tialism which would seek truth in some "innocent" group of people and the naive notion of identification which imagines the possibility of emulating them.

It is to extend their scope that we wish to introduce Lacan's theory into current discussions emerging from critiques of specific institutions. Lacan raises serious questions for those critiques which take institutions—whether museums, urban planning, television, or film—as social spaces in which already existing antagonisms are played out, interests are denied or fulfilled, values upheld or denigrated. No institution can be reduced to a mere reflection or tool of prior intersubjective struggles. For such a reduction would fail to take account of the determining action of the institution itself and of the way its operations exceed any intersubjective intention or effect. Ironically, many current critiques of institutions steer clear of psychoanalytic investigation, in order, one suspects, to avoid the "privatized" realm of human intersubjectivity. They thus deprive themselves of the most rigorous and sustained attempt to theorize a nonpsychologistic, nonformal subject and end by subscribing to a belief in an ahistorical subject with fixed values, interests, and battles to fight. In opposition to the essentialism of a "will to power" implied by these other analyses, Lacan insists on the constitution of a "desire not to know"; and thus of a subject at odds with itself. In opposition to the unity—if not always *per se*, at least, *per accidens*—of the "subject effect," Lacan elaborates a theory of a subject split between conscious and unconscious, effect not merely of an institution's meaning, but also of its complex failures of meaning, its accidents.

*

Questioned about whether his admission that science always necessarily relied on institutionally endorsed conventions of falsification made us prisoners of these conventions, Karl Popper replied that we were prisoners only "in the Pickwickian sense; if we try we can break out of our framework at any time." By this he meant that conventions were "user friendly," and that we could, with conscious effort, always change our minds about them and remake them to our needs. It is what we might call, in a slightly different sense, Lacan's "Pickwickian" recognition of the instability of language which warns us that, though we are not prisoners of signifying conventions, revolution is nevertheless not permanent; it involves the change of much more than our minds.

Joan Copjec

Most of the following documents were previously published, along with others, as supplements to Ornicar?, *the journal of the Champ freudien*: La scission de 1953 *appeared in October 1976 as supplement to no. 7 and* L'excommunication *in January 1977 as supplement to no. 8. The "Introduction to the Names-of-the-Father Seminar" is published here for the first time. We wish to thank Jacques-Alain Miller for permission to publish these documents.*

Letter to Rudolph Loewenstein

My dear Loew,[1]

If I have not written you earlier concerning the—(literally) extravagant—events that our group[2] has just traversed, it is for reasons of solidarity which governed my behavior for as long as I belonged to the group. That bond, as you know, is now broken. I have let a few days elapse, as much in order to allow the veritable sense of release brought by that break to produce its effects as in order to devote myself, first off, to setting up a working community that promises to be most auspicious:[3] unexpectedly so, I would say, had we not rediscovered precisely the fruit of our effort these last years, the meaning of our work, the principles of our teaching, in brief, everything that we thought for long months was going to be stolen from us and that *would* have been, in the most pernicious manner, for those whom we introduced to the discipline of psychoanalysis.

Let it suffice for me to tell you that I inaugurated the scientific life of the new Société Française de Psychanalyse last Wednesday in the amphitheater of the Clinic which you know, dear Loew, with a talk on "the symbolic, the imaginary, and the real," before an audience of 63 individuals, of whom 45 have already declared their adherence, as candidates, to our teaching and our works.

Lagache,[4] whose rigorous conduct since the beginning of our crisis has not faltered, presided over the session. Should anyone tell you that we represent the clan of psychologists, don't believe a word of it: we will show you, list in

1. Loewenstein, who was Lacan's training analyst from 1932 to 1938, was also the analyst of the two other principles referred to in this letter, Sacha Nacht and Daniel Lagache. Born in Poland, Loewenstein would emigrate to New York during the War, where he would be a principal proponent of ego psychology.
(The footnotes in this dossier, except those in brackets, were contributed by Jeffrey Mehlman.)
2. Société Psychanalytique de Paris
3. Société Française de Psychanalyse
4. Daniel Lagache, a psychoanalyst and Sorbonne professor, was a proponent of integrating psychoanalysis into a general theory of psychology. He saw in the University the institutional ethos best suited for guiding the organization of the practice of psychoanalysis.

hand, that we have as our students more physicians than the former Société, and among the most qualified of them. It's not for us, moreover, to take sole credit for it. For to be fair, one would have to take into account the insane behavior of that crew which saw in the founding of the Institute[5] the opportunity to confiscate for its advantage the truly enormous authority that the former Société had taken on in relation to the students. That authority, based on the good faith of people who found in the very experience of their own analysis and of their supervision the wherewithal to justify the grounds of the commitments and rules imposed on them, was suddenly presented to them in the most autocratic and disagreeable guise. Instead of a college of respected elders, among whom each according to his affinities found his masters and channels of recourse, they saw emerge the sole silhouette of our former comrade Nacht,[6] concerning which you know that it was never distinguished by its grace, but which, faced with unanticipated difficulties, manifested itself through a lack of tact and decorum, a brutality of speech, a contempt for individuals that I would not mention here if it were not destined to be the object of student fabulation for years to come. Supporting him were two newcomers without training experience: Lebovici,[7] whose nervousness, the result of the daily mistreatment to which he is subject in his service at the hospital (I think you know enough about the kind of relation that occasionally is established between a student and his patron for me not to need to expatiate on it), always made the most disagreeable impression on the students, to whom he seemed a rather "bad egg." The other one, Bénassy, a fellow who is not uncultivated, who suddenly showed himself (to the stupefaction of all) to be possessed of the mentality of a sergeant, the promoter of the most meddlesome and cantankerous of measures, instituting a roll call in courses attended by people whose hair was already gray, confronting the general insurrection with the most ludicrous confessions—"I must admit that in founding this Institute, we had forgotten about you"—only to conclude, moreover: "now it's too late: enjoy your oblivion." And to top the whole thing off, a post of general coordinator placed in the hands of a young man[8] chosen by Nacht for his notorious mediocrity, and whose name won't mean anything to you since he was not even a member of the Society when he was promoted to the post. He suddenly found himself with the function of assigning to analysts in training their supervisors, and even—to those already accepted—their analysts. Absurd in his initiatives, bombarding the students with

5. The Institute was to be the teaching arm of the Société Psychanalytique de Paris, and potentially the locus of its real power.
6. Sacha Nacht, elected president of the Société Psychanalytique de Paris in 1949, was a leading French advocate of the "medicalization" of psychoanalysis, the elimination of all but licensed physicians from the profession.
7. In 1975, Serge Lebovici became the only Frenchman ever to serve as president of the International Psychoanalytic Association.
8. Henri Sauguet

the most disconcerting administrative notes (even though they were, alas, secretly in accordance with Nacht's directives), he drove their disarray to a pitch and must be considered one of the causes of the failure of the Institute (for can there be any other term for a situation in which there remain approximately 25 students of the 83 called on to enroll).

That is where we are.

In order to analyze for you the inner mechanism of things, I must grant Nacht the justice of acknowledging that he never wavered or flinched in the pursuit of his design. And that if he still groups around him a majority of our former colleagues, he owes it to a consistency in his policies that would be worthy of our respect did they not proceed no less constantly through the most utterly unscrupulous of means.

If he thought that he would win me over to his game by patiently courting me over the years, I can agree that his disappointment must have been severe. And yet from that relationship he derived only benefits: information, ideas, readings for which he was poorly prepared for lack of grounding. He was welcomed by my wife and found in my brother-in-law, the painter Masson, the hospitality that permitted him to remarry at a remove from the anonymity of the big city, in the cordial atmosphere of a little Provençal village.[9] It was precisely last July, and my wife and I were witnesses.

Already at the time, however, he could sense my disapproval of the quite improper manner in which he had managed to get himself elected—and for five years—to the position of director of an Institute that did not yet exist. Without the Assembly's having been forewarned by an agenda, the principle, the length of the term, and his own proposal of himself as sole candidate were carried off by a voice vote, concerning which the best among his supporters were agreed only a few months ago that it was a "fascist" procedure. On that occasion once again, I had concluded the year with an address that was followed by a discussion of great warmth. And the proposals came as a surprise to the Assembly. I must confess that I voted *for* the first, although a bit vexed, but was literally stupefied when I saw that the second followed immediately thereafter. Nacht did not appear to me to be unworthy of exercising the functions of director, but at the time we did not even know in what they were to consist. For at the time there was not yet anything of the Institute, neither program nor statutes, only a building suddenly found by him and adopted as an emergency measure despite its inconveniences, whereas all the objections, obstacles, and finally the refusals (which until then had eliminated—we have written proof—all the choices proposed for a foundation whose delay had impeded our work for years) had previously stemmed from him. The vote for his name, nevertheless, was far from

9. In Le Tholonet, outside Aix-en-Provence, at the home of André Masson, Sylvia Bataille's brother-in-law.

unanimous, others, and specifically Lagache, who were more astute than I, having abstained.

My confidence in him on essential matters was, I should say, intact, and when, thanks to his efforts, the Institute was physically ready in November, it was shattering for me to hear from his own mouth with what cynicism he planned to make a purely political use of it: "giving loads of courses," for example, to those whose action he planned to neutralize; abandoning completely the question of the defense of nonphysicians whom we had welcomed in large numbers among our students, despite their vulnerability in a certain number of lawsuits then underway; proposing as a slogan destined to win over a small group the officialization of the diploma of psychoanalysis in France, concerning which he knew quite well that without an entirely unexpected success in some political procedure which would even then be subject to caution, the Council of the Ordre des Médecins would always be opposed to it; domesticating, thanks to that lure, the rather impressive numbers of those who had had recourse to us since the war, attesting to their immense need of a truly comprehensive technique for the mentally ill—and organizing on those bases what the adherents of his group admitted out loud when they deemed themselves masters of the situation: a "roadblock" destined to submit to the authority of a small team access to the exercise of the profession.

Teaching was thus not the aim of the Institute, but the means of domination over the very individuals awaiting it with a hope whose manifestations were quite moving. And they were going to pay dearly for it (which I mean quite literally, as you will see in a moment).

I did not conceal from Nacht my disapproval, whose nature he at first did not understand. "It's in your interest." "You've got a golden situation in this; why do you want to spoil it?" How many times did I hear that appeal each time, during those months of sordid struggle, that my support, still withheld, would have caused the balance to shift in their favor.

The opposition, unfortunately for us, was initiated on rather wobbly grounds. Nacht, sure of his position, thought he could get rid of the person of the Princess,[10] who was at the time quite committed to the defense of Madame Williams,[11] of whom he dared to say publicly that it was regrettable that she had been acquitted by the court: he dismissed the Princess symbolically from our counsels by refusing to receive her.

10. Marie Bonaparte, Princess of Greece, the French psychoanalyst closest to Freud personally, was a fervent adversary of Lacan's. In *La Dernière Bonaparte* (Paris, Perrin, 1982), Célia Bertin has determined that she was the mistress of Loewenstein, a circumstance of which Lacan was apparently not aware.

11. Margaret Clark-Williams was a lay analyst sued by the French medical guild for the illegal practice of medicine. She was first acquitted (1952), then found guilty (1953) in a trial in which Nacht had testified rather ambiguously.

To be sure, the activities of that person may be considered as having always been nefarious in our group. The social prestige she represents can only falsify relationships, that which she derives from her role with Freud allows her to be listened to by all with a patience resembling approval; the respect due an elderly woman brings with it a tolerance for her views which demoralizes the young in whose eyes we appear in a ludicrous posture of submissiveness.

At the time I did not know what I have learned since about her incessant maneuvers in the past to preserve her privileges within the group.

She availed herself—in order to make her way back in—of the first of the extravagances to which Nacht and his adherents have ceaselessly devoted themselves, and which, nevertheless, have led them only, after long months, to their downfall, so great is the power of a coherent minority.

The Educational Committee was informed one day, forty-eight hours in advance, that it was to receive important advice at its next meeting from the Directorial Committee (a committee of which no one had as yet heard that it was functioning). It turned out that it was to receive a curriculum that was not only remarkably weak, but which had plainly been made in order to relegate to the shadows all that had been done until then through the initiative of individuals, and specifically my own seminar of texts that twenty-five students, under no obligation whatsoever, had been attending for a year and a half with unfailing faithfulness—all to the sole benefit of Nacht's so-called technical seminar, which turned out, by absorbing on its own the activity of the "third year," to be the crowning experience of psychoanalytic training. In order to underscore for you the thrust of the thing: my seminar restricted to the "first year" was scheduled for the same time (a unique occurrence in the curriculum) as a seminar attributed to Lagache under the same heading (with the single difference that the texts assigned to Lagache were inaccessible to readers of French).

To the dish that had been served up to us in a tone of "Don't you find it excellent?" by the accomplices (or jokers) who had cooked it up in private, there was added a dessert in similar taste: it was, we were told, a matter of political urgency that Nacht (whose term had already been extended three times beyond the statutory limit) be maintained as President of the Society until the vote on the statutes of the Institute, which remained in an undetermined state, and of which we were led to understand that they would have to undergo a long period before reaching fruition.

I must say that I returned home in a state of prodigious gaiety and remained for fifteen days without revealing anything to anyone. I will skip the fact that Nacht, in whose house I had lunched the day before that first memorable day, had assured me of his intention of finally leaving the presidency to me—a curious move for which he never found any other excuse than that his wife had advised him against troubling me by speaking to me of what would be proposed

the next day!! Most remarkable of all is that he appears to have actually held her responsible for having thus "altered our relationship."

All of this, of course, was used by the Princess in order to agitate the group. In the meanwhile, Lagache came to see me in order to argue how regrettable it was that we had abandoned for so long to Nacht a representative function for which the very neutrality, if not the nullity of his doctrinal positions had appeared to us to render him particularly well suited, and which he had held, in fact, with dignity, by concluding every discussion that was the slightest bit stimulating with comments amounting to regarding the object as a matter of indifference, all things considered, in the light of his experience—all spoken in a tone whose benignness might pass as happily appropriate to his function.

A change of style might be favorably anticipated, now that the foundation of the Institute was theoretically to return to the Society a greater availability for doctrinal work. My designation for the presidency was to meet with the agreement of all.

At an exceptional session, obtained by the Princess, Lagache thus lanced the abcess with great courage, on the theme: "Work cannot go on in this manner in the Society, since the majority of its members are unhappy with it." The confluence of those remarks with the attacks of the Princess (whose style you are acquainted with) set off a powder keg, but served, alas!, to crystallize around Nacht a "medical" core, concerning which one can only regret that it was in the minority, since Nacht availed himself of it in order to nurse within it a siege mentality which gave it a coherence that it had absolutely not had on any level—be it of doctrine, of technique, or even of friendship.

With utter hypocrisy, Nacht chose to see in it the mark of a mission conferred on him by the group. His technique was consistent: any manifestation coming from the other side, no matter how innocent (Favez's candidacy as a titular member,[12] for example) was presented to his partisans as a sign of a plot.

The weeks of crisis that followed were characterized by commitments that he managed to have *signed* by the eight grouped around him. The principle of the matter was that for him to be able to succeed in pursuing the task of the Institute, he had to be "master in his own house," that is, to remain president of the Educational Committee at the same time that he was director of the Institute, since it had to be admitted that he could not be kept longer in a presidency that would revert to me (which was agreed), but to which had been joined until then the function of presiding over the Committee.

It was on that point that the battle was joined.

During all that time, and from the very first session, I had refrained from

12. "Titular members" were empowered to perform training analyses; "adhering members" could conduct only "therapeutic" analyses.

any personal attack against Nacht and limited my opposition to my votes. I constrained myself—which was sufficiently indicated by the functions entrusted to me with the consent of all—to play the role of a mediator.

At meetings in the Princess's home, I maintained against all and without faltering the principle that the Directorship of the Institute had to be reserved for he who had taken the initiative to found it—all the witnesses of my action will confirm as much for you—and despite all pressures, I never accepted that I might replace him, except in case of ultimate necessity.

It was quite in spite of myself that I was witness to the astonishing telephone calls from the Princess to Anna Freud, in which our adversaries were described by her as gangsters and in which she raised the question of whether or not she knew if the International Association would recognize their group in the event of a secession (to which she received the answer that they would certainly be recognized, as had occurred in the case of other splits on a national scale).[13]

Secession was, in fact, from the beginning the vehicle of blackmail of what was at the time the Nacht group, and it was ceaselessly bandied about until it itself became a majority.

Here is how the thing came about. Resignation as a tool of blackmail could not be pursued by the Directorial Committee of the Institute without their ultimately being forced into it. Normally, the Educational Committee should have picked up the charge and it was again the partisans of Nacht who created an obstruction.

At that point, I felt that I should accept it, believing myself to be alone able to implement an arbitrage. I was indeed elected to the post, did not take on any scientific Secretary, although both Lagache and Bouvet[14] would certainly have agreed to offer me their help, and immediately declared that I considered myself to be no more than temporary director with the aim of arriving at statutes that might meet with the agreement of all, and the following day I convoked the eight members of the Nacht group to meet with me in order to study the situation. They all accepted individually, only subsequently to decline on orders from Nacht.

I then undertook what seemed to me to be the only effort that might have a sane outcome. I withdrew for eight days (it was the Christmas vacation), far from all contact with anyone, and elaborated the principles of an Institute of the sort that seemed to me to ensure instruction open to the diversity of minds that we must satisfy and to prolong the tradition of the Society.

There was in that proposal—which all acknowledged to contain ideas for

13. This information turned out to be incorrect; see the Report of the XVIII[th] Congress of the IPA reprinted below, pp. 72-75.

14. Maurice Bouvet; his writings on libidinal phases of development are the object of a sustained critique in Lacan's seminar of 1956-1957, "La relation d'objet et les structures freudiennes."

the future—nothing that resembled a compromise motion. If I took into account the present situation, it was solely in the form I wanted to retain for it: being as close as possible to the proposal already presented—all this in order to avoid the conflict of vanities that might have erupted at the idea that I was introducing "my statute." To the delicate problem of the presidency of the commission I brought a solution that was, to be sure, a bit complex, but which, given the stiffening of minds, appeared to me to be the only one that might make them listen to reason. In sum, I hoped to bring the opponents back to notions of principle.

That was where I failed: it was objected to me that the form of the so-called statutes was not juridical. That was true and I had never hoped that they would be voted on as they were, but that they would be the starting point for a state of harmony at last restored, with a perspective placing the accent on teaching itself and not on its political incidences.

The mere fact that I failed to mention either the Princess or her honorary functions was sufficient to decide everything.

In a personal interview that she had requested with Nacht, and which upon leaving dinner at my house she had the effrontery to announce to us (Lagache, Bouvet, and myself), she carried on with him for an hour and a half, with the entire Society marking time while waiting for them, and concluded a treaty with Nacht, whose terms were revealed to us only by the subsequent sequence of events.

One of its first effects was that she found me among her followers who would permit her to assure Nacht of his majority [an illegible word], a rival for the post of president in the person of Cénac, you may imagine with what entirely disinterested intention of "conciliation" he accepted the role. I was nevertheless elected president.[15]

And thereby I became the symbol of a resistance to a long process whose stages will be indicated to you by a report of Lagache's,[16] and through which Nacht achieved point by point what had been his intention (those who supported me knew it from the beginning): ensuring, through a massive entry of the directorial committee (including the administrative secretary!) into the Educational Committee, a permanent majority in the ordinary and extraordinary functioning of that Committee: that is, having the subjects examined at every stage by a commission of four members only, the director of the Institute being the sole permanent element having, to be sure, a preponderant voice, which, given the fact that it is his secretary who designates the three others, assures him, you can understand this, I think, of a rather handsome probability that he will never be countered, etc.

15. Lacan defeated Michel Cénac in the third round of balloting on January 21, 1953.
16. Lagache's report appears in *La scission de 1953*, a supplement to *Ornicar?*, no. 7, 1976.

The success of those proposals—concerning each of which I had on a previous occasion heard one or several members of his own group affirm that it was an excess to which he would never lend his support—was obtained, nevertheless, in every case thanks to an expertly calculated technique that consisted of the Princess's reintroducing the previously rejected proposal under circumstances in which, given the fact that the entirety of those present had not been forewarned, the majority revealed itself to be favorable.

This little game, which was demoralizing for the opposition itself, took four months before coming to an end and was crowned by a special session devoted to bestowing on Princess Marie Bonaparte the reward for her good and loyal services (which she had been obliged to wait for until then) by definitively including her—for life—among the number of the members of the Administrative Council of the (medical) Institute of Psychoanalysis, an organ which, as we learned from dispatches to the press, definitively unburdens the Société Psychanalytique de Paris of everything dealing with the instruction and licensing of psychoanalysts.

You will be able to see from an open letter written by Juliette Boutonnier what the standard of existence of the unfortunate Society had become during this time and how the "gang" (*dixit* the Princess) busied itself with secret meetings in the directorial chambers of the Institute, from which it emerged, at whatever time the futile "works" to which it had henceforth consigned the Society came to an end, for the administrative session at which serious matters could begin to be discussed.

The last of these, as you know, consisted in finally removing the President of the Society[17] so that the blunder of his unexpected election might at last be corrected, and replacing him, according to M. Lebovici's very words, with an even more insignificant (and consequently more docile) personality than the one who had been unsuccessful the first time in opposing him.

It's at this juncture that we reencounter the notorious students, who had been forgotten in the whole affair.

The students, indeed, who had been asked, as soon as the Institute opened in March, to pay absolutely exorbitant enrollment fees, at this time—that is, during this ongoing struggle, of which none of us defending the students, throughout the entire year, had made the slightest mention in their presence—had dared to issue a number of demands (and did so, moreover, in the most respectful manner vis-à-vis their directors and teachers), and it was in the form of their response that the latter, in turn, began to lose face. One of them did not hesitate to tell the students that he was losing 200,000 francs every month in this little operation; the same one went further, saying, in effect, that if they were being asked for a lot of money, psychoanalysis, on the other hand, was a profession that allowed one to earn a lot later on.

17. Lacan himself.

The very same one did not hesitate to say to the face of one of the delegates presenting him with the griefs of his comrades that the role he was playing augured rather poorly for his analytic future. For every demonstration the standard response was: "You are revealing to what an extent you are poorly analyzed" (it was a question, by the way, of their own students).

Under those circumstances, one need not be surprised that the unsuccessful petitioners came to believe that they were making a displacement, and they were put on the track of a more adequate interpretation of their reactions by the tenor of the commitments to the Institute which they were asked to sign a second time, after they had already done so quite willingly in relation to the good old Société. That awakened their suspicions and they asked to see the statutes.

The effect produced was indescribable. This was the moment chosen by the group of our increasingly flustered colleagues (who refused to understand anything of what was transpiring) to make an example. They had tried to intimidate the students by announcing to them that a Disciplinary Commission was to be formed and by proposing to name a former magistrate (sic!) to head it. That had a certain effect. But it would have been hard for that effect to be definitive on individuals who had not yet formally committed themselves to the Institute. How could they think that by striking on high, the intimidation would be decisive? A certain Pasche, a former existentialist turned Jacobin of the new institution, who, from the very first conflicts, told me that what was at stake was having in hand a power whose effects were to be pressed "to their ultimate consequences," let me know—with all the esteem in which he held both my person and my teaching, whose terms had often proved illuminating for him—that my very presence in the position I occupied was at the origin of the students' resistance, that it was because they knew themselves to be supported by me from within that their resistance continued unabated and that it would be appropriate to separate us.

I will remember all my life, through the comments of that Robespierre (which retained a certain decorum in their madness), the convulsed faces of those participating in that bizarre manhunt. It was not a pretty sight and, resisting their barks, I accorded myself the luxury of seeing it a second time.

To tell the truth, the second time was far calmer. The motion of lack of confidence proposed by Madame Odette Codet on behalf of the Princess, who was sure of her course, was passed. But a certain number of those, in whom the previous spectacle had stirred in their fiber a human horror, left definitively in order to found a new Society and I immediately joined them.

You now know the whole story of the affair. And you can imagine what an experience it was for me. I was subjected to the ordeal of the most thoroughgoing and wrenching betrayal. An individual, Nacht, whom I had admitted to my friendship, behaved in such a manner that every time his wife, who was, by the way, overwhelmed by the affair, telephoned mine, I was able to find in the

circumstance an unmistakable clue that within 48 hours a new blow was to follow.

Nothing was spared by him in his attacks on me. An old discussion engaged on the terrain of theory and practice—and which bore on a technique that (be it justified or not) I had defended publicly, to wit: the systematic use of shorter sessions in certain analyses, and in particular in training analyses, in which the specific nature of the resistances seemed to me to justify the technique. This was revived by him even though I had publicly declared that since we were beginning to organize the profession, I would submit to the standards of a professional ruling and not revert to the practice no matter what interest I regarded it as having, and even though I had gradually adjusted to the rule the previous year and definitively conformed to the regulation time all my training analyses since the end of that year; it was impossible to find since then the slightest failing in that regard.

He recalled an alleged commitment made in February 1951, precisely concerning a particularly successful training analysis, to restrict myself to the commonly held standard, without attempting to remember that I had been authorized again in the month of December 1951 to present before the Society the reasons for that technique which I had in fact been pursuing in full sight and with the full knowledge of all.

The number of my students was turned into an objection against me by claiming that that was the sole motivation for the reduction in the time devoted to each one and by failing to recall that all those who had previously taken the Committee's examination had been able to speak individually of the benefits they had derived from their training and to show in their supervision the sterling quality of that training.

Nacht, by reporting a comment alleged to have been made by one of our colleagues, a physician in a hospital (Madame Roudinesco,[18] to give her name), concerning these facts—in a form that turned out to be false upon inquiry, to wit: that he, Nacht, had lied—succeeded, by conveying the allegation to each of our colleagues on the Committee in the course of a round of visits that took up a whole afternoon, in convincing several of them to sign an affidavit to the effect that I would indeed have taken the commitment in question during the meeting of the Committee in February 1951. All this done with the sole aim of producing it in that form the following day at a meeting of students on whom, by the way, it had no effect.

Everything was put to work so that my students might leave me. And after my departure from the Society, those students in analysis alleged to be

18. Jenny Roudinesco, a pediatrician and psychoanalyst in training, was the mother of the future historian of psychoanalysis in France, Élisabeth Roudinesco. After writing an open letter to Nacht and Lacan on the malaise among analysts in training, she was accused by the Nacht group of plotting with Lacan.

suspect for having suffered defects in their initiation were informed that they could henceforth spontaneously apply (that is, without my authorization) to be accredited for supervision before the Educational Committee.

Not one left me, nor even dreamed of it. And I dare say that my analyses continued without being appreciably affected by the whole tornado raging outside.

I can also tell you that what this ordeal has taught me of the maneuvers and the weaknesses of men is such that a page of my life has now been turned. I have seen how a friend is pressured step by step in a direction against you by a force stronger than himself, to what abdications the best come to advise you to yield (while taking your own good as their pretext), the frivolity with which each sees what does not affect his immediate interests, and how an honest and generous man may be won over to such enterprises, how, because of his fatigue, one might obtain from him the first concession made to the desire for peace, an infamy.

I have seen what can happen in a society of "analyzed" individuals, and I knew from Freud himself that it goes beyond anything one might imagine: and indeed I would never have imagined *that*. I now see, having brought a few of its features back to life for you, what these nightmarish months may have been for me, and that, in truth, I have been able to survive them only by virtue of continuing, through all the frightful emotions these months afforded me, my seminars of reading and supervision, without having either missed them a single time or, I believe, having allowed their inspiration and quality to wane. Quite to the contrary, this year has been particularly fruitful, and I believe I have brought genuine progress to the theory and techniques specific to obsessional neurosis.

Yes, I have managed to live thanks to that labor, which was at times executed in true despair—and also thanks to a presence whose succor did not wane for an instant, even though she (yes, she is my wife) was not shielded from the attempts to unsettle the firmness which I have seen her to possess at certain moments. Yes, believe me, Loew, I don't want to tell you about the most abject part, but that too existed.

What is most wrenching for me is perhaps the attitude of a certain number of titular and adhering members. Thank God, the youngest of them showed themselves to be of a different stamp, as I told you. But among those who knew the Occupation and the years preceding it, I observed with terror a conception of human relations revealed in the style and forms that can be seen flourishing in the people's democracies. The analogy was striking, and the group effects resulting from it have taught me more about the problem, which has always fascinated me, of the so-called Prague-type trial than all my reflections—which had advanced rather far, all the same—on the subject.

I think of the kind of faith which carries me now beyond all that, which almost makes me forget it; yes, it is composed of a capacity for forgetting which

is a function of that precious audience of those who followed me—who would never have forgotten me, even if I had been alone in walking out—of what I am going to write for Rome, my report on the function of language in psychoanalysis, of the fact that I know better and better what it is mine to say about an experience which I have only these last years been able to recognize and solely thereby truly to master.

I hope to see you in London. Whatever happens, rest assured that you will encounter there a man more convinced of his duties and his destiny.

Lagache will bring the file on the affair there: and you will see from it that it was not we who were engaging in divisiveness.

These pages were not written in order to add to that file—but in order to transmit to you, in the frank tone that our particular relationship allows us, the kind of living testimony without which a history cannot be written. No objectivity can be achieved in human matters without that subjective basis.

That is why I am authorizing you to make use of it with whomever you believe capable of understanding it—and specifically Heinz Hartmann,[19] to whom, moreover, I shall send a message.

You know, Loew, that if you come to France before or after the Congress, my wife and I will be happy if you come with your wife for the visit at our country house to which you have long been invited. I could tell you much more about what we are all expecting from the future of our work. We have given ourselves over to it in a manner sufficiently wholehearted to find ourselves, in our relations with you, to be very tardy indeed.

Rest assured, though, that our loyalty to your person remains unchanged.

Jacques Lacan
July 14, 1953

Second Manuscript

We will indeed come there with our files, and prepared to support our position.

Despite formal appearances, we have not engaged in any secession.

The members who were obliged to break away from the Society were for years the object of an insulting attitude on the part of a group in the Society pretending to possess in relation to them I know not what position of scientific superiority, and we will give you proof of that veritable rejection. They nevertheless remained, patiently, in a position of loyal collaboration. But the intimation that they should leave was formally made to them by the aforementioned Pasche as well as to the president then in office.

As for the latter, to wit your servant Lacan, his situation, as you have just

19. Prominent ego psychoanalyst and president of the IPA from 1953 to 1959.

seen, was different. Accorded star-billing during recent years by the group in question, who were deriving a certain lustre as well as advantage from the success of his teaching, he dissented from them over questions of principle, and thereafter his very desire to maintain a bond among all the elements of the Society was held to be criminal. I have proof of this as well.

Moreover, the time had come when Nacht could no longer assume the mediating function that had suited him during the period in which the Society was being reconstituted. The absolute lack of doctrinal and technical coherence in the group had seemed to dictate leaving to him a position for which he seemed designated by his very unimpressiveness. He thus managed to transform the service he was rendering into a hegemony. But already the wind was changing, the very style of the debates on matters of doctrine (at the last Congress, for example) allowed for the emergence of a certain number of new personalities, the bearers of an authentic experience and a true power of expression.

Given that situation, since he was going to have to hand over his function of leadership, it was clear that he would no longer be anything at all. The comment comes from one of his own friends, who admits to having supported him for that very reason.

In fact he would have found his precise task had he consented to fulfill it within his own limits.

On the contrary, he perceived in all this an opportunity to stifle the life of the reemerging Society beneath the demands of a bureaucratic apparatus that was suddenly deemed worthy of grabbing hold of all our efforts. And this in order to benefit a clique he constituted expressly to that end, whose leading members he had until then astutely kept at a distance from the teaching experience. Which is what one of them expressed gloriously in these terms: "Until now I was an undesirable; now I am here for life."

Loew, I am telling you, no one was more careful in gauging his actions in relation to the rhythm of the group's progress.

For years, I maintained at a certain esoteric remove whatever might confound those minds still hesitating as to the value of psychoanalysis.

And it was just when an authentic life became possible that they decided to deny us access to it.

The thing was possible solely thanks to the contribution of that floating group for whom these questions have no meaning, the group marching to the orders of the Princess, whose sole true concern is maintaining her privileged position. It was arranged through a cynical deal, entirely worthy of those whom Lagache quite rightly designated by the term "a divisive faction without principles."

Divisiveness indeed is what was practiced by them, and from the very beginning of the crisis—in the form of openly blackmailing us with the threat of secession.

As incredible as it may now seem, it was in order to prevent them from

walking out that we went from concession to concession, to the point of losing, through fatigue with the whole game, someone who was initially quite loyal and devoted to us by virtue of the very affinities of his sensitive personality, but who, being physically too frail, ended up wearing himself out and not wanting to hear anything more of the tensions that were causing his deterioration.

Rest assured that the future will return to us many a one who is truly with us.

With us, who represent whatever there is of real—and not counterfeit—teaching in the Society.

For there is where the ordeal is turning increasingly in our favor. Believe me: Nacht's inaugural lecture on the history of psychoanalysis revealed to the students a level of ignorance that they are nowhere near forgetting. And it will soon be seen if, in the presence of an active rival Society, a teaching institute can maintain itself in the service of no other end than prestige.

For us, I can tell you, the break that was finally imposed on us was a liberation—and a happy one, since we were able to see, from the maturity with which the generation of analysts currently in training reacted, that the future was secure—and the delivery, however forced it may have appeared, was a salutary one.

Pardon me if I have gone on a bit, my dear Loew. The essential matter of these last lines could not be understood without the sketch I have given you of a story that has taken away long hours of our work this year.

I wanted you to feel how bitter this experience has been for us, and how crucial as well.

I am authorizing you to convey this, whatever its confessional tone, which was authorized by our particular relationship, to Heinz Hartman, whose person I have always held in particular esteem.

I fear that some misunderstanding may remain between us because of the talk (which was strangled by time: they reduced my 20 minutes to 12 in extremis) I gave at Amsterdam. To tell the truth, that was why I preferred not to publish it even though it would take on its meaning in the context of what can now appear and will allow the relation between our positions to be clearly established. He will then see how little they are opposed to each other.

The contrary would have astonished you, dear Loew, since those positions are yours and that is where your pupil started out.

I hope to see you soon, and should you come to France either before or after London, Sylvia and I renew to you and your wife that invitation to come see us in our country house to which we had so hoped you would come at the time of the penultimate Congress of Psychoanalysis in the French Language.

Convey my respects to your wife—and we say to you, in all faithfulness, "we'll see you soon."

J. L.