

SCRÍOBH 1



February 2017

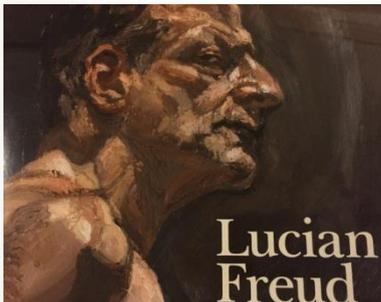
ICLO-NLS is happy to announce the exciting new arrival of its first newsletter *Scríobh*.

This newsletter is part of the work carried out in ICLO for the development and promotion of psychoanalysis of the Lacanian Orientation.

Scríobh aims to make available to the English speaking community previously untranslated texts in the Lacanian Orientation. *Scríobh* will also make known (by ongoing commentary) the work produced at ICLO-NLS Study-Days, Seminars and other spaces of theoretical and clinical exchange. Finally, resonances of the current artistic, cultural and political Irish landscape will be included.

Scríobh is an aperiodic publication. It can be received by e-mail upon subscription at scriobh@iclo-nls.org and it can also be accessed through the ICLO-NLS website.

Sheila Power



“Anxiety is without cause, but not without object” [1]

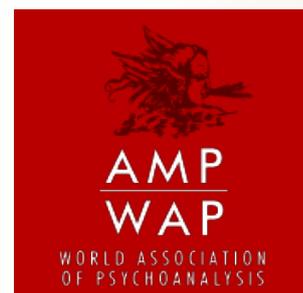
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Anxiety Constituent and Constituted

Jacques-Alain Miller

In this witticism (“do without it, provided it is put to use”) lies a paradox which is not without calling to mind the one Kant examined in 1793 in the common expression “that might be correct in theory, but it is useless in practice”. Should we hear, “do without the Name-of-the-Father in theory, but make use of it in practice”? There is something of this in Lacan's witticism. There is some reference to the inertia opposed by practice to the ingenuity of theoretical constructs. We know only too well in psychoanalysis how vain such theoretical constructs can appear with regard to the practico-inert of the psychoanalytic experience.

Underlying the witticism, and that which it points to, is a gap between theory and practice - one which we try to narrow by regularly devoting our Study-Days to accounts of clinical cases. Nevertheless, it seems to me that we in psychoanalysis cannot put up with the “theory-practice” gap. The practice of theory, as my old master Althusser used to say, has no place among us. The sole theory that interests us, is the theory of practice. In the case of the Name-of-the-Father, doing without it-putting it to use means precisely, as at least I am suggesting here, to do without believing in it, while using it like an instrument.

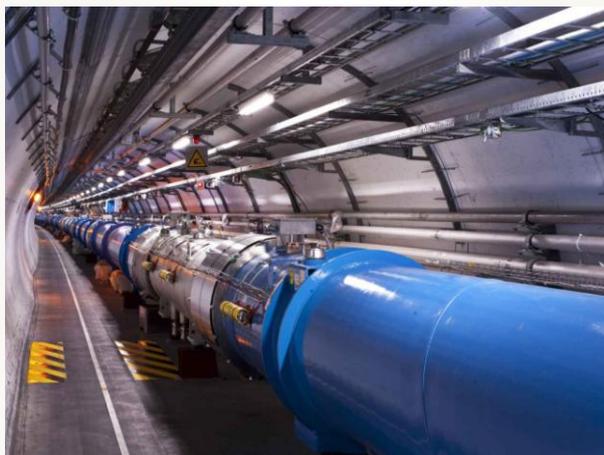
The gap between belief and usage does not encompass but rather displaces that between theory and practice. The gap between belief and usage, to tell the truth, is essential to structuralism, to every structuralist approach. This gap is the very origin of what Lévi-Strauss called “*bricolage*”, which meant reusing, recycling as we say, the products of the now abandoned beliefs of another age. And the gap between belief and usage is essential to analytic practice in as

much as it is by ceasing to believe in his symptom that the subject has the chance to make use of it. For example, by speaking about it, which can at times, when he speaks about it well, in a captivating manner, result in his nomination as AE.

The chapter to be commenced therefore is that of the usage of symptoms. They say “healing”, to which is added in a recent best seller, it's hard to hear, “healing without psychoanalysis”- when all they can see in the symptom is a dysfunction to be fixed, whereas an analysis, on the contrary, allows the subject to make use of what remains incurable in his symptom.

Anxiety, by which I mean the anxiety which messes up and causes mess-ups, must be done without, but provided that it is made use of. By making use of the object it produces as an instrument made to pass over what was keeping us from doing what we needed to do. The anxiety which must be done without is - as François Leguil showed us in the first presentation - the development of anxiety, its *Entwicklung*, its half-baked muddle by which the subject is held captive and which inhibits the act. That anxiety is certainty refused, anticipation and refusal of the certainty which the act would produce.





They say, or rather we say, “relieving anxiety”[*désangoisser*], and probably rightly so, because anxiety, as Lacan used to say, is a half-baked [*foireuse*] thing, a thing which messes up [*fait foirer*] for the subject, what has to be done, messes up his plans, the things he has to do. But it is not a matter, in this “relieving anxiety”, of any cure, of any removal of anxiety, and I would more precisely say, it doesn't mean any return to zero of anxiety. Relief of the subject's anxiety, if I may say so, opens onto the transformations of anxiety and it seems to me that this is what the pieces of work from these Study-Days that I was able to hear have shown. The relief of anxiety opens onto the transformations of anxiety, the transference of the certainty

The anxiety to be put to use, on the other hand, is the one which is a sign of the real. Anxiety which gives a sign of the real is not to be reduced to zero, that is say brought back to homeostasis, and for the simple, excellent reason that it is impossible, that anxiety is the name of the moment when, amidst the nothingness [*néant*] of all the objects of the world, the plus of is produced, the surplus object which breaks all the laws of objectivity, and which we call small *a*.

We distinguish two statuses of anxiety, which I could call, for the purposes of simplification, constituted anxiety and constituent anxiety. Constituted anxiety is the one whose descriptions

fill the treatises of psychopathology one would want to shove down the throats of the candidates for the title of psychotherapist. It's the labyrinthine, unbounded anxiety around whose hellish circle, which holds him back from passing to the act, the subject condemns himself to wander. It's this anxiety, it seems to me, that Lacan suggested symbolizing by the *aleph*, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and which was the very letter Cantor chose to designate infinity, of which he showed mathematicians the proper use in their discourse. It's an anxiety which is repetition, intended to go on ad infinitum. Constituent anxiety is productive anxiety, it hides from consciousness. It produces the object *a*, in its essential paradox, that is to say it produces it as a lost object. That is why it can only be designated as the object of anxiety through negation: “it is not without object”. What needs to be seen is that there isn't first an object and then its loss, but that the object *a* is constituted in its very loss.

If one allows a useful partition, one might say that the seminar on anxiety, *Seminar X*, tries to situate constituent anxiety. Anxiety is the privileged road to access the object *a* as nothing [*rien*]. Let's say that constituted anxiety corresponds to the capture of this nothing-object in the fantasy. To which the subject, therefore, finds himself suspended, paralyzed, in an infinite fading, where he has the painful experience of his own division. This is what has been described as the phenomenon of anxiety, which I distinguish from what Lacan allows us to reconstitute of a structure. The nothing-object is here in the phenomenon of anxiety the cause of a mortal desire turned towards the subject. It's the same nothing-object which can become the cause of the act, an act which always holds a moment of suicide, a moment of death of the subject. The nothing-object, around which the phenomenon of anxiety gravitates, at least in this construction, dictates the mourning to be done of all objects, the mourning in which the place from where the

subject can assume the analytic act is carved out (...)

Extract of Jacques-Alain Miller's presentation, at the Autumn Study-Days of the ECF, of the 2006 WAP Congress: *Le nom-du-père, s'en passer, s'en servir* [The Name-of-the-Father, doing without it, putting it to use].

Translated from the French by *Kieran O'Meara*



Report on ICLO-NLS Open Seminar

“Anxiety in Human Life – A Lacanian Reading” with Alan Rowan

Friday 27 January 2017

The first ICLO-NLS Open Seminar for the year 2017 was opened to the above title presented by Alan Rowan. An abstract of the seminar theme previously made available online, accentuated how the philosophical tradition has reflected for many ages upon the “particular mystery of the human being... whereby anxiety both defines us and takes the form of a most intimate partner”. The enigma of a life lived with anxiety integral to it, which privileges the signifier anxiety as embedded in contemporary discourse, spoke to many as demonstrated by this well attended event.

Rowan began by stating the central place of anxiety as the defining affect of human beings and as the most widespread so-called mental health problem of today. Drawing data from various epidemiological studies, he spoke of vast anxiety-driven market consumption. This scale is further evidenced in the DSM whereby generalised anxiety and/or panic disorders make up two thirds of it, alerting us also to the established anxiety component of all mental health disorders today.

Treatment of anxiety by the medical and psychological fields primarily aims at treating the symptom - a symptom understood as universal, presenting and affecting the same for each. The subject remains elided. Bio-psychiatry operates on the fundamentally biological model of assumed chemical unbalance whereby treatment is implemented through suppression of anxiety via medication - benzodiazepines/antidepressants

- which dampen down or sedate the subject. Psychological interventions operate on the basis of learning and behaviour modification, teaching one how to counter anxiety-provoking thoughts and substitute them for non-anxiety provoking thoughts. Such treatments which are typically associated with cognitive models are based on the assumption of maladaptive learning and aim to take account of consciously accessible thought patterns and bodily reactions. This approach is akin to learning a new language and leaves untouched the impossibility of the sexual relation for each. The emphasis on mindfulness and meditative practices to treat anxiety, such as ACT interventions, use the premise of acceptance of anxiety and behaviour modification strategies. The instrumentalisation and commodification of meditation ensures that its connection with ancient meditative practices and what they aimed at is lost.

Rowan continued via a brief detour into the philosophical tradition to present key relevant points drawing upon Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Sartre. Conceptions of anxiety for each have to do with anxiety conceived as defining modes of human existence. For Kierkegaard, the concept of anxiety and what it indicates is clearly placed at the centre of human life. Not a symptom but a perennial and defining mode of human existence, anxiety is freedom's possibilities. For Heidegger and the concept of Dasein as pure existence with no properties only possibilities, the crucial experience of anxiety is that of choice. How each chooses to live 'authentically' with the impossibility of enacting all possibilities. Whilst for Sartre, the human being is radically free, with anxiety being the cost to pay for this existential unbounded freedom. Anxiety therefore occurs when one acts on the world with free will and one suffers from illness due to various forms of weakness of will.

Having evoked this implicit comparison, it definitively illustrates the deep chasm existing between mainstream bio-psychiatry and most psychological models today, and philosophical thinking which extends over almost 200 years in its conception of "Anxiety in Human Life". This allowed the opportunity for the introduction of Freud's point of departure from the philosophical view (the binary of body/mind), with the divided subject between conscious and unconscious. Freud's hypothesis of the unconscious places anxiety in the body, the cause of which is an overwhelming excess of the drive. A primordial psychic defence against that which threatens to overwhelm the subject is inherent to the working of the psychic apparatus – drive representatives are repressed which give rise to anxiety. This is structural. The basis of Freud's first theory on anxiety laid emphasis on the release of blocked libido where organic tension must be transformed into anxiety beyond the soma. His later and elaborated theory moved to anxiety as a signal of impending threat regarding object loss – castration anxiety represented its paradigmatic form. For each subject, the experience of anxiety is in a singular way, without correlation between event and subjective response. Examples of PTSD were cited as illustrations. The aim of psychoanalysis is therefore not to eliminate anxiety but to alleviate it, to reduce it for the subject in terms of suffering and any possibility of *passage à l'acte*.

Lacan agrees with Freud that anxiety is of the body, that it inscribes itself on the parlêtre as a signal of the Real and exists as jouissance as a property of the body. It is the body that experiences jouissance and it is the subject that desires. The concepts of anxiety and desire are woven together, no more so than in Lacan's seminal *Seminar X "Anxiety"* the seminar where Lacan truly presents his invention and elaboration of object petit *a*. It is here that he sets out the innovative and complex developments of

anxiety as a concept and yet, Rowan refers to Jacques-Alain Miller in saying that the constitution of desire is the subject of the seminar. Lacan challenges his own notion of desire as constituted by an object by what it aims at. The constituting object of desire has a cause, an object cause from which desire in its intentional form is constituted. This means therefore that the object cause is behind and not in front of the subject. The object that causes desire is *a*, the non-specularised remainder in the Real that escapes the subject's immersion in language and is a scrap of the real in the subject. It is the unknowable and real object as opposed to one of the objects in the field of the Other which are known.

The formula for phantasy contains the same elements as for anxiety setting out the relationship between the subject and *a*. The phantasy represents how the subject transforms this object into the field of the Other. The constituted or aimed for object in the socio-cultural field are those that animate us and present in myriad substitutable form. They are the same objects that can cause anxiety, taking on an uncanny air turning the object away from a point of satisfaction. Examples cited include the oral object being derailed or the disembodied persecutory voice experienced by the paranoid. Anxiety is this encounter with the object cause of desire, the real constituting object which is the meaning of 'anxiety is not without an object'. Anxiety is not a signifier or symbolic object but nevertheless *a* is not conceivable without the signifying chain. Anxiety arises when nothing mediates between the subject and jouissance, when *a* is too present, when lack is lacking, extinguishing desire. When the subject can no longer find a reflection of the image, can no longer find themselves localisable in the Other, anxiety emerges.

Rowan concluded the seminar by stating that anxiety has the same structure for each subject, who creates symptoms in response to the enigmatic desire of the Other in order to give meaning to diffuse sense. Language treats jouissance but always in an imperfect way leaving a remainder, a gap. It is this lack of being that leads to desire and this is what makes us human.

A varied discussion followed in response to questions and comments from the audience which addressed each aspect of Rowan's presentation, before culminating on the question of the prevalence of anxiety in our era. Rowan spoke of the effects on the subject of increasingly being reduced to an object of consumption, bereft of social bond in the capitalist discourse, whilst also grounding it within a European and specifically Irish context.



ICLO-NLS would like to express our appreciation and our thanks to Alan Rowan for the transmission of a complex concept with ease and additionally, for situating "*Anxiety in Human Life*" within our culture and within our city.

Caroline Heanue

The Freud Project at IMMA 2016-2021

Susan McFeely

For the first time in its history, IMMA has dedicated a series of galleries to a particular artist for an extended period of time. Over the next five years, the Freud Project will provide a full programme of related exhibitions, artist commissions which will offer new perspectives on Lucian Freud's work, with particular emphasis on Freud's relationship to Ireland and Irish modernism.- The Freud project: "In creating the dedicated Freud centre in IMMA's garden galleries we are creating a space for looking, thinking and learning that will provoke new reflection on Lucian Freud's work and what it means in the contemporary world".

The IMMA Collection brings together 50 of Lucian Freud's works encompassing the themes of portraiture, self-portraiture, Still life, animals and nature. Lucian Freud described the subjects of his work as autobiographical remarking "it's all to do with hope and memory and sensuality and involvement, really". Lucian Freud's work explores the human condition, aging and the passage of time. In particular, the portraits of his mother, he commented, that he had spent his childhood trying to avoid his mother's excessive attention. Following his father's death, his mother fell into a deep depression, it was only at this time Lucian Freud painted over 12 paintings of her remarking "I started working from her because she lost interest in me, I couldn't have if she had been interested". In all of Freud's portraits the subject's gaze is averted.

The current exhibition ends October 2017.



"This is what analysts deal with, such that, despite what one may think, they are confronted with the real far more than even scientists are. Analysts deal with nothing but that. They are forced to submit to it -that is, to brace themselves all the time. To do so, they must have awfully good armor to protect them from anxiety. The very fact that they can at least speak about anxiety is quite something." [2]

EVENTS	What's Coming Up?	WHERE/ WHEN
FEB 10th FRI	ICLO-NLS Space Formation of the Analyst and its School <i>"The Desire For Supervision"</i> with Veronique Voruz	PSI Grantham House, Grantham St, D2 7pm-9pm
FEB 11th SAT	ICLO-NLS Annual Clinical & Theoretical Seminar <i>"The Place of Images in an Analysis"</i> with Veronique Voruz	The Teacher's Club 36 Parnell Sq, D1 11am-1pm
FEB 17th FRI	ICLO-NLS SIG Child & Adolescent Lacanian Psychoanalysis with Joanne Conway	TBC
FEB 24th FRI	ICLO-NLS Teaching Seminar: <i>"The Trauma of Language"</i> with Rik Loose	DBS Castle House, Georges St., D2 7pm-9pm
MAR 11th SAT	ICLO-NLS Annual Study-Day: <i>"The Unconscious. For And Against"</i> with Lilia Mahjoub , President of the NLS	The Teacher's Club 36 Parnell Sq, D1 9.30am – 4pm
APR 07th FRI	Book Launch: <i>Surviving Anne. A novel</i> [Karnac Books] with Gustavo Dossal	TBC
APR 08th SAT	ICLO-NLS Annual Clinical & Theoretical Seminar: <i>'Transgender'</i> with Gustavo Dossal	PSI
APR 29th-30th	NLS Annual Congress: <i>"About the Unconscious. Place and Interpretation of Formations of the Unconscious in Psychoanalytical Treatments"</i>	Paris
JUL 1st-2nd	PIPOL 8 <i>"A Non-Standard Clinical Practice"</i>	Brussels

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Freud Project Sign, IMMA: Susan McFeely, 2016
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[1] Lacan J., *Anxiety, The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book X*. Ed. Miller J.-A., Trans. Price A. P., Polity Press
Cambridge, UK. p. 311.
[2] Lacan J., *The Triumph of Religion preceded by Discourse to Catholics*. Trans. Fink B., Polity Press,
Cambridge, UK, 2013. p. 62.

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New Lacanian School: www.amp-nls.org

World Association of Psychoanalysis: www.wapol.org
