

Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis:

Philosophy, Art and Clinic

Edited by

David Henderson

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CONTENTS

List of Figures.....	vii
Introduction	ix
David Henderson	
Chapter One.....	1
Philosophy of Time and Psychoanalysis: The Temporality of the Unconscious Giacomo Croci	
Chapter Two	19
Attributive Judgment and A Source of Freud's <i>Project</i> Ben Hooson	
Chapter Three	37
Philosophy at the <i>Bar</i> with Freud and Lacan; The <i>subject</i> : Being Always in the Wrong Place at the Wrong Time... Robert Montague	
Chapter Four	69
Peace Beyond Reason: Psychoanalytic Remarks on <i>The Better Angels of our Nature</i> João Gabriel Lima da Silva	
Chapter Five	89
'Will it not be Better': Recognizing the Indian Psychoanalytical Society Akshi Singh	
Chapter Six	107
Anti-melancholia: The Failure of Melancholy Gender and its Alternative Chenyang Wang	
Chapter Seven.....	125
Victorian Visions of Youth: The Child in Art and Psychoanalysis Melissa Greenberg	

Chapter Eight.....	155
Dimensionality in Jonathan Glazer's <i>Under the Skin</i>	
Carla Ambrósio Garcia	
Chapter Nine.....	173
“Suffering from Reminiscences”: Memory and Trauma in Elizabeth Bowen's Short Fiction	
Olena Lytovka	
Chapter Ten	189
Extracting the Extraction: From Clinic to Literature and Back Utilizing a Signifier	
Amir Klugman	
Chapter Eleven	203
On Money	
Mauricio Rugeles Schoonewolff	
Chapter Twelve.....	219
Representing the Inner World	
Naftally Israeli	
Chapter Thirteen	239
Biological Uniqueness or Subjective Singularity?	
Choices in the Clinic of Autism	
Thomas Harding	
Contributors.....	259

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 7-1: Mary Cassatt *Peasant Mother and Child*, ca. 1894
Drypoint and aquatint, printed in color plate 29.2 x 24 cm, sheet 48.6 x 39.1 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (29.107.97)
Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Fig. 7-2: John Everett Millais *Cherry Ripe*, 1879
Oil on canvas 134.5 x 89 cm. Private Collection
Photograph courtesy of Sotheby's

Fig. 7-3: Giovanni Boldini (Italian) *Portrait of Giovinetta Errazuriz*
Oil on canvas 201.3 x 101 cm. Private Collection

Fig. 7-4: Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll) *Portrait of Evelyn Hatch*, ca. 1879. Glass, oil paint, photographic emulsion 11.1 x 15.9 cm.
The Rosenbach Museum & Library, Philadelphia

Fig. 7-5: Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll) *Portrait of Beatrice Hatch*, 1873. Watercolor drawing of a Dodgson photograph, apparently painted by laying the watercolor paper over a print of the photograph. Mounted on larger sheet of buff wove paper. 15.2 x 14 cm
The Rosenbach Museum & Library, Philadelphia

Fig. 7-6: Polixeni Papapetrou *Olympia as Lewis Carroll's Beatrice Hatch Before White Cliffs*, 2003. Type C photograph 105 x 105 cm.
Courtesy of the artist and Stills Gallery, Sydney

Fig. 7-7: Julia Margaret Cameron *Venus Chiding Cupid and Removing His Wings*, 1872. Albumen silver print 32.4 x 27.3 cm.
The J. Paul Getty Museum

Fig. 7-8: Julia Margaret Cameron *The Turtle Doves*, 1864
Albumen print from wet collodion glass negative 18.8 x 14.4 cm.
Victoria and Albert Museum, given by Mrs. Margaret Southam, 1941

INTRODUCTION

DAVID HENDERSON

This volume grew out of ‘Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society,’ a conference for postgraduate students and research fellows organised by the Centre for Psychoanalysis, Middlesex University, London in June 2014. The range of themes addressed at the conference demonstrates the interdisciplinary character of psychoanalytic studies. Few of the contributors are affiliated with established psychoanalytic research centres and subsequently can feel isolated within their respective departments. They were pleased to have the opportunity to meet with others who are pursuing related questions.

Giacomo Croci offers a Lacanian analysis of a psychoanalytic theory of time, in his chapter entitled, ‘Philosophy of Time and Psychoanalysis: The Temporality of the Unconscious.’ He argues that Lacan provides “another conception of time... which focuses on the faculty of memory as linguistically mediated.” Lacan’s concept of *future anterieur* has the potential to bind together “the three temporal dimensions in a knot which exceeds both a linear and a circular representation of time.”

In ‘Attributive Judgment and a Source of Freud’s *Project*,’ Ben Hooson explores among other things, Freud’s reliance on John Stuart Mill in *Aphasia* and *Project for a Scientific Psychology*. He asks, “Can it make sense that Freud found a prototype of the signifier system (Saussurean language) in a mid-19th century work by J.S. Mill?”

Raphael Montague’s chapter, ‘Philosophy at the *Bar* with Freud and Lacan; the *Subject*: Being, Always in the Wrong Place at the Wrong Time...’, considers the work of Freud, Lacan, Derrida, Laruelle and Meillasoux. Among the questions he entertains are, “What is the relationship between the work and the thing?” and “What is the relationship between psychoanalysis and ontology?”

João Gabriel Lima da Silva’s ‘Peace Beyond Reason: Psychoanalytical Remarks on *The Better Angels of Our Nature*’ is not simply a critique of Steven Pinker’s book. Beyond this da Silva discusses Freud’s work on violence and the death instinct, and “the problem of the weakness of reason in psychoanalysis.”

In “‘Will It Not Be Better’: Recognising the Indian Psychoanalytical

Society,' Akshi Singh draws out a number of themes at play in the relationship between psychoanalysis in India and the West. These range from Freud's statues of Indian gods to Girindrasekhar Bose's correspondence with Freud and Ernest Jones. She discusses some of the institutional, cultural and theoretical complexities that accompanied the emergence of psychoanalysis in India.

Chenyang Wang questions Judith Butler's reading of Freud in his chapter entitled, 'Anti-Melancholia: The Failure of Melancholy Gender and Its Alternative.' He suggests that Butler's "theory of melancholy gender... not only misreads Freud's theory of melancholia, but becomes a melancholic fantasy itself." Wang argues that a Lacanian understanding of lack offers a solution to this impasse.

In 'Victorian Visions of Youth: The Child in Art and Psychoanalysis' Melissa L. Greenberg examines "the diverse ways in which children were viewed during the second half of the 19th century – in the public eye, in medical literature, and in the arts." This provides an understanding of the complex context within which Freud introduced his theory on child sexuality.

Carla Ambrósio Garcia's chapter, 'Dimensionality and Adhesiveness in Jonathan Glazer's *Under the Skin*,' calls on the work of Esther Bick and Donald Meltzer. She demonstrates that their theories can help us to understand the central concern of the film – how the "primal anxieties of falling apart, dispersing or liquefying... need to be passively contained by another, before a capacity for emotionality can emerge."

"Suffering From Reminiscences": Memory and Trauma in Elizabeth Bowen's Short Fiction' by Olena Lytovka explores the role of domestic space as a container for traumatic experience. She maintains that for Bowen the house, far from being an image of comfort or security, is portrayed as "antagonistic to its inhabitants... [who] feel threatened and uncertain of their identity."

In 'Extracting the Extract: From Clinical Practice to Literature and Back, Utilizing a Signifier' Amir Klugman introduces a new concept 'the extract of jouissance.' He advocates the "movement of one signifier between a number of language games." He draws on Lacanian theory, a story by David Grossman and a number of clinical vignettes to understand "**ex-tractive** listening."

Mauricio Rugels Schoonewolff in 'On Money and Psychoanalysis: From the Freudian Anal Object to Lacan's Surplus-Enjoyment' explores how psychoanalysis has thought and theorized money. He describes the character of anal eroticism in Freud's work, especially in the Rat Man. Lacan borrow's Marx's concept of surplus-value to develop the idea of

surplus-*jouissance*. Schoonewolff insists that “money plays a unique role for each subject in his singularity.”

Naftally Israeli’s ‘Representing the Inner World’ asks whether we use language “as a means of communication which transmits a message... or as a means of expression that establishes an experience.” He develops the concept of ‘paradoxical representation’ using the thought of D.W. Winnicott, Melanie Klein and Hannah Segal, and demonstrates how this concept can help us to understand aspects of A.A. Milne’s *Winnie the Pooh*.

Thomas Harding describes autism as “a distinct subjective position which, as such, cannot be straightforwardly reduced to any set of linear causes, biological or otherwise, in his chapter, ‘Biological Complexity and Subjective Singularity in the Clinic of Autism.’ Because “psychoanalysis is more interested in the contingent encounter between language and the body which functions as an exception to any causal chain,” it can provide “a reflective approach to clinical work.”

The authors of these chapters offer the reader a rich tapestry of psychoanalytic thought. They demonstrate bold creativity in their use of psychoanalytic concepts to think about a wide range of problems in philosophy, art and the clinic.

CHAPTER ONE

PHILOSOPHY OF TIME AND PSYCHOANALYSIS: THE TEMPORALITY OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

GIACOMO CROCI

1. Time, Subjectivity and Consciousness

This paper aims at delineating a fruitful interaction between philosophy and psychoanalysis from the standpoint of the interrogation about the notion of time. First of all, an introductory difference needs to be posited to delimit the spectrum of the analysis: time can be conceived either as a feature of things as they are or as something that appears once the condition of subjectivity is assumed. Two general categories of time-theories are therefore defined.

An example for the second category of time-theories, which constitutes the object of this inquiry, is Aristotle's definition of time as "number of motion in respect of before and after": motion is numbered and this requires a perceiving and numbering soul¹. Thus, time appears when something that changes is perceived and numbered by someone. In a more modern conceptuality, time appears as the result of the activity of a time-constituting subject². Subjectivity constitutes an intrinsically atemporal reality as something that is temporally organised and is therefore a condition of time, which is fundamentally related to subjectivity. My question is then: once the hypothesis of a time-constituting subjectivity is assumed, does our notion of subject determine our notion of time?

In fact, it can be argued that many, if not most of the time-theories that think of time as subject-related reduce subjectivity to, or understand subjectivity mainly as consciousness. Subjectivity, considered as centred on the faculty of conscious perception of a given reality, constitutes time and its shape. Time is hence understood, broadly speaking, as the result of the activity of our conscious perception.

2. Time and the Unconscious: Freud and Lacan

Once Freud's teaching is taken into account, especially in regard of its theoretical results, it is clear that for him subjectivity cannot be conceived exclusively as consciousness, since unconscious processes relate structurally to it. More specifically, it can be argued that Freud's theories drastically challenge the philosophical inquiry, since they don't recognise the faculty of conscious perception as the main theoretical path of approach to the notion of subject. On the contrary, Freud's researches look more like an investigation about memory³: how and why we remember, what's the meaning of an occasional inability of remembering and how our past effectively acts upon our present life and habits, eventually appearing through symptomatic phenomena – such are the questions that we find at the heart of Freud's works (let's think at Freud's early and most renown formula, according to which hysterics mainly suffer from reminiscences). Does this radical modification in the way we look at ourselves affect our comprehension of temporality?

Even though at first sight the question seems legitimate and promising, Freud's words sound preemptory: in his text *Das Unbewußte* it's stated that the unconscious is timeless and that time relations are limited to the activity of the “consciousness system”⁴. More or less five years later, in *Jenseits des Lustprinzips*, Freud repeats again that our abstract representation of time seems to relate to the way in which the perception-consciousness system works and corresponds to a sort of self-perception of that system itself⁵. A challenging interrogation seems to be frustrated at its roots and Freud's claims are transparent: psychoanalytical experience deals with the past not as past, but as a present, powerful force that directs an individual's habits and choices⁶. According to this, 'being past' is a feature that has a meaning only in the context of our conscious experience, since it doesn't apply to unconscious processes. Time is still conceived as time for a subject and that subject is considered from the perspective of its conscious life: a dead-end agreement between philosophy and psychoanalytical theory⁷.

I feel that this conclusion isn't necessary. In fact, my aim is to show how Lacan's rereading of Freud allows a more specific understanding of the topic – a notion of time that could apply to the psychoanalytical unconscious –, which will in the end result in a very peculiar theoretical configuration, manifesting a primary philosophical relevance.

Before the exposition begins, it seems reasonable to remember some facts, related to a general attitude towards the philosophical corpus (and especially to the subject matter of this paper) that is to be found in Lacan's

works. In fact, if Freud was quite sceptical about philosophy, showing only a superficial interest, Lacan never shared such a stance⁸. In his works a strong anti-philosophical critique coexists with the baroque usage of a mostly philosophical conceptuality⁹. Among the many names of Lacan's flourishing intellectual background, at least two must be brought to attention: Kojève, the most famous interpreter of Hegel, and Heidegger; it would be redundant to repeat how cardinal for them the questioning about time and temporality is. Secondly, the problem of time maintains a central position throughout Lacan's intellectual adventure and dates back at least to 1935, when he wrote a review about Minkowski's *Le temps vécu*¹⁰. Time always remained a fundamental focus of Lacan's theoretical efforts during his whole life, as Choi points out¹¹.

Finally, it's of fundamental importance to underline the central role that the discipline of structural linguistics had for Lacan's arguments and constructs. It's actually from Lacan's ruminations about language and speaking, that I'll try to isolate and define his contribution to the inquiry about the notion of time.

3. Lacan and the Concept of Language

It would be hard to overestimate the role that the fact of speech plays for Lacan: psychoanalysis is first of all a "talking cure", as the renowned analyst Anna O. put it.

How multifaceted, complex and stratified Lacan's legacy might be, it would be an error to misjudge the varying focuses and periodic changes in Lacan's interests to the point of concluding that, at the beginning of his career, Lacan gave no importance to the dimension of speech, while developing only later a sort of linguistic turn. In fact, as Lacan tried to give in 1936 a "phenomenological description of the psychoanalytical experience", he clearly stated that psychoanalytical experience is a fact of language¹². Roughly speaking, language always stayed in the middle of Lacan's interests, even if in different shapes and modulations¹³.

In a somehow arbitrary, though not unjustified way, I'd like to focus in the next paragraphs on a Lacanian formula, in order to cast a little light on the key position held by language in Lacan's theories and to show how the indissoluble entanglement that occurs in Lacan's theoretical constructions, and binds together language, subjectivity and the psychoanalytical unconscious, works. Lacan's theories of language, of subjectivity and of the unconscious mutually imply one another.

In a very summarising way, I'd fix this theoretical constellation as follows: language implies a speaking being and to be a speaking being

means to be a subject; but a subject is a living being, too, and once a living being enters in the dimension of language, it must face the necessity of speaking speak and living in a symbolic environment. The organic dimension of his needs is therefore necessarily mediated by the symbolic dimension. This implies, in the end, the unconscious in a Lacanian sense.

Lacan firmed this theoretical junction by defining the signifier as something that represents a subject for another signifier¹⁴. From this definition I'll try to infer some other notions that will ultimately cooperate in determining Lacan's original contribution to the problem of temporality.

4. Language, Subjectivity, Individual History

Lacan's understanding of language is centred on the concept of signifier ("*signifiant*"). Borrowed from Saussure's linguistics¹⁵, the term relates, in Lacan's theory at least, to a necessary logical moment implied by the fact of speaking, which a phenomenological analysis of speech acts isolates and shows, as Juranville puts it¹⁶.

Once the previously mentioned definition of signifier is considered, it implies the following conclusion: if there is a signifier, then there is a subject¹⁷. To bind indissolubly through a definition the notions of subject and signifier means in first place to refuse the hypothesis of an ideal language spoken by an ideal speaker in an ideal situation: that would be an abstraction. If there is language, then there are speakers, concrete speaking beings. No subject is to be thought outside of the dimension of speech, as well as no language is thinkable if not given in concrete signifiers. Lacan's language theory remains throughout a theory of the speaking being: subject and linguistic phenomena, even in the minimal structure of signifying chain, cannot be thought independently¹⁸.

No language is, if it's not spoken, and implies necessarily what Lacan calls a subject. Once the other side of the definition is taken into account, it must be remembered that not only language, but also subjectivity gains a specific determination: the subject is defined through his structural relation to language, understood through the notion of signifier. What does this imply? In particular, that every individual is born in a specific and already articulated socio-symbolic system: languages are already given before the actual birth of the individual. They pre-exist and precede the individual, who is born into historically determined social institutions (e.g. the family, specific social environments, etc.), and who is raised speaking historically determined languages¹⁹. The individual enters the pre-given socio-symbolic dimension.

Lacan's paradigmatic description of such an entrance fulfils the function of a general model for the understanding of the relationship between individual and language, as Haas accurately recognises²⁰, and bases on a particular interpretation of Freud's *Jenseits des Lustprinzips*. I won't summarise here Freud's description and explanation of the famous "*Fort-Da Spiel*"²¹. Anyway, Lacan's theoretical trick consists in relating Freud's observations to his own idea of a subject whose central focus is the fact of language: the situation described by Freud becomes therefore nothing more than the "point of insemination" of a symbolic order that pre-exists the infantile subject²² and represents therefore the moment of entrance into the symbolic order.

There's a specific feature of this moment, as Lacan determines it, that I'd like to stress. Lacan posits a logical equivalence between the entrance into the symbolic dimension and the entrance into the dimension of history, up to the point that he talks of a "primary historization"²³. I'd summarise as follows: a living being enters into the dimension of language and, at the same time and necessarily, has to be determined as an historical being. Mere life is mediated through language, society and culture and, consequently, among the names that belong to Lacan's subject of the signifier is "historical being" to be found.

Lacan recognises his debt towards Heidegger's idea of the historicity ("*Geschichtlichkeit*") of the *Dasein*²⁴, while keeping a specific theoretical originality in the fact that the notion of historicity bases on the necessity of the entrance into the symbolic dimension. An individual enters into the dimension of language and is therefore to be determined as historical. This moment could also be understood as the emergence of a primary, most general narrative dimension, that makes it possible for a life to undergo narration²⁵.

Once it has been considered that language, for Lacan, is always an incarnated, spoken language, given in concrete speech acts and linguistic manifestations, and that the fact of language implies at the same time the fact of history, it can be easily understood why Lacan, in 1966, states that the unconscious is history, while repeating that experience is marked by a "primary historization"²⁶. The first result of a closer commentary of Lacan's definition of signifier terminates therefore in positing the necessity of the relation between language, subjectivity and history, as just presented.

5. The Signifiers' Synchronicity

Lacan's definition of signifier doesn't determine its object only in respect of its necessary bound with subjectivity. Stating that a signifier represents

a subject for another signifier means to imply that every time that there is a signifier, there is another signifier, too. No signifier is given alone, there must be at least more than one signifier: more than just an affinity with the Saussurean linguistics is here at stake.

A signifier is defined through the structural opposition to another signifier. A signifier alone is not a signifier, since a signifier is defined by its mutual relations to other signifiers. In other words, this is the classical structuralist claim according to which language consists in nothing but differences²⁷: the notion of pure difference regards necessarily the fact of language, as understood by structural linguistics²⁸.

Language, considered as “*langue*” in Saussurean terms, appears in Lacan's writings as the synchronic system of differential oppositions that define the involved signifiers and thus deserves the designation of structure²⁹. The set of a structure's defining relations is considered as synchronic: a time-related notion makes here its appearance, although only negatively. All signifiers, their structural and defining relations, are given at the same time, i.e. the structure is given as synchronic; in other words: there's no before and after in it.

The idea that we obtain from this second step of interpretation of Lacan's definition of signifier is that language, understood as “*langue*” in Saussurean terms, appears as a structure, whose elements consist in nothing more than the place they occupy in the defining system of reference and every system of signifiers must be understood as characterised by synchronicity.

I'll try now to show how this idea relates to Lacan's conception of the unconscious, as well as with his understanding of psychoanalysis itself.

6. Repetition and the Timelessness of the Unconscious

Let's consider now Lacan's following formulation: “[t]he unconscious is that chapter of my history that is marked by a blank or occupied by a falsehood: it is the censored chapter”³⁰. It could be clarifying to also take into account some statements Lacan made during his 1958-1959 seminar, nowadays to be found in the sixth book of the official transcription:

Essentially, the unconscious presents itself as an indefinitely repeated articulation. [...] [T]he subject is in the end the one who bears the mark, the stigmata of a repetition, which remains for him not only ambivalent, but properly speaking inaccessible, too, until the analytic experience [...] allows him to nominate, situate, designate himself for being the support of that sanction.³¹

The unconscious presents itself in the form of a repetition. What is repeated? An articulation is repeated. The unconscious, since it is structured like a language, has to be thought³² as an articulation, as a structure, a synchronically given system of oppositions and differences, and it presents itself as the constant repetition³³ of the multiple structures that determine the life of the subject, its habits and speech acts. Freud's hypothesis of the timelessness of the unconscious gains at this point a particular facet: Lacan's notion of the synchronicity of the signifiers, borrowed from Saussurean linguistics, allows a more precise understanding of the absence of time regarding the Freudian unconscious.

Once Lacan's allegorical³⁴ reading of Poe's *Purloined Letter* is considered, these arguments become even clearer: Lacan distinctly argues that articulations repeat themselves because of their being structured like a language³⁵ and, as already underlined, the synchronic, structural relations between signifiers are not liable to be said 'past', 'present' or 'future', since they're simply synchronic, given at the same time.

The Freudian link between timelessness of the unconscious and repetition compulsion is therefore vehemently stressed by Lacan³⁶ and understood through the lens of his already presented idea of the symbolic constitution of subjectivity. Lacan explains Freud's point of view by analysing it from a specific standpoint.

This is the reason why it isn't completely false, in a Lacanian sense, to state that the unconscious is timeless. This is indeed, in a specific sense, true: a socio-symbolic structure, that unconsciously determines the life of the subject, repeats itself indefinitely, continuously, even if it occurred in what our conscious experience would make us call the past. But conscious experience isn't directly, as already remarked, the centre of Freud's inquiry about subjectivity. An unconscious articulation is not to be considered as an event of the past, but as a "present-day force", as Freud writes in *Erinnern, Wiederholen und Durcharbeiten*³⁷.

The difference between Lacan and Freud lies, in this respect, in Lacan's explanation of the Freudian timelessness, which isn't immediately a primary feature of the unconscious, but rather bases on the symbolic constitution of subjectivity: it is consequently understood as the synchronicity of the fundamental signifiers, unconsciously articulated, that effectively determine the life of the individual.

7. The Necessity of Diachronic Realisation in Speech

The baroque convolutions of Lacan's arguments do often appear as arbitrary exhibitionism, if not as theoretical sophistries: such a rereading

of some basic Freudian notions risks to come out as an outstanding example of Lacan's tendency to conceptual tortuousness. But, as a matter of fact, his linguistic (if we ought to call it so) model for the understanding of phenomena linked to the unconscious happens to enhance psychoanalytical theory, as it offers the chance to think positively some necessary features of the psychoanalytical praxis. I'll try now to explain in which sense and why.

Let's consider some aspects of Saussure's linguistic theory: the dimension of "*langue*", characterised by the feature of synchronicity, does not cover alone the whole dimension of linguistic phenomena, since the concrete speech act, the "*parole*", shows for Saussure some specific properties that do not apply to the field of "*langue*". But – and here's the point – the dimension of the synchronic system of signifiers implies necessarily its concrete realisation in speech acts. We always face concrete speech acts, we do not experience a "*langue*" as such³⁸.

One of the distinctive features of the "*parole*" is its diachronic unfolding: diachronicity is a structural property of every speech act, i.e. every speech act is organised following a diachronic sequence. Its elements are organised as a series. In order to be meaningful, every speech act must present itself as a diachronically organised succession.

If we now translate these arguments into the Lacanian field of research, i.e. psychoanalytical theory, something more interesting than a mere analogy appears: the timelessness of the unconscious, that was previously understood as the synchronicity of the articulation of the fundamental signifiers, begs for its realisation, must be spoken out, realised every time. And each realisation of a synchronically given system of signifiers has to be understood as a diachronic unfolding of a series of elements. Thus, the so-called formations of the unconscious are to be considered as diachronic unfoldings, as speech acts are, once their structural relation to the unconscious, understood as the articulation of signifiers, is assumed.

I'll try now to explain why this way of understanding the phenomena that pertain to the field of psychoanalysis not only brings psychoanalytical theory a little further, but also offers a most original approach to the problem of time, which can be indeed of particular philosophical relevance.

8. The Notion of Afterwardness

From the inquiry about language Lacan obtains once again the theoretical devices that allow him to reinterpret some notions which relate originally to Freud's psychoanalytical theory. Lacan actually invests of new meaning,

partially thanks to linguistics, Freud's ideas, so that they end up presenting specific features which are absent in Freud's formulas. Exactly the same happens concerning Saussure's observations.

Once Saussure's idea of the necessary diachronicity of speech acts is taken into account, the figure of a line emerges: an element, as already mentioned, follows the other, building up a linearly organised sequence. For example, the sentence 'I am in this room' is meaningful because every constituting element follows the one or the ones preceding it, being the whole ruled by a given system of conventions.

For Lacan, things get a little more complex. If we consider the following different sentences: 'I am', 'I am in this', 'I am in this room', it's evident that they do not have the same meaning. Lacan states therefore that diachronicity in speech can't be understood as a mere linear unfolding, but as a repeated and retroactive rearticulation of the relationships between the elements of the speech act, i.e. between signifiers.

Every signifier that comes after the others does effectively change the mutual relations that define the elements of the sentence. But once we assume that a signifier is nothing more than the defining structural relations that situate it in a system, as mentioned before, it is by necessity that the following conclusion is then formulated: the signifier coming after the others actually changes the preceding signifiers.

This is a smaller picture of the Lacanian way of reading the originally Freudian notion of "*Nachträglichkeit*", or afterwardness³⁹. The relevance of Lacan's theoretical effort lies not only in putting the accent on a concept too often forgotten or left aside, which gains again under the name of "*après-coup*" its proper centrality, but also in formulating or at least outlining a specific form of temporality which could include the notion of "*Nachträglichkeit*" as constituting.

Such specific form of temporality is indicated by Lacan with the name of "*futur antérieur*", future anterior, and relates essentially to a way of comprehending time that is able to include the reference to subjectivity as structurally marked with the psychoanalytical unconscious.

Lacan writes:

What is realised in my history is not the past definite of what was, since it is no more, or even the present perfect of what has been in what I am, but the future anterior of what I shall have been for what I am in the process of becoming.⁴⁰

The realisation of individual history that is at stake in psychoanalytical experience has to face the fact that the past, or what our conscious experience would make us call the past, constantly acts upon us, as

understood through the notion of a synchronically articulated structure of fundamental signifiers. The past dooms the individual in the form of an indefinitely always-recurrent repetition.

But psychoanalytical experience should be able to actively change the frame of such a repetition, or better, put the individual in a position that enables him to do so: the past would otherwise, as an unchanging constellation of petrified signifiers, unavoidably shape the life of the subject, without escape. It is in this sense that Žižek claims that the repressed comes from the future⁴¹.

From this perspective, “*Nachträglichkeit*” is the fundamental aspect of the act of rewriting the subject's history, which should be understood as a way of 'changing the past'⁴² – or rather the way in which the past acts upon our lives. The form of temporality which includes it and is defined by it is indicated by Lacan with the term of “*future antérieur*”. The aim of this notion is to conceive a dimension of time which doesn't reduce temporality to a linear succession of experienced moments, neither dooms the individual to a predetermined and unchangeable repetition of the past.

A time theory⁴³ that is based on the psychoanalytical way of understanding subjectivity has to be able to conceive time so, that time itself becomes the condition of possibility for a praxis that, through the individual's rewriting, remembering, making history of the past⁴⁴, actively changes the life of the subject, its concrete “process of becoming”. In this sense, the Lacanian “*future antérieur*” identifies a specific form of temporality which conceives time as structurally related to a subjectivity characterised by the psychoanalytical unconscious.

9. Some Conclusions

A brief summary of the conclusions should now be outlined, in regard of some of the results that appear as the most relevant gains of the preceding arguments.

First of all, a change of views can be derived from the Lacanian 'return to Freud', since the traditional statement of the timelessness of the unconscious happens to face a revision: the unconscious is sure timeless, if a specific form of temporality is considered, which is linked with a comprehension of subjectivity that posits its fundamental point of theoretical access in the faculty of conscious perception. But it's also possible to look for another conception of time, as indeed Lacan does, which focuses on the faculty of memory as linguistically mediated and involves the psychoanalytical unconscious.

The second relevant conclusion consists consequently in the fact that, among the time theories that conceive time as structurally related to subjectivity, a specific construct can be found, which not only relates temporality to subjectivity, but also conceives the considered subjectivity as characterised by the psychoanalytical unconscious. Its central theoretical device is the Lacanian “*future antérieur*”, which emerges as an intricate figure that binds together the three temporal dimensions in a knot which exceeds both a linear and a circular representation of time.

Thirdly then, and more radically, it must be underlined that Lacan's conception of time does not think time as something that can be reduced to the fact of perception. If time also depends on language, on the symbolic constitution of subjectivity, and language and the symbolic dimension as such implicate the dimension of history, it has to be therefore stated that the dimension of history cooperates in giving to temporality its own position and meaning.

It's not history that is conceived as based on a previous comprehension of time, but it's time that is thought as strictly based on the dimension of history. As Lang writes, time is historised, linguistically mediated⁴⁵.

A specific comprehension of history has to shape our conception of time. Such a point of view is expressed in an exemplary way by Walter Benjamin, in particular in the “*Passagen-Werk*” and in the theses on the concept of history, which I'd like to quote, at the end of this short contribution:

Historicism contents itself with establishing a causal nexus of various moments of history. But no state of affairs is, as a cause, already a historical one. It becomes this, posthumously, through eventualities which may be separated from it by millennia. The historian who starts from this, ceases to permit the consequences of eventualities to run through the fingers like the beads of a rosary.⁴⁶

I feel that this structural similarity could open an interesting and potentially fertile field of research.

Notes

¹ Aristotle, *Physics, Books III and IV*, Translated with Introduction and Notes by Edward Hussey, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1983, 219b, 223a.

² For this general categorisation, cf. also: G. Böhme, *Zeit als Medium von Darstellungen und Zeit als Form lebendiger Existenz*, p. 235, in: K. Münch, E. Löchel (Ed.), *Zeit und Raum im psychoanalytischen Denken. Arbeitstagung der Deutschen Psychoanalytischen Vereinigung in Bremen, 27. bis 30. April 2005*, Geber+Reusch, Frankfurt a. M. 2005, pp. 234-241.

³ Cf.: P. Hutton, *The Art of Memory Reconceived: From Rhetoric to Psychoanalysis*, in: "Journal of the History of Ideas", Vol. 48, No. 3, 1987, pp. 371-392; N. Langlitz, *Die Zeit der Psychoanalyse. Lacan und das Problem der Sitzungsdauer*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M. 2005, pp. 18-54.

⁴ S. Freud, *Das Unbewußte*, in: S. Freud, *Gesammelte Werke, Band X. Werken aus den Jahren 1913-1917*, Fischer, Frankfurt a. M. 1969, p. 286.

⁵ S. Freud, *Jenseits des Lustprinzips*, in: S. Freud, *Gesammelte Werke, Band XIII. Jenseits des Lustprinzips / Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse / Das Ich und das Es*, Fischer, Frankfurt a. M. 1969, p. 28.

⁶ S. Freud, *Erinnern, Wiederholen und Durcharbeiten*, in: S. Freud, *Gesammelte Werke, Band X, op. cit.*, p. 131.

⁷ Cf.: J. Derrida, *Freud et la scène de l'écriture*, in: J. Derrida, *L'écriture et la différence*, Seuil, Paris 1967, pp. 317-318.

⁸ Even a quick reading of Lacan's biography by Roudinesco gives a clear picture of Lacan's involvement with more or less traditional philosophers, as well as with the intellectual debate of his time. Cf.: E. Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan. Esquisse d'une vie, histoire d'un système de pensée*, Fayard, Paris 1993.

⁹ How misleading Lacan's readings for a traditional philosophy scholar may be, it must be remembered that Lacan always pointed out quite clearly that he worked in the field of psychoanalysis, not of philosophy. Cf.: J. Lacan, *Autres écrits*, Seuil, Paris 2001, p. 204.

¹⁰ J. Lacan, *Psychologie et esthétique*, in: "Recherches philosophiques", 5, 1935/36, <http://www.ecolelacanienne.net/documents/1935-00-00a.doc> (consulted on 13.03.2014).

¹¹ Y.-H. Choi, *Saussure et Lacan: autour du problème du temps*, in: M. Arrivé, C. Normand (Ed.), *Linguistique et psychanalyse*, Hermann, Paris 2013, p. 268.

¹² J. Lacan, *Écrits*, Seuil, Paris 1966, p. 82.

¹³ Notable and nowadays become almost scholastic is Žižek's identification of three moments in Lacan's conception of the Symbolic dimension. Cf.: S. Žižek, *Lacan – at What Point is he Hegelian?*, in: S. Žižek, *Interrogating the Real*, Continuum, London 2005, pp. 26-37.

¹⁴ J. Lacan, *Écrits, op. cit.*, p. 819.

¹⁵ It must not be forgotten that, although Lacan uses a pseudo-Saussurian terminology, he doesn't immediately apply Saussurian notions; he forces them instead to fit into a partially different theoretical field, in order to fulfil specific functions. From another point of view, it can't be argued that many notions, e.g. "signifier" and "signified", are not, in Lacan's theory, related to Saussure's linguistics at all. Lacan's use of Saussure is a complex topic and needs a specific treatment. I'd like to mention here Michel Arrivé, whose systematic research focuses often on Lacan's legitimate (or not) commitment with linguistics. Arrivé point out how Lacan's "signifier" does not correspond entirely to Saussure's, being rather the case of a homonymy, and not a synonymy; Lacan's usage of the term is not, however, strictly illegitimate (cf. particularly on this point: M. Arrivé, *Linguistique et psychanalyse. Freud, Saussure, Hjelmslev, Lacan et les autres*,

Méridiens/Klincksieck, Paris 1986, p. 123; M. Arrivé, *Langage et psychanalyse, linguistique et inconscient*. Freud, Saussure, Pichon, Lacan, PUF, Paris 1994, p. 82).

¹⁶ A. Juranville, *Lacan et la philosophie*, PUF, Paris 1984, p. 120.

¹⁷ Cf. Lang's interpretation of Lacan's definition of signifier: H. Lang, *Die Sprache und das Unbewusste*. Jacques Lacans Grundlegung der Psychoanalyse, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M. 1986, pp. 257-258.

¹⁸ Cf.: M. Hatzfeld, « *Le signifiant est ce qui représente le sujet pour un autre signifiant* », in: M. Arrivé, C. Normand (Ed.), *Linguistique et psychanalyse*, op. cit., p. 343; J.-C. Milner, *L'Œuvre claire*. Lacan, la science, la philosophie, Seuil, Paris 1995, p. 105.

¹⁹ J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire. Livre II. Le moi dans la théorie de Freud et dans la technique de la psychanalyse*, Seuil, Paris 1978, pp. 30-31.

²⁰ N. Haas, *Fort/da als Modell*, in: D. Hombach (Ed.), *ZETA 02/Mit Lacan*, Rotation, Berlin 1982, p. 29.

²¹ S. Freud, *Jenseits des Lustprinzips*, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

²² J. Lacan, *Écrits*, op. cit., p. 594; J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire. Livre VI. Le désir et son interprétation*, Martinière, Paris 2013, p. 490. It's not of real relevance here to find out whether Lacan's reading is proper or not. What is important to me, is to show how the inner structure of some of Lacan's notions and their developed consequences actually allow to give a specific understanding of time that involves the psychoanalytical unconscious.

²³ J. Lacan, *Écrits*, op. cit., p. 261; J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire. Livre V. Les formations de l'inconscient*, Seuil, Paris 1998, p. 493.

²⁴ E.g.: M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, in: M. Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe, I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914-1970, Band 2. Sein und Zeit*, Klostermann, Frankfurt a. M. 1977, pp. 503-525. Hock underlines this aspect of Lacan's thought, too: U. Hock, *Das Unbewusste Denken. Wiederholung und Todestrieb*, Psychosozial-Verlag, Gießen 2012, p. 237.

²⁵ R. Hofmann, *Beschreibungen des Abwesenden. Lektüren nach Lacan*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt a. M. 1996, p. 27.

²⁶ J. Lacan, *Interview au Figaro Littéraire (relue par Lacan) par Gilles Lapouge*, in: "Figaro Littéraire", 1966, <http://www.ecole-lacanienne.net/documents/1966-12-29.doc> (05.03.2014).

²⁷ F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, Payot, Paris 1972, pp. 166-169.

²⁸ A. Juranville, *Lacan et la philosophie*, op. cit., p. 45; J.-C. Milner, *L'Œuvre claire*, op. cit., p. 101.

²⁹ J. Lacan, *Écrits*, op. cit., p. 501.

³⁰ J. Lacan, *Écrits. A selection*, translated by A. Sheridan, Routledge, London 1989, p. 55.

³¹ J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire. Livre VI. Le désir et son interprétation*, op. cit., pp. 466-467. Translation is mine.

³² I'd like here to suggest to read Lacan's statement, "the unconscious is structured like a language", underlining the word "like", "*comme*". Properly speaking, to say that something is structured, for Lacan, is to say that it presents itself in the form of a language (cf.: *Interview au Figaro Littéraire*, op. cit.: "pour moi, le mot structure

désigne exactement l'incidence du langage comme tel dans ce champ phénoménal qui peut être groupé sous la rubrique de ce qui est analysable au sens analytique. Je précise: dans le champ de ma recherche, dire 'structuré comme un langage', c'est un pléonasma"); anyway, the exact meaning of the formula remains open in regard to a realist or constructivist interpretation. On this topic: H.-D. Gondek, „*La séance continue*“. *Jacques Derrida und die Psychoanalyse*, postface to: J. Derrida, *Vergessen wir nicht – die Psychoanalyse!*, transl. H.-D. Gondek, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M. 1998, p. 203. A more precise inquiry is nevertheless needed and begs for discussion.

³³ The mutual implication of difference and repetition is one of the points made by Deleuze: G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, PUF, Paris 1968, p. 96ff.

³⁴ S. Felman, *Jacques Lacan and the Adventure of Insight. Psychoanalysis in Contemporary culture*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachussets 1987, p. 32ff.

³⁵ J. Lacan, *Écrits*, op. cit., p. 11.

³⁶ Green also describes the repetition compulsion as “murder of time”. A. Green, *Freuds Konzept der Zeitlichkeit im Unterschied zu heutigen Auffassungen*, in: *Zeit und Raum im psychoanalytischen Denken*, op. cit., p. 84.

³⁷ See footnote 6.

³⁸ Saussure didn't strictly, if I'm not wrong, put it this way; what can be found, anyway, in his *Cours* is the historical precedence of the “*parole*” in respect to the “*langue*” and the reciprocal necessity of the two fields of language. F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, op. cit., p. 37.

³⁹ I can't develop here in details a complete discussion about the concept. For a summary of the word's occurrences in Freud's work and some observations about its translation and reception in the psychoanalytical tradition, cf.: F.-W., Eickhoff, *On Nachträglichkeit: The modernity of an old concept*, in: “*International Journal of Psychoanalysis*”, 87, 2006; for further observations about the notion of “*Nachträglichkeit*”: J. Bernat, „*Psyché n'est qu'après-coup*” (*les temporalités psychiques*), in: “*Cahiers d'Études Germaniques*”, 57, 2009; G. Dahl, *Nachträglichkeit, Wiederholungszwang, Symbolisierung. Zur psychoanalytischen Deutung von primärprozesshaften Szenen*, in: “*PSYCHE*”, Heft 5, 2010; U. Hock, *Die Zeit des Erinnerens*, in: “*PSYCHE*”, Heft 9, 2003; G. Botta, *Nachträglichkeit, la risignificazione del passato tra tempo lineare e circolare*, in: “*Psichiatria e Psicoterapia*”, 31, 2, 2012; C. Kirchhoff, *Das psychoanalytische Konzept der »Nachträglichkeit«*. *Zeit, Bedeutung und die Anfänge des Psychischen*, Psychosozial-Verlag, Gießen 2009; J. Laplanche, *Problématiques VI. L'après-coup*, PUF, Paris 2006.

⁴⁰ J. Lacan, *The Language of the Self: The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis*, translated by A. Wildern, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland 1981, p. 63.

⁴¹ S. Žižek, *The Truth Arises from Misrecognition*, in: E. Ragland-Sullivan, M. Bracher (Ed.), *Lacan and the Subject of Language*, Routledge, New York 1991, pp. 188-189.

⁴² Cf. also: H.-D. Gondek, *Subjekt, Sprache und Erkenntnis. Philosophische Zugänge zur Lacanschen Psychoanalyse*, in: H.-D. Gondek, R. Hofmann, H.-M. Lohmann (Ed.), *Jacques Lacan – Wege zu seinem Werk*, Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart 2001, pp. 154-156.

⁴³ In this sense, a more specific research that focuses on the hereby mentioned notions of “*Nachträglichkeit*” and “*après-coup*”, as well as on the “*future antérieur*”, is needed, i.e. a precise inquiry about the relations that bind together the three dimensions of time, understood as past, present and future, in such a conceptual constellation and in its relationship to other time theories. This kind of research cannot obviously be developed here: I simply tried to outline its background and to underline its relevance, both in the psychoanalytical and in the philosophical field of interests.

⁴⁴ Kettner points out that the centre of the notion of history is, for psychoanalysis, not the “*Veridikalität*” (veridicality) but the “*Kausalität*” (causality) of memories. M. Kettner, *Nachträglichkeit. Freuds brisante Erinnerungstheorie*, in: J. Rüsen, J. Straub (Ed.), *Die dunkle Spur der Vergangenheit. Psychoanalytische Zugänge zum Geschichtsbewußtsein. Erinnerung, Geschichte, Identität*, 2, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M. 1998, p. 43.

⁴⁵ H. Lang, *Die Sprache und das Unbewusste*, op. cit., pp. 146-147.

⁴⁶ W. Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften, I*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M. 1972, p. 704, translated by D. Redmond (<http://members.efn.org/~dredmond/ThesesonHistory.html>, consulted on 31.07.2014). For a more or less systematic research on the affinities between Lacanian theory and Walter Benjamin's thought, cf. among others: U. Hock, *Das Unbewusste Denken*, op. cit.; G. Schwering, *Benjamin – Lacan. Vom Diskurs des Anderen*, Turia+Kant, Wien 1998.

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