

Editorial

Tine Norregaard-Arroyo*

Sarah Jones•

This year the editorial committee has engaged in the work of a cartel addressing questions around the position of the father in psychoanalysis. The cartel was a device invented by Lacan to redirect the transference beyond the ideals of the Subject Supposed of Knowledge, towards the transference of work for each one. This runs counter to the transference of the *group*, which adheres to a set of ideals. It is from this point of the transference of work that a School of psychoanalysis sustains its ongoing reworking of the psychoanalytic discourse, through the particular transference each subject holds with psychoanalysis.

The cartel studied Lacan's paper 'The State of Psychoanalysis and Training of Psychoanalyst in 1956' presented in the centenary year of Freud's birth.¹ Lacan opens the text with the following:

The centenary of a birth is hardly ever celebrated. This presupposes that the work is a continuation of the man, which conjures up survival.²

The paper addresses the continuation of the transference to Freud. He notes that for the psychoanalysts at the time Freud *survived* as a man and ideal master, rather than through his work. Freud proposes that the idealization of masters derives from an extension of the longing for the father as a protector. This position of the father figures in the formation of social groups, as discussed by Freud in

* Psychoanalyst. Analyst Member of the School.

• Member of the School.

Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego, the most explicit example being religious deification. To counter imaginary group formations Lacan promoted a reading and reworking of the texts of Freud.

It is from this perspective that in 1956 Lacan underlines the neglect of the function of the signifier in the training of psychoanalysts and the development of the psychoanalytic theory. It is through the transference of work that the function of the signifier, of the particular symbolic designations of each subject, might predominate over imaginary identifications. Furthermore, the subject's accession to the signifier proceeds from his failure to sustain an idealised father. Lacan identifies that it was the group effects rather than the effects of discourse that reigned at the core of the psychoanalytic institution itself. The social bond amongst the analysts after Freud was formed through a quest for a knowledge in which it was sentiment, rather than the act of work, that formed the strength of the social bond: 'this sentiment is knowledge in a pathetic form, one receives communion from it without communicating and it is called hatred'.³

Lacan questions how an association created by Freud might survive otherwise, saying, 'it is the voice, which maintains it, a dead man's voice'.⁴ The man, he impresses, is dead, leading us to consider a separation of the mediums of the signifier from life: that is, a separation of the voice, speech and writing, from a living master, and also from the silent life of jouissance. Freud's works *Totem and Taboo*, and *Moses and Monotheism* are referred to by Lacan as foundational references to the concept of the dead father. It is through the registration of a death, a castration or limitation of a potentially all-powerful father that the subject might take up what is his own in his work. That imaginary identifications predominated in the psychoanalytic association in 1956 could be reasonably expected, as Lacan presents it, where there is a neglect of the function of the signifier and its alienating intrusion into the life of man.

In 1980 with the dissolution of *Ecole Freudienne de Paris* Lacan noted that his own *experiment* of creating a school of psychoanalysis, even in being Freudian, was not without being effected by the transferences of the group.⁵ To this he responded:

If I persevere [*père-sévère*: severe father], it is because the experiment completed calls for a compensatory counter-experiment.⁶

This response was at the same time a *veering* towards the father, Freud, and a moving beyond him taken as an ideal, an arbiter of universal standards. In this there is a reference made to the moment where Freud leaves behind the seduction hypothesis by stating ‘the surprise that in all cases, the *father*, not excluding my own, had to be accused of being perverse..’⁷ In his surprise his negation, *not excluding my own*, forms a point of exclusion that marks the truth which concerns a father’s symptoms, even in Freud’s own case. It is from this possibility of exteriorising something in regard to the knowledge of his own symptoms that Freud makes a theory out of the Oedipus myth. *Psychoanalysis is hereby constituted at a point of castration in regard to the knowledge Freud himself was included in.* This moment of truth for Freud occurs in transference, which requires another to be addressed, Fliess, to whom Freud was writing to at the time. In psychoanalysis the truth is always addressed through transference. It is a point of castration which makes of the truth a not all, but a particular, that of the unconscious in each case.

Lacan raised this question of the point of truth in his discourse, when he in 1973 spoke to the public through the medium of television.⁸ By making a pun around his name, *a la cantonade*, Lacan warned against addressing the public through a *single* gaze, that is, in an attempt to be understood by everyone at large. Instead, the point of truth occurs as an effect of discourse, which means one always addresses oneself in *the name of which one speaks*. For Lacan the public in this sense was necessary to sustain a listening, whereby the subversion of the said

would reveal a saying, a naming of a truth that is particular for every speaking subject.

Recently the French Lacanian psychoanalyst Jean Allouch visited Melbourne. Allouch underwrites Lacan's assertion that 'the field of psychoanalysis is Freudian, but the particularity of the unconscious is Lacan's'. The ethics of the psychoanalytic method is in this writing anew of each case, whereby we do not ascribe to a common symbolism.

Freud invents a method of receiving, of treating and of investigating what was otherwise categorised as a mental illness. For him the paradigm remains the case; like Wittgenstein, he has found a new calculus though he has not put at our disposal the symbolism, which corresponds to it.⁹

Allouch participated in the psychoanalytic movement when Lacan was still alive; however, he works the transference in regard to the position of Lacan by relentlessly re-writing his concepts in the forming of the psychoanalytic discourse of today. Lacan underlined the necessary obligation of the transference to psychoanalysis in light of a return to Freud: that is, as a constant reworking of the concepts which he discovered, rather than raising monuments to his work. Is not then the transference in regard to Lacan, that of requiring a similar further questioning and theorizing of the concepts associated with his name?

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- ¹ Lacan, J. *Situation de la psychanalyse et formation du psychanalyste en 1956* IN: *Écrits. Éditions du Seuil*, Paris 1966
- ² Ibid. p.459
- ³ Ibid. p.479
- ⁴ Ibid. p.486
- ⁵ Lacan, J. Letter of Dissolution IN: *Television. A Challenge to the Psychoanalytic Establishment.* (Ed.) Joan Copjec, W.W.Norton & Company, New York 1990
- ⁶ Ibid. p.130
- ⁷ Freud, S. *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess 1887-1909.* (Ed.) J.M.Masson, The Belknap Press, Massachusetts, 1985, p.264
- ⁸ Lacan, J. *Television. A Challenge to the Psychoanalytic Establishment.* (Ed.) Joan Copjec, W.W.Norton & Company, New York 1990, p.3
- ⁹ Allouch, J. The Secretarial Function, Element of the Freudian Method. IN: *Papers of the Freudian School of Melbourne, Vol.15: The Lacanian School.* (Ed.) David Pereira, Melbourne, 1994, p.206