
Response to Jean Hyppolite's Commentary on Freud's "Verneinung"

I hope that the gratitude we all feel for the favor Prof. Hyppolite did for us by providing such an illuminating exposé will justify in your eyes, no less I hope than in his, my insistence in asking him to prepare it.

We see once again here that, in proposing a text by Freud—that is apparently of but the most local interest—to a mind that has the fewest preconceptions about it, even if that mind is certainly not the least practiced, we find in the text the inexhaustible richness of significations that it is destined to offer up to the discipline of commentary. It is not one of those two dimensional texts, which are infinitely flat, as mathematicians say, which have only a fiduciary value in a constituted discourse, but rather a text which carries speech insofar as speech constitutes a new emergence of truth.

While it is fitting to apply to this sort of text all the resources of our exegesis, we do so not simply, as you see in this example, in order to investigate it in relation to he who is its author—a mode of historical or literary criticism whose value as "resistance" must be immediately obvious to a trained psychoanalyst—but rather in order to make it respond to questions that it raises for us, to treat it like true speech in its transferential value, as we should say, assuming we know our own terms.

This, of course, assumes that we interpret it. And is there, in fact, a better critical method than the method that applies to the comprehension of a message the very principles of comprehension that the message itself conveys? This is the most rational means by which to test its authenticity.

For full speech is defined by the fact that it is identical to what it speaks about. And this text by Freud provides us with an illuminating example by confirming my thesis regarding the transpsychological nature of the psychoanalytic field, as Jean Hyppolite just told you quite directly. 382

This is why Freud's texts turn out, in the final analysis, to have true training value for the psychoanalyst, making him practiced—which he must be, as I teach explicitly—in a register without which his experience becomes worthless.

For what is at stake is nothing less than whether the analyst is equal to the level of man at which he grabs hold of him, regardless of what he thinks of it, at which he is called upon to respond to him, whether he likes it or not, and for which he assumes responsibility, despite any reservations he may have about doing so. This means that he is not free to let himself off the hook with a hypocritical reference to his medical qualifications and an indeterminate reference to clinical foundations.

For the psychoanalytic New Deal* has more than one face—indeed, it changes faces depending on its interlocutors, such that it has had so many faces for some time now that it has been getting caught in its own alibis, starting to believe them itself, and even to erroneously see itself in them.

Regarding what we have just heard, today I simply want to indicate to you the avenues that it opens up for our most concrete research.

Prof. Hyppolite, in his analysis, has brought us over the high pass, marked by the difference in level in the subject of the symbolic creation of negation with respect to *Bejahung*. This creation of the symbol, as he stressed, must be conceptualized as a mythical moment rather than as a genetic moment. One cannot even relate it to the constitution of the object, since it concerns the relation between the subject and being and not between the subject and the world.

In this short text, as in the whole of his work, Freud thus proves to be very far ahead of his time and not at all lacking compared with the most recent aspects of philosophical reflection. He does not in any way anticipate the modern development of the philosophy of existence. But this philosophy is no more than the parry [*parade*] that reveals in certain people and covers over in others the more or less well understood repercussions of a meditation on being, which goes so far as to contest the whole tradition of our thought, believing it to stem from a primordial confusion of being among beings [*l'être dans l'étant*].

Now, we cannot fail to be struck by what constantly shines through in Freud's work regarding the proximity of these problems, which leads me to believe that his repeated references to pre-Socratic doctrines do not simply bear witness to a discreet use of notes on his reading (which would, moreover, contradict Freud's almost mystifying reluctance to show how immensely cul- 383

tivated he was), but rather to a properly metaphysical apprehension of what were pressing problems for him.

What Freud designates here as the affective has nothing to do—need we go back over this?—with the use made of this term by backers of the new psychoanalysis; they use it as a psychological *qualitas occulta* in order to designate that “lived experience” whose subtle gold, they claim, is only rendered through the decanting of a high alchemy; yet their quest for it evokes little more than a sniffing that hardly seems promising when we see them panting before its most inane forms.

In this text by Freud, the affective is conceived of as what preserves its effects right down to the discursive structuration on the basis of a primordial symbolization, this structuration (which is also called “intellectual”) having been constituted in such a way as to translate in the form of misrecognition what the first symbolization owes to death.

We are thus brought to a sort of intersection of the symbolic with the real that one might call immediate, insofar as it occurs without an imaginary intermediary, but that is mediated—although in a form that goes back on itself [*se renie*—by what was excluded at the first moment [*temps*] of symbolization.

These formulations are accessible to you, despite their aridity, thanks to everything they condense related to the use of the categories of the symbolic, the imaginary, and the real, which you are kind enough to grant me.

I want to give you an idea of the fertile fields, the key to which is what I earlier called the high pass defined by these categories.

In order to do so, I will extract two examples as premises from two different fields: the first, from what these formulations can clarify about psychopathological structures and simultaneously allow nosography to understand; the second, from what these categories allow us to understand about psychotherapeutic clinical work and simultaneously shed light on for the theory of technique.

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The first concerns the function of hallucination. We cannot, of course, overestimate the magnitude of the displacement which occurred in the position of this problem by the so-called phenomenological envisioning of the data of hallucination.

But whatever progress has been made here, the problem of hallucination remains just as centered as before on the attributes of consciousness. This is a stumbling block for a theory of thought that sought the guarantee of its certainty in consciousness. As such—at the origin of the hypothesis of this counterfeiting of consciousness that one understands as one can using the term “epiphenomenon”—it is once again and more than ever as a phenomenon of consciousness that hallucination is subjected to phenomenological reduction,

[phenomenologists] believing that it yields its meaning to us when we triturate the component forms of its intentionality.

There is no more striking example of such a method than the pages devoted by Maurice Merleau-Ponty to hallucination in his *Phenomenology of Perception*. But the limits to the autonomy of consciousness that he so admirably apprehended there in the phenomenon itself were too subtle to bar the way to the crude simplification of the hallucinatory noesis into which psychoanalysts regularly fall, incorrectly using Freud's notions in their attempt to explain hallucinatory consciousness on the basis of an eruption of the pleasure principle.¹

It would be all too easy to object to this that the noeme of an hallucination—the hallucination's "content," as we would say in the vernacular—in fact has only the most contingent of relations with any of the subject's satisfactions. Hence the phenomenological preparation of the problem allows us to glimpse that it no longer has any value here other than that of laying out the terms necessary for a true conversion of the question—namely, whether or not the noesis of the phenomenon bears any necessary relationship to its noeme.

It is here that this article, put back on the analyst's reading list, assumes its proper place by pointing out how much more structuralist Freud's thought is than received ideas would have it. For we distort the meaning of the pleasure principle if we neglect the fact that it is never posited all by itself in Freud's theory.

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The casting into structural form found in this article, as Prof. Hyppolite just outlined it for you, brings us immediately beyond the conversion that I consider to be necessary, if we know how to understand it. I am going to try to accustom you to this conversion by analyzing an example in which I hope you will sense the promise of a truly scientific reconstitution of the givens of a problem. Together we shall perhaps be the artisans of this reconstitution, insofar as we can find the handholds that have heretofore eluded [theoreticians concerned with] the crucial alternative of experience.

I need go no further to find such an example than to take up the one that fell into our lap last week, by investigating a significant moment in the analysis of the Wolf Man.²

I believe that you still recall the hallucination whose trace the subject finds anew when he remembers [a scene from his childhood]. The hallucination appeared erratically in his fifth year, but it comes to him now with the illusion, whose falsity is soon demonstrated, that he has already told Freud about it. Our examination of this phenomenon will be rendered easier by what we already know about its context. For it is not on the basis of an accumulation of facts that light can shine forth, but on the basis of a fact that is well reported

with all its correlations, in other words, with the correlations that one forgets precisely because one does not understand the fact—except when a genius intervenes who formulates the enigma precisely (here again) as if he already knew its solution(s).

This context is furnished to us in the obstacles to analysis that this case presented, Freud seeming to proceed here from one surprise to the next. For he did not, of course, have the omniscience that allows our neopractitioners to situate case planning at the crux [*principe*] of the analysis. Indeed, it is in this very case study that he asserts with the greatest force that the crux should be quite the opposite—namely, that he would rather give up the entire stability of his theory than misrecognize the tiniest particularities of a case that might call his theory into question. This means that even if the sum total of analytic experience allows us to isolate some general forms, an analysis proceeds only from the particular to the particular.

The obstacles of the present case, like Freud's surprises—assuming you remember not only what came to light last week but also my commentary on this case in the first year of this seminar³—lie at the heart of contemporary concerns: namely, the “intellectualization” of the analytic process, on the one hand, and the maintenance of repression, despite conscious acknowledgment [*prise de conscience*] of the repressed, on the other.

For Freud, in his inflexible inflection of analytic experience, comments here that, although the subject manifested in his behavior that he had access (not without audacity) to genital reality, the latter went unheeded in his unconscious where the “sexual theory” of the anal phase still reigned.

Freud discerns the reason for this phenomenon in the fact that the feminine position, assumed by the subject in the imaginary capture of the primal trauma (namely, the one whose historicity gives the case write-up its major *raison d'être*), makes it impossible for him to accept genital reality without inevitably being threatened with castration.

But what Freud says about the nature of the phenomenon is far more remarkable. It is not a question, he says, of repression (*Verdrängung*), for repression cannot be distinguished from the return of the repressed in which the subject cries out from every pore of his being what he cannot talk about.

Regarding castration, Freud tells us that this subject “did not want to know anything about it in the sense of repression” (“er von ihr nichts wissen wollte im Sinne der Verdrängung”).⁴ And to designate this process he uses the term *Verwerfung*, for which, on the whole, I would propose the term “excision” [*retranchement*].⁵

Its effect is a symbolic abolition. For, when Freud says, “Er verwarf sie,” “he excises” castration (adding, “und blieb auf dem Standpunkt des Verkehrs

im After," "and held to his theory of anal intercourse"), he continues: "thereby one cannot say that any judgment regarding its existence was properly made, but it was as if it had never existed."⁶ 387

Several pages earlier, right after having determined the historical situation of this process in the subject's biography, Freud concluded by distinguishing it expressly from repression in the following terms: "Eine Verdrängung ist etwas anderes als eine Verwerfung."⁷ This is presented to us in the following terms in the French translation: "A repression is something other than a judgment which rejects and chooses." I will let you judge what kind of evil spell we must admit has cursed Freud's texts in French—assuming we refuse to believe that the translators made a pact to render them incomprehensible—not to mention the added impact of the complete extinguishing of the liveliness of his style.

The process in question here known as *Verwerfung*, which I do not believe has ever been commented on in a sustained manner in the analytic literature, is situated very precisely in one of the moments that Prof. Hyppolite has just brought out for us in the dialectic of *Verneinung*: *Verwerfung* is exactly what opposes the primal *Bejahung* and constitutes as such what is expelled. You will see proof of this in a sign whose obviousness will surprise you. For it is here that we find ourselves at the point at which I left you last week, a point beyond which it will be much easier for us to go after what we have just learned from Prof. Hyppolite's talk.

I will thus forge on ahead, and the most fervent devotees of the idea of development, if there still are any here, will be unable to object that the phenomenon occurred at too late a date [to constitute a primal scene], since Prof. Hyppolite has admirably shown you that it is mythically speaking that Freud describes it as primal.

Verwerfung thus cut short any manifestation of the symbolic order—that is, it cut short the *Bejahung* that Freud posits as the primary procedure in which the judgment of attribution finds its root, and which is no other than the primordial condition for something from the real to come to offer itself up to the revelation of being, or, to employ Heidegger's language, to be let-be. For it is clearly to this distant point that Freud brings us, since it is only afterwards that anything whatsoever can be found there as existent [*comme étant*]. 388

Such is the inaugural affirmation, which can no longer recur [*être renouvelée*] except through the veiled forms of unconscious speech, for it is only by the negation of the negation that human discourse allows us to return to it.

But what thus becomes of that which is not let-be in this *Bejahung*? Freud told us right away that what the subject has thus excised (*verworfen*), as I put it, from the opening toward being will not be refound in his history, assum-

ing we designate by the latter term the locus in which the repressed manages to reappear. For I ask you to note how striking the formulation is since there is not the slightest ambiguity in it: the subject *will not want* “to know anything about it in the sense of repression.” For, in order for him to be able to know something about it in this sense, it would have had to come in some way to light in the primordial symbolization. But once again, what becomes of it? You can see what becomes of it: *what did not come to light in the symbolic appears in the real.*

For that is how we must understand “Einbeziehung ins Ich,” taking into the subject, and “Ausstossung aus dem Ich,” expelling from the subject. The latter constitutes the real insofar as it is the domain of that which subsists outside of symbolization. This is why castration—which is excised by the subject here from the very limits of what is possible, but which is also thereby withdrawn from the possibilities of speech—appears in the real, erratically. In other words, it appears in relations of resistance without transference—to extend the metaphor I used earlier, I would say, like a punctuation without a text.

For the real does not wait [*attend*], especially not for the subject, since it expects [*attend*] nothing from speech. But it is there, identical to his existence, a noise in which one can hear anything and everything, ready to submerge with its roar what the “reality principle” constructs there that goes by the name of the “outside world.” For if the judgment of existence truly functions as we have understood it in Freud’s myth, it is clearly at the expense of a world from which the cunning [*ruse*] of reason has twice collected its share [*part*].

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There is no other value to be given, in fact, to the reiteration of the dividing up [*partage*] of the outside and the inside articulated by Freud’s sentence: “Es ist, wie man sieht, wieder eine Frage des Aussen und Innen.” “It is, we see, once more a question of the outside and the inside.” When exactly does this sentence come? First there was the primal expulsion, that is, the real as outside the subject. Then, within representation (*Vorstellung*), constituted by the (imaginary) reproduction of the original perception, there was the discrimination of reality as that aspect of the object of the original perception which is not simply posited as existing by the subject but can be refound (*wiedergefunden*) in a place where he can grab hold of it. It is in this respect alone that the operation, even if it is set in motion by the pleasure principle, escapes the latter’s mastery. But in this reality, which the subject must compose according to the well-tempered scale of his objects, the real—as that which is excised from the primordial symbolization—*is already there*. We might even say that it talks all by itself [*cause tout seul*]. The subject can see something of it emerge in the form of a thing which is far from being an object that satisfies him and which involves

his present intentionality only in the most incongruous way—this is the hallucination here insofar as it is radically differentiated from the interpretive phenomenon. As we see here in the testimony Freud transcribes as the subject speaks.

The subject tells him that:

when he was five, he was playing in the garden next to his maid, and was cutting notches into the bark of one of the walnut trees (whose role in his dream we are aware of). Suddenly, he noticed, with a terror which was impossible to express, that he had sectioned his pinkie (right or left? he doesn't know) and that the finger was hanging on by the skin alone. He didn't feel any pain but a great deal of anxiety. He did not have the heart to say anything to the maid who was only a few steps away from him; he let himself fall onto a bench and remained there, incapable of looking at his finger again. In the end, he calmed down, looked carefully at his finger, and—lo and behold!—it was altogether intact.

Let us leave it to Freud to confirm for us—with his usual scrupulous care, employing all the thematic resonances and biographical correlations that he extracts from the subject by the pathway of association—the whole symbolic richness of the hallucinated scenario. But let us not ourselves be fascinated by it.

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The correlations of the phenomenon will teach us more, regarding what we are interested in, than the narrative that submits the phenomenon to the conditions of the transmissibility of discourse. The fact that its content lends itself to this so easily, and that it goes so far as to coincide with themes of myth and poetry, certainly raises a question, a question which can be formulated immediately, but which perhaps must be posed anew in a second moment, if only owing to the fact that we know at the outset that the simple solution is not sufficient here.

For a fact is brought out in the narrative of the episode which is not at all necessary for its comprehension, quite the contrary: the fact that the subject felt it impossible to speak about at the time. Let us note that there is a reversal of the difficulty here in relation to the case of the forgetting of a name that we analyzed earlier. In that case the subject no longer had the signifier at his disposal, whereas here he is arrested by the strangeness of the signified—to so great an extent that he cannot communicate the feeling he has, even if only by crying out, whereas the person who is most suited to hear his call, his beloved Nania, is right nearby.

Instead, he doesn't balk [*moufte*], if you'll allow me the term due to its expressive value. What he says about his attitude suggests that it is not simply that

he sinks into immobility but that he sinks into a kind of temporal funnel out of which he eventually rises without having been able to count how many times he has wound around during his descent and his reascent, and without his return to the surface of ordinary time having in any way occurred in response to an effort on his part.

Strangely enough, we find the feature of terrified mutism in another case, which is almost a carbon copy of this one, a case that is related to Freud by an occasional correspondent of his.⁸

This feature of a temporal abyss proves to have significant correlations.

391 We shall find them in the current forms in which the recollection occurs. You know that the subject, at the moment of undertaking his narrative, at first believed that he had already recounted it, and that this aspect of the phenomenon seemed worth considering separately to Freud, being the subject of one of his writings that is on our syllabus this year.⁹

The very way in which Freud comes to explain this illusion of memory—namely, by the fact that the subject had recounted several times an episode in which his uncle bought him a pocketknife at his request while his sister received a book—is of concern to us only in terms of what it tells us about the function of screen memories.

Another aspect of the movement of the recollection seems to me to converge on an idea that I will propose. It is the correction that the subject adds secondarily, namely, that the walnut tree involved in the narrative—and which is no less familiar to us than to him when he mentions its presence in the anxiety dream, the latter being in some sense the key piece of material in this case—is probably brought in from elsewhere, in particular, from another memory of an hallucination where it is from the tree itself that he makes blood seep.

Doesn't all of this indicate to us, in the recollection's in some sense extra-temporal character, something like the seal of origin of what is remembered?

And don't we find in this character something not identical but that we might call complementary to what occurs in the famous sense of *déjà vu* which, since it constitutes the cross of psychologists, has not been clarified despite the number of explanations it has received, and regarding which it is no accident and not simply out of a taste for erudition that Freud recalls them in the article I was just speaking about?

One might say that the feeling of *déjà vu* comes to meet the erratic hallucination, that it is the imagiary echo which arises as a response to a point of reality that belongs to the limit where it has been excised from the symbolic.

392 This means that the sense that something is unreal is exactly the same phenomenon as the sense of reality, if we designate by this term the "click" [*déclit*] that signals the resurfacing, which is hard to obtain, of a forgotten memory.

What allows the second to be felt as such is the fact that it is produced inside the symbolic text that constitutes the register of the recollection, whereas the first corresponds to the immemorial forms that appear on the palimpsest of the imaginary when the text, leaving off, lays bare the medium of reminiscence.

To understand it in Freud's theory we need but listen to the latter all the way to the end, for if a representation is of value there only in terms of what it reproduces from the original perception, this recurrence cannot stop at the original perception, except mythically. This observation already led Plato to the eternal idea; today it presides over the rebirth of the archetype. As for me, I will confine myself to remarking that perception takes on its characteristic of reality only through symbolic articulations that interweave it with a whole world.

But the subject has a no less convincing sense if he encounters the symbol that he originally excised from his *Bejahung*. For this symbol does not enter the imaginary, for all that. It constitutes, as Freud tells us, that which truly does not exist; as such, it ek-sists, for nothing exists except against a supposed background of absence. Nothing exists except insofar as it does not exist.

This is what we see in our example. The content of the hallucination, which is so massively symbolic, owes its appearance in the real to the fact that it does not exist for the subject. Everything indicates, indeed, that the subject remains fixated in his unconscious in an imaginary feminine position that evacuates all meaning from his hallucinatory mutilation.

In the symbolic order, the empty spaces are as signifying as the full ones; in reading Freud today, it certainly seems that the first step of the whole of his dialectical movement is constituted by the gap of an emptiness [*la béance d'un vide*].

This is what seems to explain the insistence with which the schizophrenic reiterates this step. In vain, however, since for him all of the symbolic is real.

He is very different in this respect from the paranoid whose predominant imaginary structures I laid out in my doctoral thesis, that is, the retroaction in a cyclical time that makes the anamnesis of his troubles so difficult, the anamnesis of his elementary phenomena which are merely presignifying and which only attain that ever partial universe we call a delusion after a discursive organization that is long and painful to establish and constitute.¹⁰

I will go no further today with these indications, which we will have to take up again in a clinical context, because I would like to provide a second example by which to put my thesis today to the test.

This example concerns another mode of interference between the symbolic and the real, not that the subject suffers in this case, but that he acts on. Indeed,

this is the mode of reaction that we designate in analytic technique as “acting out,”* without always clearly delimiting its meaning. As we shall see, our considerations today can help us revamp the notion.

The acting out* that we are going to examine, even though it apparently was of as little consequence for the subject as was the hallucination we have just discussed, may be no less demonstrative. If it will not allow us to go as far, it is because the author from whom I am borrowing it does not demonstrate Freud’s investigative power and divinatory penetration and because we quickly run out of the material we would need to learn more from it.

This example is recounted by Ernst Kris, an author who is nevertheless quite important because he is part of the triumvirate that has assumed responsibility for giving the New Deal* of ego psychology its in some sense official status, and even passes for its intellectual leader.

He does not give us a more assured formulation of ego psychology, for all that; and the technical precepts that the example he provides in his article, “Ego Psychology and Interpretation in Psychoanalytic Therapy,”¹¹ is supposed to illustrate lead (in their vacillations, in which we can see the nostalgia of the old-school psychoanalyst) to wishy-washy notions that I will examine at some later date—ever hoping, as I am, that a half-wit will come along who, in his naïveté, will keenly size up this infatuation with normalizing analysis and land Kris the definitive blow without anyone else having to get involved.

In the meantime, let us consider the case that he presents to us in order to shed light on the elegance with which he, one might say, cleared it up, thanks to the principles whose masterful application his decisive intervention demonstrates—these principles being the appeal to the subject’s ego, the approach “from the surface,” the reference to reality, and all the rest.

We have here a subject for whom Kris is serving as the second psychoanalyst. The subject is seriously thwarted in his profession, an intellectual profession which seems not so far removed from our own. This is couched by Kris in the following terms: although he holds a respected academic position he cannot rise to a higher rank because he is unable to publish his research [page 22]. The obstacle is a compulsion that he feels impels him to take other people’s ideas. He is thus obsessed with the idea of plagiarizing and even with plagiarism. Although he derived a pragmatic improvement from his first analysis, at present he is tormented by the constant effort not to take others’ ideas, especially those of a brilliant scholar* he knows. In any case, the subject has a study that he is ready to publish.

One fine day he arrives at his session with an air of triumph. He has found proof: he has just come across a book in the library that contains all the ideas in his own book. One might say that he did not know the book since he had

merely glanced at it some time ago. Nevertheless, he is a plagiarist in spite of himself. The (woman) analyst with whom he did his first analysis was certainly right when she told him more or less the following, "he who has stolen once will steal again," since at puberty as well he pilfered books and sweets.

It is here that Ernst Kris intervenes with his science and audacity, expecting us to appreciate their great merits, a wish we are likely to only half-satisfy. He asks to see the book from the library. He reads it. He discovers that nothing in it justifies what the subject thinks is in it. It is the subject alone who has attributed to the author everything the subject himself wanted to say.

At this point, Kris tells us, the question "appeared in a new light. The eminent colleague, it transpired, had repeatedly taken the patient's ideas, and embellished and repeated them without acknowledgment" [page 22]. This was what the subject was afraid of taking from him, having failed to recognize his own property therein.

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An era of new comprehension begins. Were I to say that it was Kris' big heart that opened its doors, he probably would not agree. He would tell me, with the seriousness proverbially attributed to the Pope, that he followed the grand principle of approaching problems from the surface. Why not add that he approaches them from the outside and even that there is, unbeknown to him, something quixotic in the way he settles a question as delicate as that of plagiarism?

The reversal of intention that Freud has taught us about again earlier today no doubt leads to something, but it does not lead to objectivity. In truth, if we can be sure that it is in no wise useless to alert the beautiful soul, who is revolting against the disorder of his world, to the part he plays therein, the opposite is not at all true: we should not assure someone that he is not in the least bit guilty just because he accuses himself of bad intentions.

It was, nevertheless, a fine opportunity to perceive that if there is at least one bias a psychoanalyst should have jettisoned thanks to psychoanalysis, it is that of "intellectual property." Perhaps this would have made it easier for Kris to take his bearings from the way in which the patient understood that notion himself.

And, since we are crossing the line of a prohibition, which is actually more imaginary than real, in order to allow the analyst to make a judgment on the basis of documentary evidence, why not perceive that we would be adopting an overly abstract perspective were we not to examine the true content of the ideas at issue here, for that content cannot be indifferent?

Furthermore, the impact of the inhibition on his vocation perhaps must not be altogether neglected, even if such effects obviously seem more significant in the success*-oriented context of American culture.

Now, although I have noticed some modicum of restraint in the exposition of the principles of interpretation implied by a form of psychoanalysis that has definitively reverted to ego psychology, we are certainly not spared anything in Kris' commentary on the case.

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Finding passing comfort in having come across formulations by the honorable Edward Bibring, and considering himself very fortunate to have done so, Kris exposes his method to us as follows:

[T]here was . . . an initial exploratory (*sic*) period, during which . . . typical patterns of behavior, present and past, [were studied]. Noted first were his critical and admiring attitudes of other people's ideas; then the relation of these to the patient's own ideas and intuitions (page 24).

Please excuse me for following the text step by step. I am doing this so that we will not be left with any doubt as to what the author thinks.

At this point the comparison between the patient's own productivity and that of others had to be traced in great detail . . . Finally, the distortion of imputing to others his own ideas could be analyzed and the mechanism of "give and take" made conscious.

One of my early and sorely missed teachers, whose every twist and turn in thought I did not follow for all that, long ago designated as "summaryism" [*bilanisme*] what Kris describes to us here. We should not, of course, disdain the making conscious of an obsessive symptom, but it is something else altogether to fabricate such a symptom from scratch.

Abstractly posited, this analysis, which is descriptive we are told, still does not strike me as very different from the approach adopted by the patient's first analyst, based on what we are told of it. No mystery is made of the fact that the analyst was Melitta Schmideberg, for Kris cites a passage from a commentary she apparently published of this case:

A patient who during puberty had occasionally stolen . . . retained later a certain inclination to plagiarism. Since to him activity was connected with stealing, scientific endeavor with plagiarism, etc. [page 23].

I have been unable to check whether this sentence exhausts the part played in the analysis by the author mentioned, some of the psychoanalytic literature having unfortunately become very difficult to find.¹²

But we understand much better the emphasis of the author whose text we

do have, when he trumpets his conclusion: "It is now possible to compare the two types of analytic approach" [page 23].

For insofar as he has concretely indicated what his approach consists of, we clearly see that the analysis of the subject's behavior patterns* amounts to inscribing his behavior in the analyst's patterns. 397

Not that nothing else is stirred up in this analysis. Kris sketches for us a situation involving three people, including the subject's father and grandfather, which is quite attractive in appearance, all the more so in that the father seems to have failed, as sometimes happens, to rise to the level of the grandfather, a distinguished scientist in his homeland. Kris provides a few astute remarks here about the grandfather and the father who was not grand, whereas I might have preferred a few indications about the role of death in this whole game. I don't doubt but that the big [*grand*] and little fish caught on the fishing trips with his father symbolized the classic "comparison," which in our mental world has taken the place held in earlier centuries by other more gallant comparisons. But all that does not seem to me to be approached from the right "end," so to speak.

I will provide no other proof of this than the *corpus delicti* promised in my example, in other words, precisely what Kris produces as the trophy of his victory. He believes that he has arrived at his goal; he shares this with his patient:

Only the ideas of others were truly interesting, only ideas one could take; hence the taking had to be engineered. At this point of the interpretation I was waiting for the patient's reaction. The patient was silent and the very length of the silence had a special significance. Then, as if reporting a sudden insight, he said: "Every noon, when I leave here, before luncheon, and before returning to my office, I walk through X Street (a street well known for its small but attractive restaurants) and I look at the menus in the windows. In one of the restaurants I usually find my preferred dish—fresh brains."

These are the closing words of Kris' clinical vignette. I can only hope that my abiding interest in cases in which a mountain is made out of a molehill will convince you to pay attention for another moment as I examine this case more closely. 398

We have here in every respect an example of an acting out*, which is no doubt small in size, but very well constituted.

The very pleasure this acting out seems to give its midwife surprises me. Does Kris actually believe that the height of his art has managed to give rise to a valid way out for this id*?¹³

I have no doubt but that the subject's confession has its full transference value, although the author decided, deliberately as he stresses, to spare us any details regarding the link—I am stressing this myself—between “the defenses” (whose breakdown he has just described for us) and “the patient's resistance in analysis” [page 24].

But what can we make of the act itself if not a true emergence of a primordially “excised” oral relation, which no doubt explains the relative failure of his first analysis?

But the fact that it appears in the form of an act which is not at all understood by the subject does not seem to me to be of any benefit to the subject, even if it demonstrates to us what an analysis of the resistances leads to when it consists in attacking the subject's world (that is, his patterns*) in order to reshape it on the model of the analyst's world, in the name of the analysis of defense. I don't doubt but that the patient feels quite good, on the whole, going on a diet of fresh brains in his analysis too. He will thus follow one more pattern*, the one that a large number of theoreticians ascribe quite literally to the process of analysis—namely, the introjection of the analyst's ego. We can only hope that, here too, they are referring to the healthy part of his ego. Kris' ideas about intellectual productivity thus seem to me to receive the Good House-keeping Seal of Approval for America.

It might seem incidental to ask how he is going to deal with the fresh brains, the real brains, the brains that one fries in black butter, it being recommended to first peel the *pia mater*, which requires a great deal of care. It is not a futile question, however, for suppose that he had discovered in himself a taste for young boys instead, demanding no less refined preparations; wouldn't there ultimately be the same misunderstanding? And wouldn't this acting out*, as we would call it, be just as foreign to the subject?

This means that by approaching the ego's resistance in the subject's defenses, and by asking his world to answer the questions that he himself should answer, one may elicit highly incongruous answers whose reality value, in terms of the subject's drives, is not the reality value that manages to get itself recognized in symptoms. This is what allows us to better understand the examination made by Prof. Hyppolite of the theses Freud contributes in “Die Verneinung.”

Notes

1. As an example of this simplistic perspective, one can cite the paper given by Raymond de Saussure at the 1950 Congress of Psychiatry and the all-purpose use he makes there of the frankly new notion, “hallucinated emotion”!
2. *GW* XII, 103–21 [“From the History of

an Infantile Neurosis," chapter 7, "Anal Erotism and the Castration Complex," *SE* XVII, 72–88].

3. Namely, in 1951–1952.

4. *GW* XII, 117 [*SE* XVII, 84].

5. [Added in 1966:] As you know, having since weighed this term more carefully, I have gotten the term "foreclosure" accepted as the translation for it.

6. *GW* XII, 117 [*SE* XVII, 84, reads "He rejected castration, and held to his theory of intercourse by the anus. [. . .] This really involved no judgement upon the question of its existence, but it was the same as if it did not exist"].

7. *GW* XII, 111 [*SE* XVII, 79–80, reads, "A repression is something very different from a condemning judgement"].

8. See "Über fausse reconnaissance ('déjà raconté') während der psychoanalytischen

Arbeit" in *GW* X, 116–23, especially the passage quoted on page 122 [*SE* XIII, 201–7, especially 206].

9. That is the article just cited.

10. *De la psychose paranoïaque dans ses rapports avec la personnalité* (Paris: Le François, 1932).

11. The article was published in *PQ* XX, 1 (1951): 15–29 [and reprinted in *Selected Papers of Ernst Kris* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 237–51].

12. See, if you can find it, Melitta Schmeidler, "Intellektuelle Hemmung und Essstörung," *Zeitschrift für Psychoanalytische Pädagogik* VIII (1934). [In English, see "Intellectual Inhibition and Disturbances in Eating," *IJP* XIX (1938): 17–22.]

13. "Id" being the standard English translation of Freud's *Es*.

a coarse, ignorant, or servile person of low extraction.

(367,5) *De notre index le commandement de*

sa boucle (my index would command it to continue) strikes me as quite obscure; there seems to be a play on *bout* and *boucle*.

NOTES TO "INTRODUCTION TO JEAN HYPOLITE'S COMMENTARY ON FREUD'S 'VERNEINUNG'"

(370,2) Monsieur Jourdain is a character in Molière's play, *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*, best known in English as *The Would-Be Gentleman* (see especially Act II, Scene 4). Cf. *Écrits* 1966, 456 and 478. *Imageant* (imaginative) is a philosophical term found in Sartre's *L'imaginaire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1940) meaning productive of images; it is translated in *The Psychology of Imagination* (New York: Rider and Company, 1950) as "imaginative."

(372,1) See *SE* II, 289, and *SE* XIV, 149.

(373,3) See *SE* XII, 101.

(373,fn1) See Seminar III, 181–82, where Lacan indicates that he had made the same comment in an earlier seminar.

(375,5) *La belle affaire!* (Big deal!) could also be translated as "Isn't that just great!"

(375,6) Carl von Clausewitz (1780–1831) was a Prussian general and a military theorist who wrote *On War* (*Vom Kriege*).

(376,3) See *SE* XII, 104, footnote 1.

(377,1) Purgons is a doctor from Molière's play *The Imaginary Invalid* (see especially Act III, Scene 5).

(377,2) See Lacan's exchange with "Dr. Z*" in Seminar I, 34–37/26–28.

(377,3) See endnote to *Écrits* 1966, 80, paragraph 2.

(378,4) *Élaboration* (elaboration) could also be translated as "revision," in which case *se poursuit* (is carried out) might better be rendered as "continues." As we see (*SE* V, 518

fn2), the one step (*pas*) from the sublime to the ridiculous is the *Pas de Calais*, the English Channel.

(379,1) Lacan had just discussed Freud's forgetting of the name Signorelli a week earlier in Seminar I, 57–59/46–48. Actually, Freud's traveling companion is not a medical colleague, but he discussed with this traveling companion a part of a conversation he had had earlier with a fellow physician. *Retrancher* (Lacan's translation for Freud's *Verwerfung*, as we shall see in his "Response to Jean Hyppolite's Commentary") means to suppress, cut off a part, prune, remove, amputate, excise, and eliminate. "The broken half of the sword of speech" may be a reference to the tale of Tristan and Isolde, in which a part of Tristan's sword remains stuck in the head of the giant, Morholt, whom he slays. Cf. *Écrits* 1966, 447.

(379,2) For a different gloss on *discours de l'Autre*, see *Écrits* 1966, 814, where it is translated as "discourse about the Other."

(380,2) A tessera is a small tablet or die used by the ancient Romans as a ticket, tally, voucher, means of identification, or password. The tessera was used in the early mystery religions, where fitting together again the two halves of a broken piece of pottery was used as a means of recognition by the initiates, and in Greece the tessera was called the *sum bolon*. A central concept involved in the symbol is that of a link.

NOTES TO "RESPONSE TO JEAN HYPOLITE'S COMMENTARY ON FREUD'S 'VERNEINUNG'"

(382,7) The Heideggerian terminology here, *l'être dans l'étant*, could alternatively be translated as "Being (with)in the existent."

(383,2) The French at the end of the paragraph, *d'aloï peu relevé* (that hardly seems

promising), is more ironic than the English suggests in that *aloï* also used to refer to the legal status of a currency or of a goldsmith's work, and *relevé* can also mean spicy or strong (for tastes and odors). This may be a reference

to the idea of being smelled by one's analysand mentioned in *Écrits* 1966, 267 and 337, and Seminar IV, 79. Cf. *Écrits* 1966, 610.

(383,3) The first sentence here could, alternatively, be rendered as: "In this text by Freud, the affective is conceived of as that which, of a primordial symbolization, preserves its effects right down to the discursive structuration" or "In this text by Freud, the affective is conceived of as that part of a primal symbolization that preserves its effects right down to the discursive structuration."

(383,7) The first example will be seen to concern hallucination in Freud's case of the Wolf Man, whereas the second example concerns acting out in Kris' case of the man who loved fresh brains.

(384,fn1) See Raymond de Saussure, "Present Trends in Psychoanalysis," in *Actes du Congrès International de Psychiatrie V* (1950): 95–166.

(384,3) Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945); *The Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (New York: Humanities Press, 1962).

(385,5) One of the "neopractitioners" Lacan seems to have in mind here is Ernst Kris, discussed further on. The topic of "planning" is explicitly addressed in the last section of his article, "Ego Psychology and Interpretation in Psychoanalytic Therapy," *PQ XX*, 1 (1951): 15–29. "Planning" seems to imply the establishment of regular patterns in analyses, allowing the analyst to predict the course of a specific analytic case and plan his or her interventions accordingly. Lacan may also have Anna Freud in mind; see *Écrits* 1966, 604.

(386,3) *Est restée lettre morte* (went unheeded) literally means remained a dead letter.

(386,fn1) No stenographer was present at the seminars Lacan gave in 1951–1952 and 1952–1953, nor were they tape-recorded.

(386,fn2) Strachey renders the German phrase here as "he would have nothing to do with it, in the sense of having repressed it." *Verwerfung* is translated as "condemning judgement" in *SE XVII*, 80, and the verb form as "to reject" in *SE XVII*, 79 and 84. *Retrancher* means to suppress, cut off a part, prune, remove, amputate, excise, and eliminate. Freud's clear-

est statement about foreclosure is found in "The Neuro-Psychoses of Defence" (*SE III*, 58), where the verb form *verwirft* is translated by Strachey as "rejects": "In both the instances [of defence] considered so far, defence against the incompatible idea was effected by separating it from its affect; the idea itself remained in consciousness, even though weakened and isolated. There is, however, a much more energetic and successful kind of defence. Here, the ego rejects the incompatible idea together with its affect and behaves as if the idea had never occurred to the ego at all. *But from the moment at which this has been successfully done the subject is in a psychosis, which can only be classified as 'hallucinatory confusion.'*"

(387,5) The usual French for what is known in English as Freud's "primary process" is *processus primaire*; here Lacan gives *procès primaire* (primal process).

(388,1) *Comme étant* (as existent) could, alternatively, be rendered as "in the guise of a being."

(388,3) *Au jour de la symbolisation primordiale* (to light in the primordial symbolization) could also be rendered as "into the light of primordial symbolization"; *au jour du symbolique* (to light in the symbolic) could also be rendered as "into the light of the symbolic."

(388,4) See *SE XIX*, 239, which reads "the ego took things into itself or expelled them from itself." Lacan referred to punctuation in his introduction to Hyppolite's presentation.

(389,2) Freud's sentence is from *SE XIX*, 237 (translation modified). *Cause tout seul* (talks all by itself) could also be rendered as "talks to itself" or "causes all by itself."

(389,3) *SEXVII*, 85, reads, "When I was five years old, I was playing in the garden near my nurse, and was carving with my pocket-knife in the bark of one of the walnut trees that come into my dream as well. Suddenly, to my unspeakable terror, I noticed that I had cut through the little finger of my (right or left?) hand, so that it was hanging on by its skin. I felt no pain, but great fear. I did not venture to say anything to my nurse, who was only a few paces distant, but I sank down on the nearest seat and sat there incapable of casting another glance at my finger. At last I calmed down, took a look at the finger, and saw that it was entirely uninjured."

(390,4) *Moufte* (balk) could also be rendered as "open his trap" or "flinch."

(392,1) *Déclit* (click) is a notoriously difficult term to translate, signifying as it does something that happens or gives way ("snaps"), which then constitutes a breakthrough or turning point of some kind (in comprehension, in speaking a language, in one's psychological state, etc.).

(392,3) Lacan here uses a term, *ek-sistence* (which he later spells *ex-sistence*), which was first introduced into French in translations of Heidegger's work (e.g., *Being and Time*), as a translation for the Greek *ekstasis* and the German *Ekstase*. The root meaning of the term in Greek is standing outside of or standing apart from something. In Greek, it was generally used for the "removal" or "displacement" of something, but it also came to be applied to states of mind which we would now call "ecstatic." (Thus a derivative meaning of the word is "ecstasy.") Heidegger often played on the root meaning of the word, "standing outside" or "stepping outside oneself," but also on its close connection in Greek with the root of the word for "existence." Lacan uses it to talk about "an existence which stands apart from," which insists as it were from the outside, to talk about something not included on the inside, something which, rather than being intimate, is "extimate."

(394,4) Lacan's interpretation of the English account of the case leaves something to be desired; here, for example, the English reads as follows: "[O]ne day the patient reported he had just discovered in the library a treatise published years ago in which the same basic idea was developed. It was a treatise with which he had been familiar, since he had glanced at it some time ago" (page 22).

(394,5) Again, Lacan's interpretation of the English is open to question. Kris writes: "His paradoxical tone of satisfaction and excitement [about finding his idea in the treatise in the library] led me to inquire in very great detail about the text he was afraid to plagiarize. In a process of extended scrutiny it turned out that the old publication contained useful support of his thesis but no hint of the thesis itself" (Ibid., 22).

(395,3) *Désordre* (disorder) can also be rendered as "chaos," "havoc," or "mess."

(396,1) Lacan inserts "(sic)" after the word he proposes to translate Kris' "exploratory": *préparatoire* (preparatory). His French rendition of Kris' text is highly abbreviated.

(397,2) Reading *patrie* (homeland) for *partie* (part).

(397,3) Lacan provides a comment here (which I have omitted) on the English term "engineering," suggesting that it is related to the famous American "how to," or, if not, to the notion of planning (discussed in the last section of Kris' article). He seems, however, not to understand the meaning of the verb form, "to engineer," as used here, for the translation he provides is "s'en emparer est une question de savoir s'y prendre" (taking it is a matter of knowing how to go about it).

(397,4) Lacan perhaps confuses "attractive" with "attentive" here, because he suggests in his translation that these are restaurants where one is well looked after, or well attended to (*où l'on est bien soigné*).

(398,6) On "introjection of the analyst's ego," see, for example, R. Sterba, "The Fate of the Ego in Analytic Therapy," *IJP* XV, 2-3 (1934): 117-26.

NOTES TO "THE FREUDIAN THING"

(401,6) *Il se consommait* (it occurred) can also be rendered as "it came to an end" or "it was at its height."

(402,2) It should be kept in mind throughout this article that *sens* (meaning) also means both direction and sense.

(406,2) Lacan makes a pun here on the French pronunciation of *Bondy* and *bandits*.

The Bondy Forest, to the north of Paris, was long famous as a haunt of bandits.

(406,3) *Gros sabots* (big clodhoppers) figuratively means all-too-obvious allusions or intentions visible from a mile away.

(407,1) The *Pays du Tendre* was an allegorical country in which love was the sole preoccupation. It was the creation of Mademoiselle