propose an unusual definition of psychosis: wanting to conform absolutely to the mother's desire may produce a peculiar relationship to language that is genuine madness. This defines psychosis as a certain type of normality. It is a curious definition, but it allows me to answer the first question I raised: does psychosis have access to reason that is not *sui generis* nor developed haphazardly? The answer now appears to be that it is the structure of language itself that organizes psychosis, and it is in relation to the signifier that we may try to measure its effects.

It is in terms of the structure of language that we can recognize the various types of forms of psychosis. By definition, language alienates the subject, and it is only through the symptom that one can resist this alienation. The point of resistance in the symptom is equal to the negation of the Other's desire. In this way, the desire of the subject is the desire of the Other, but under a denied form, that is, under the form that is marked by the symptom. It is the presence of this negation that constitutes the discourse of the neurotic. I am going to try to show that, for the psychotic, the situation is different in that he is entirely alienated in language. There is no separation, no symptom, between him and language. I will demonstrate this general point by looking schematically at the different forms of psychosis.

First, I should say that as there are different forms of psychosis, it is not immediately evident that there is a unified category in which to place them. Paranoia, schizophrenia, mania, and melancholia have varied clinical manifestations. It is only natural to wonder if they fall under a single definitive structural characteristic (known in the teaching of Lacan as "foreclosure").

To address this question and to schematize the problem of psychosis, I will introduce the Lacanian concepts of the "object o" and the "imaginary phallus." These concepts will be used to simplify the schematic description of psychosis. I will define them further below. At this point I will simply point out that mania and melancholia can be understood in terms of an identification of part of the ego with the lost object ("object o") while schizophrenia and paranoia involve a similar identification but with the "imaginary phallus."

In all cases then, it is the ego that provides the opportunity for an identification underlying psychosis. It is important to mark this for what comes later: that what is involved is the ego, that is, the setting of narcissism.

Let us consider the first point, that of mania and melancholia, the identifi-

cation of the ego with the "object o." To understand this point, consider the voice the prototype or model of the lost object. From the moment that the cry of the child is an opportunity for interpretation by the Other, that is from the moment when this cry is seized in its intention of signification by the child's mother, the verbal material takes on a double value. For the child, it is a sensation, the exact meaning of which we can never understand. For the Other, this sensation is lost behind a meaning which is immediately given to it. There is an important consequence to the fact that the vocal utterance has no value in itself, that its value derives from a meaning being given, namely that in this sense, the lost object is the vocal object itself. It is a loss that is inevitable in the act of naming, and it is a very particular loss in that no substantial object really has been lost. Indeed, the verbal sonority or resonance remains present in the words that have been forged, yet this very process of symbolization implies privation. The voice as sonority can be considered the lost object insofar as it has been taken in an intention of signification, that is, as a cry or call. There is a direct equation between the voice taken as a call and the object of the drive.

Let us consider this assertion that the vocal object as lost object is equivalent to the object of the drive as Freud conceived it. It is the object which finds itself rejected at the moment of the primal repression, or what can be called the constitution of the signifier. This rejection is referred to by Freud as an *Ausstossung*.¹ Each word ejects its sound behind its signification. There is an African proverb that describes this very well: "Speaking is strange: it breeds its own mother."

Given this constitutive relation, as long as the act of speaking, and of thinking, continues, there can be no end to the search for this lost object which, in fact, the words will never reach. The search for this object lost behind the word is the motive of the subject's alienation, i.e., a search that cannot end. Thus, the vocal object as such will always remain at the crossing point between its materiality and its *meaning* (signification), between the loss it indicates (that which it is) and the language sign which has become its value, between the condition of privation—in which the question "Who am I?" is posed—and that of signification—which comes in reply in the form of a message, a message which will always originate from the Other. Because the vocal object rests at this crossing point, there really is no "cut," properly speaking, between sound and sense. The effect of a cutting comes retroactively in the pursuit of the object now lost. Thought endlessly pursues an object which it will never reach because it is

Ausstossung

¹ Editor's Note: This *Ausstossung*, which might strictly be translated as "ejection," is presumably equivalent to the notion of Countercastration or Anticastration. As Freud wrote in the essay, "Repression": "It is this (the anticastration) which represents the permanent expenditure of a primal repression, and which also guarantees the permanence of that repression. Anticastration is the sole mechanism of primal repression." Using this terminology, the sonority or resonance of the voice is anticastrated as it takes on a signifying function as cry or call.

already behind it. The situation of the voice as lost object is paradigmatic of the object in general. It can thus allow us to approach the question of mania, and of melancholia.

This may be clearer if I call your attention to the compulsion to speak in mania, in which the speaker makes an effort to isolate the sound as such through plays on words and homophony. However, when sound is taken up in speech, it will inevitably have some meaning, and on this, whatever it may be, mania develops endless associations.

The situation is not at all the same in melancholia, as described by Freud in "Mourning and Melancholia." In order not to lose the object, which is however lost from the start, the child identifies with it. That is, part of the ego becomes identified with what is lost in an effort not to lose it. Such an identification partakes of persecution. This moment when "the shade of the object falls on the ego" contains danger because the object of pleasure is mythical. It has never and will never exist but as a dream, and he who identifies with it falls into the persecution where identification means joining this nothingness.

The principle that forbids this identifying union with nothingness, that is to say with the lost object, is what is called by Lacan the "name of the father." Therefore in the situation where a psychotic melancholia prevails, the name of the father has been "foreclosed."²

I will now turn to the second general aspect of the primal repression, that which is related to schizophrenia and paranoia. So far, in the situation of mania and of melancholia, the relation I have addressed is that of the subject to the lost object: a relation that can be characterized as the retroactive seizing of the signifier's effect at the very moment of its formation. In considering schizophrenia and paranoia, the grammatical essence of the signifier must be viewed from a different angle.

The lost object first arises for the subject with the formation of the signifier itself, as discussed above. However, in addition to this originary loss (of the vocal object) another factor comes into play as a necessary effect of the signifier's coming from the Other. This second factor can be seen as that which the signifier asks for. What is it that can answer to the demand of the signifier and indeed form its limit thereby? The name for this limiting factor is the Phallus, as it comes to be through the retroaction of the Oedipus complex. Phallus is a notion appropriate to the enigma of the Other's demand; it is the something that is asked for.

² Editor's Note: Here the reference is to the mechanism that Lacan claimed was particular and fundamental to psychosis. The term in Freud from which the concept of "foreclosure" is drawn is *Verwerfung*, which is also translatable as "repudiation." Cf. Freud in the "Wolf Man": "A third current, the oldest and deepest, [which had purely and simply repudiated castration, and] which did not as yet even raise the question of the reality of castration." Thus Lacan's "foreclosure of the names of the father" is equivalent to the repudiation of castration in Freud, that is, repudiation in the sense that the question or possibility of castration is not even raised.

If, at the constitution of the signifier, the subject does not identify with the lost object, he may nevertheless be identified with the object of the mother's demand, that is, with the Phallus. In this case, it is the subject's body itself that stands as the object of the jouissance (of the Other). This is different from an identification with the lost object because of this image of the body on which the identification rests in the first place.³ For this reason, that is, this primary identification of the body-image and the Phallus, the terms "narcissistic psycho-neurosis" used by Freud or "topical regression to the mirror stage" as used by Lacan seem very appropriate to name paranoia and schizophrenia.⁴

However, in this identification of the body with the Phallus, the imaginary consistency of the body cannot adequately answer the disparate set of signifiers that appears as the demands formulated by the Other. The fundamental inadequacy between the two heterogeneous registers (body-image and signifiers) seems to me to define these forms of psychosis. The body, taken as imaginary phallus, will never in fact ensure the consistency of the symbolic, that is, of the domain of the signifier. Finally, because there is no adequacy between the body and the signifiers of the demand, the body is scrapped. This is particularly the case with the schizophrenic—the "scrapped body" of schizophrenia.

Thus the schematic description of the general types of psychosis rests on the distinction that can be drawn between the Other's demand working as the cause of the object *o* (the lost object) and that which stands as the limit to this demand, the Phallus. This distinction is useful because, for one thing, the object *o* and the Phallus are certainly not the same thing. Therefore, identification with one or the other is likewise different even if, in all cases, foreclosure of the names of the father remains the impelling force. Finally, this schematic view, in portraying the relation between the psychoses and the signifier, allows us to see in what way psychosis is logical.⁵

Speech and the Signifier

There is a logic to psychosis which differs from that of neurosis, if indeed we can speak of a logic of neurosis. For after all, the signification of the neurotic is

³ *Editor's note:* The author is here contrasting an identification based on the image of absence, that is the lost object, with an identification based on the image of presence provided by the imagined wholeness of the body, and indeed its imagined sufficiency in answering the Other's demand.

⁴ *Editor's Note:* It is interesting to note that while Freud used the term "narcissistic neurosis" to refer in general to psychosis, he came to use it preferentially for melancholia rather than for paranoia and schizophrenia as the author is here arguing.

⁵ *Editor's Note:* Here the author concludes his discussion of what might be called the identificatory logic of psychosis. Note that in all cases, the repudiation of the paternal function is what makes the identification possible. It is then a question of whether that identification occurs with the lost object (mania and melancholia) or with the imaginary Phallus (schizophrenia and paranoia). In the second section, Pommier continues his argument for the logic of psychosis in a discussion of psychosis and speech.

grammatical but it is not logical. You can verify this whenever you speak because neurotic speech is in fact the occasion for the what is illogical, in mistakes, in slips of the tongue, in wit, in puns—in fact in something which denotes that there is an outside presence aside from you and the one to whom you speak. Once this third party is present, logic is put off, the exclusion of the "third term" being an elementary principle of logic.⁶ The "excluded third term" recurs in any sentence that is uttered. This third term denotes the existence of repression, a repression that is missing in psychosis. Therefore, psychosis is more logical, more mathematically logical that is, than neurosis. How can we explain this?

If we imagine a mythical first encounter between the subject and speech, the subject is confronted with signs regarding which he understands absolutely nothing. He understands nothing, but not because he is stupider than any animal—after all, animals are quick to learn what a given sign corresponds to, indeed, all that lives must read signs to survive. The human is not in fact deficient in this regard. If the human being understands nothing of the signs that he reads in the Other, it is precisely because they are not signs at all but signifiers that have the specific characteristic of designating something only to the extent that it is defined in terms of other signifiers. What is enigmatic in the signifier is that it refers to the totality of other signifiers, that is, to a global signification. It is this signification—the desire of the Other, what the Other wants, what the mother wants—that is enigmatic, not each individual word. What the child cannot understand can be represented as $S(A)$, the Signification of the Other (Autre) in totality, that is, the Other "unbarred."

This representation, $S(A)$, refers to the question, "What does the mother want?"—"Che vuoi?"—which is illustrated in a graph by Lacan. Every sign, read first in the Other, asks this question, the question of unity, the inaccessible unity of the Other. Each word, in effect, contains the meaning of the whole, the plenitude of the mother. Because there is this unity, we represent such originary signifiers as S_1 . The "1" does not denote an ordinal position, "first"—it simply refers to the unity of the Other. Signifiers of that unity are all S_1 .

In this way, the originary signifier, to the extent that it touches on this mythical unity of the Other, evokes nothing less than incest. The subject who seeks to answer to what the S_1 asks, in doing so, seeks to confirm his own completeness (to be able to satisfy the totality of the demand) by identifying himself with all that is missing: either the object (*o*) or the Phallus. However, he can go on aligning as many S_1 s as he likes and identifying himself with their answer and never solve the enigma of what the Other wants, because the next signifier will again reiterate the question. It is this logic that leads to the perfectly equal weight attributed to each originary signifier (S_1), for example, in paranoia. Or to put it the other way, it is in paranoia that each signifier may have the

⁶ *Editor's Note:* "A" and "not A" exhaust the field in logical propositions. In the ordinary speech of neurotics, a third term, originating from "another scene," is always present.

equivalent weight of the S_1 . This possibility exists as pregnant for the subject only to the extent that the Other's presence is insistent. The subject will continue to be confronted by the same enigma of the meaning of the Other's signification as long as the Other (i.e., the mother) continues to pose the same question. If, on the other hand, the mother is no longer there to pose the question, the S_1 now will refer to a signifier of a wholly different type, that is, to a binary signifier, one that is predicated on absence.

That which constitutes "proof" of the potential absence of the Other, that which establishes that the mother has desires elsewhere, has been classified globally under the generic term, The Name-of-the-Father. The Name-of-the-Father need not be the parent at all. It is simply the place toward which the Other's desire is directed. From the moment that this place makes an appearance for the subject, he will answer the question of the S_1 in qualified terms, rather than absolute. The S_1 s will not refer only to other S_1 s but to S_2 s, that is, to qualifiers. These signifiers carry the suffix "2" not to denote that they are second, but that they are binary, and therefore that they are qualifiers. In order to qualify that the milk is good, for example, there must be the quality "bad." Quality implies binarity. It is the subject that makes this sort of judgment. Confronted with the two in one, the subject performs the act that posits this binarity.

In order to pass from the set of unitary (absolute) S_1 signifiers to the qualifying S_2 signifiers, a qualifying act on the part of the subject is required. It is an act which brings together the two sets of signifiers and thus cannot be signified in either set. It is a third set, the "null set," that exists only to mark the act of bringing the other two sets together. To the extent that this act occurs, that the subject acts from the null set, repression has taken place, repression in the Freudian sense of *Nachträglich* repression (a repression of "deferred action," "after the fact," or *a posteriori*).⁷ The Name-of-the-Father is the condition for access to ordinary speech in the sense of sentence formation.

Thus you can see how we may define that which differentiates neurosis and psychosis from the point of view of the handling of language. It is in terms of the presence or absence of the Name-of-the-Father and thus of the S_2 signifier, that is, the binary signifier or qualifier. When there was only S_1 , the question was, "What object must I be to ensure the Other's jouissance?" Now, when the subject answers in the set of S_2 , when he qualifies what is suitable for jouissance, the only possible answer is the Name-of-the-Father. In this way the object (o) which initially was situated on the side of jouissance, becomes forbidden (taboo), and therefore comes to occupy the place of desire. In this way, access to ordinary speech is simultaneous with the formation of a phantasy based on repression, that is, a phantasy to recuperate a lost jouissance.

⁷ Editor's Note: The repression is *a posteriori* because the formerly unitary S_1 s are now qualified by the binary signifiers, a retroactive effect made possible only by the appearance of the Name-of-the-Father.

As noted above, Lacan considered psychosis to be the consequence of the foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father. In fact, however, Lacan's work on this point shows an evolution. At first it is a question of *the* Name of the Father. Later he speaks of Names-of-the-Father, that is, in plural. There are as many names of the father as reasons for the absence of the mother. If the mother is away from the subject in order to cook, cooking is one of the names. Indeed, that is why food is always, in a certain way, something religious, with taboos and rules.

The Names-of-the-Father is an invention made necessary by a question that remained unanswered in all of Freud's writing: "What is a father?" Freud proposed several answers to this question, but always concluded that he was dissatisfied with the answer he gave. In the later part of his writings, his answer takes the form of a myth, the myth of *Totem and Taboo*, which invokes the presence of a primal father. It is this primal father that alone can be termed "real" in the Lacanian sense, that is to say, as that which cannot be defined.

The real father—the one who can only be known as a myth—is the locus for speech. There is no living father who corresponds to this father. All the progenitors in the world are merely sons in relation to this first mythical father. Consequently they are brothers, in the sense of *Totem and Taboo*. The mythical father has no particular attributes or living characteristics that can be defined. This unknowable "real" father is the one invoked in the formation of sentences, since in order for this formation to occur, there must be passage from the unitary signifier to the binary signifier. As I described above, the binary signifier implies the mother's absence in a place marked by the Names-of-the-Father. This, then, is the first meaning of paternity. However, how are we to qualify the living progenitors, the horde of brothers? There must be a second meaning of paternity, and it must stand in some relation to the "real" father, who is mythical.

Relative to this real father, the living progenitors simply imagine themselves to be fathers. Their real status is that of brothers among themselves and sons in relation to the mythical father. Therefore, strange as it may seem, it would appear suitable to define the living progenitors as imaginary fathers. In truth, the only thing that engenders the subject is the locus of speech. This is the mythical father. The living father occupies this place only in an imaginary sense.

There is finally a third instance of paternity: the father who gives the name. Because this is what he does, he can be considered the symbolic father. However, to the extent that this is all he does, he can merely be represented by a living person. The living person who represents the symbolic father is the means of filiation, but the symbolic father himself, insofar as he has given his name, is already dead. Thus we have the real father who is in Heaven, who does not exist; the imaginary father who is only what he imagines paternity to be, but is very much alive, a father to kill; and finally, the symbolic father who is the dead father.

These three agents of paternity pose a problem for the scheme concerning access to speech. The problem is posed from the moment one wishes to talk seriously about foreclosure. Namely, which of these paternal agents is involved

in the foreclosure? Will it be the real father (of myth)? I do not think so. For people on the side of psychosis, there is no foreclosure of the real father—they are quite capable of mystical or religious feeling. This is certainly the case of paranoiacs who invent religious systems. Likewise, it cannot be said that the symbolic father is missing in psychosis. Psychotics have names. They know what they are called. Even if they make puns on their names, this does not prevent them from recognizing the name itself as their own. In this sense at least, they recognize their filiation with regard to the symbolic father. As for the imaginary father, psychotics have an imaginary father with whom they may be engaged in more or less acute conflict. The case of Schreber, who had an extremely consistent father who sought to impose brutal educational norms, makes this clear. How then shall we define foreclosure in terms of these three instances, if, under scrutiny, they may all be present in psychosis? In my opinion, a simple definition would consist in saying that what is lacking is not any of the three agents of paternity, but their interrelationship, the knot which holds them together.

Lacan gave an indication of this idea in the "Question Preliminary to any Possible Treatment of Psychosis" when he spoke of "the place that [the mother] reserves for the father in promulgation of the Law." It is this place, a place reserved by a living mother, which knots the three instances together and enables them to function. It is the place accorded to the imaginary father, that is to say the father of reality, or "daddy" if you like, the place accorded to him in the locus of the Other related to that point in the real that corresponds to the gap in the symbolic, that is, to the fact that there is a vacancy there. It is possible to knot the three instances of paternity together by means of the imaginary, indeed, I would say, by means of any imaginary form. For example, the totem has such an imaginary facet that lends consistency to the name of the father.⁸

This knot is useful for an understanding of what the psychiatrists call a "fertile moment," a triggering of delirium. This triggering concerns the place of the imaginary father. The knot that unites the three paternal instances comes undone during an encounter with a father who imagines himself to be the father. For example, Schreber became delirious when he encountered someone, or rather encountered the signifier that brilliantly demonstrated the demerits of paternal authority. This happened when he became President of the ~~Bavarian~~ ^{Bavarian} Appeals Court. It happened when he met Dr. Flechsig, that is to say, when he met a "father," someone who, in reality, took himself to be the father—an imaginary father imagining himself to be a real father. For Schreber this meeting undid the knot in the imaginary that held the three agencies together, and foreclosure stood revealed.

⁸ Editor's Note: Thus, it can be the imaginary father, that is, "daddy," who is accorded this place by the mother and thereby knots together the agencies of paternity, but it need not be him—another imaginary figure or object may do.

Following this dénouement, this unknotting, a ^{delusional} ~~delirious~~ system moves into place: a system based on the association of S₁s that I have mentioned. Logically speaking, this associative system is an infinite regress, because there is no longer anything to arrest its development. I think this model of "unknotting" enables us to better understand one of Lacan's remarks in "The Question Preliminary to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis." He points out that what triggers psychosis is the arrival of "a father" as a third party, that is, in a third-term position. In the event of a delirium, it is often possible to pinpoint, in that which surrounds the triggering of the delirium, this arrival of "a father" as a "third term" or else an access to a signifier of paternity. It helps to see how broad the notion of the paternal signifier may be: it appears whenever there is a superimposition of the real father and the imaginary father. Thus for example, in a moment of success, passing an exam, receiving an inheritance, a certain jouissance becomes possible, the real and imaginary fathers are involved as one, and indeed the psychotic may become delirious a short time after.

The schematization I have developed here permits two distinctions that I think are important when asking oneself if a patient is or is not psychotic. It is important to possess criteria for differentiating between phantasies and hallucinations, on the one hand, and between phantasies and delirium, on the other. It is especially important to note this distinction when someone is speaking of this or that phantasmagoria. In my discussion above, the question of phantasy gets posed at the moment of access to speech when relative to jouissance, a prohibition is imposed on this jouissance itself. The phantasy includes the minimal element: prohibition. It also includes the element of transgression. This bringing into play of two conjoint yet perfectly contradictory elements is the source of all the difficulties involved in the construction of the phantasy.

This montage permits both prohibition of a given jouissance and transgression of that prohibition. The analysand comes a long way before he grasps this particular duplicity. It takes time, for instance, to realize that the phantasy of murder is a way of achieving incest. The phantasy stems from the access to language that is the purest form of the Oedipus complex. The scheme I have presented makes it possible to distinguish between phantasy and hallucination because the hallucination is in fact situated on the side of the object "o," that is, unlike the phantasy, it is not prohibited. It represents pure jouissance, which is divisive and destructive, and this is not the case with the phantasy. The phantasy is also jouissance, but a jouissance that is prohibited. It stands outside the body, purely signifying, and in this sense is Phallic.

The second distinction—between phantasy and delirium—is more difficult to make but is no less important. To make this distinction, I must first relate phantasy to speech by pointing out that phantasy occupies the place of what is missing from speech, that is, a gap in the symbolic.

Phantasies are not signifying associations, and in this way they are fundamentally different from delirious thoughts induced by the associational logic of

the S_1 . For example, Schreber's phrase, "How beautiful it would be to be a woman undergoing copulation!" is not a phantasy but a delirious phrase. It is the thought in S_1 corresponding to the Other's hold over jouissance. In this sense, there is, strictly speaking, no phantasy in psychosis. There is only either hallucination or delirium.

You may also notice that the notion of the knotting together of the three instances of paternity is relevant to the fact that psychosis can involve "fertile moments" and then moments of remission. Most psychotics are people of quite normal appearance inasmuch as the knot holds good. At such times, their representation of paternity is imaginary, an ideal that enables them to function. Only occasionally does it fail to work, and this is purely accidental, and can be quite momentary.

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