

## litura

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The word *litura* does not appear in all Latin dictionaries and only merits a brief mention in others. The entry of Francis Valpy<sup>2</sup>, for instance, in his etymological dictionary, consists only of the meaning “the blotting out a letter or word”. Leverett<sup>3</sup> is a little more forthcoming. He notes that this word refers to “the drawing or smearing of the wax of a writing-tablet over a letter or word, in order to efface it; the rubbing out of a letter or word; a rasure” and thus “correction, erasure”. Figuratively the word comes to signify “any change, alteration”. It also refers to “the part or passage which is thus smeared over [...] or stricken out; the letter, word, place erased”. Furthermore it refers to “the spot, blot, blur, streak which one makes in writing; by one’s tears for instance, which by obscuring the impression, makes the writing illegible”.

What is consistent in these entries is the relation of *litura* to writing, whether it is through the literal or figurative meanings. Indeed, for Saussure<sup>4</sup>, there is no difference between a literal and a figurative meaning, since the meaning of words is only defined negatively, that is, by the difference of one meaning to all the others. But what is betrayed by the *litura* in this manner is a sensuous relation to writing and its erasure, the physicality of the smearing of wax, or by the thickening, the texture, of what is smeared or streaked; and by the tears evoked by the writing. It is these very tears that in turn lead to the writing on the page becoming blurred or streaked. Hence this relation to writing is a very moist and carnal one, in contrast to a text that might otherwise be excessively dry if we take it to the letter. So then what strikes us in the *litura* is its relation to jouissance.

Lacan of course gives *litura* a link to the letter in making literature into *Lituraterre*<sup>5</sup>, the land of the *litura*. In following Joyce’s slippage from letter to litter, he connects *litura* to the letter, in defiance of any etymology. This letter is a singular one though, the letter a, which here takes the form of litter or refuse. And Lacan puts forward that the letter is a littoral, or shoreline, between knowledge and jouissance.

In his paper in this volume, Nazir Hamad refers to the bone that Lacan observed in the museum of St. Germain-en-Laye, the bone upon which a pre-historic man produced a number of marks, or *traits*. Lacan comments that such a trait, the basis of the signifier, is always vertical. Writing also participates in this verticality, it consists of marks carved against the horizontal of the page. The *litura* then is fundamentally horizontal as it comes to strike out, to erase, or to bar, a letter.

Here we can find a logical basis to the bars that punctuate Lacan’s letters: for instance the bar that marks the division of the subject: \$; the bar that punctures the Other deflating it of its wholeness:  $\text{A}$ ; and in particular in the form of the signifier of the lack in the Other: S( $\text{A}$ ). These bars produce an absence within the letter itself, and it is through this absence, in the lack in the signifier that is traced out by the *litura*, that we can connote a jouissance of the not all. It is through the *litura*, by rupturing a semblant, that a jouissance is evoked. This bar however, is not the futility of knowledge or the writing of a letter, quite the contrary. It is its exhaustion: knowledge that has been taken to its very edge. And the bar, the striking out, is that edge: it is the exhaustion of the signifier itself.

So if we can only circumscribe and not transcribe this *jouissance*, it is only through writing, through the letter, that it can be approached. And here we publish a number of letters, letters that we write to others by which we speak of our work within *The Freudian School of Melbourne, School of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*, and letters that we receive from outside, letters addressed to us in one way or another. These letters respond to the urgency of our work, a logic of haste as Erik Porge writes in his paper on *The Presentation of Patients*. These papers then respond to the work of psychoanalysis, but they do not correspond, which would be to reconstitute yet another semblant.

Porge proposes elsewhere that there are two psychoanalytic clinics with two different logics: a logic of the (phallic) all, tied to the exception of the father and which has hitherto dominated the transmission of clinical practice, and a logic of the (phallic) not-all, of the incommensurability of the One to the other, tied to repetition, and which still offers a vast field of exploration. He notes that:

A certain number of devices are particularly propitious to the unveiling of this clinic of the not-all: the *pas*, the presentation of patients, supervision, psychoanalysis with children and parents [...]<sup>6</sup>

A number of the papers published here approach this clinic of the not-all by speaking of aspects of the work of the *School*: the activities of the presentation of patients and psychoanalysis of children are prominent amongst our papers on this occasion. And it is also propitious that we publish a paper by Guy Le Gaufey who will be a guest of the *Freudian School of Melbourne* in August 2011, with whom we will work, amongst other things, his text on *Lacan's Notall*.<sup>7</sup>

This year, in order to address our letters to those who do not necessarily share our language and geography, we have endeavoured, not only to publish texts that members and analysts of *The Freudian School of Melbourne* have translated into English, but additionally to publish these same works in their original language. Thus in this edition there are a number of papers that appear in both English and their original French. I would like to thank Nicole Chavannes for her assistance in establishing a number of the texts in French and Marina Jaofeno for her help in proofreading all of these papers.

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## References

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- <sup>4</sup> De Saussure, Ferdinand. *Écrits de linguistique générale*. Paris : Gallimard, 2002. 72.
- <sup>5</sup> Lacan, Jacques. *Seminar 1971: Of a discourse that would not be of the semblant*. Lesson of 12<sup>th</sup> May 1971. Paris: Éditions de l'Association Freudienne Internationale, 2001.
- <sup>6</sup> Porge, Erik. *Transmettre la clinique psychanalytique : Freud, Lacan, aujourd'hui*. Ramonville Saint-Agne : Éditions Érès, 2005. 208.
- <sup>7</sup> Le Gaufey, Guy. *Le pastout de Lacan*. Paris: EPEL, 2006.