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See [Autism : 13th July 2006 \(Rome\) : Virginio Baio](#) or [here](#)
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(Only a selection have been indexed - there are more)

Baio Virginio: Autism (One of many) p9-11: 2006: Translated by Daniele Maracci, Marco Bani, Chiara Tartaglione, Monica Vacca, Daniela Simone [:here
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Autism

Virginio Baio

The Name-Of-The-Father and Autism. “We can live without the Name-Of-The-Father, if we use it”, says Jacques Lacan (**Sém. XXIII**, page 136, French edition). Is this **true** also (true) for the autistic child? If so, how does he limit and control his jouissance? How does he find his place as a subject in the social context? Under what conditions can he live without the Name-Of-The-Father?

Tano and his invention - Tano is five. Tano’s father calls me because after having been sent back home from the institution, Tano cries desperately for hours in the hall. I suggest that the father and I have a meeting. Standing in the middle of the hall, while Tano is crying desperately and walks back and forth, the father explains to me that he has been doing repairs in the house for two weeks. All of a sudden the father stops talking and says: “Oh no!.....I removed the sink!” “Look..” he says pointing to an empty spot in the hall, “There was a sink right there. Every time Tano came home from the institution he would go and lean against the sink and spend hours hitting against the wall with an object. How could I destroy his place?” **He hasn’t finished the sentence yet,** [Before he finishes the sentence,] I hear a big noise. I turn myself and I see Tano smiling running towards his father and jumping on his lap. Touched, his father tells me: “It is the first time that he has hugged me!”
At the institution, Tano sits in front of a door and bites the door frame continuously hitting **with** [delete with] an object against the wall. He , [alternately], eats the little pieces of wood and wall that fall on the floor **and in alternation to this** then makes vocal sounds.

A peculiar sinthome . The places and the times change, what doesn’t change is the pantomime that Tano performs in order to make the knot and to write his **symptomaticⁱ**, private language. This is a minimal language which he tries to give the dignity of a **significant chainⁱⁱ**, a unique knotting. In a **first timeⁱⁱⁱ** this invention of his, though, repeats constantly in an **eternal present** and doesn’t find a point of anchorage.

THE NAME-OF-THE-FATHER IN AUTISM?

In the **structuralist categorization**^{iv} of the first phase of Lacan's clinic we don't find the Name-Of-The-Father. In autism - that Lacan prefers **to keep not separated** [to link to] **from** schizophrenia- the important characteristic of The-Name-Of-The-Father [is] as a guarantee inside the place of the Other.

If we refer to the Borromean **categorization**^v of the second phase of Lacan's clinic we can say that there is the equivalent of the Name-Of-The-Father in the form of a **sinthome**, that is something that does not tie **standard** elements anymore but rather non-standard elements, rare elements that belong only to the subject. In Tano's case those elements are the wood and the wall, elements related to his father, who works in construction.

In the first phase of Lacan's clinic, The-Name-Of-The-Father is what keeps the world **organized** [stable?], what makes sure that our thoughts stay in our head and not somewhere else and what gives everything its own place. In the second phase of Lacan's clinic, the **sinthome** is the function that gives the subject a place, organizes the world and controls their enjoyment.

Sinthome and social bond. If this necessary, ongoing pantomime, on the one side, gives Tano a place, if this is his minimal enunciation with which he defends himself from the Other, on the other side, he remains segregated and keeps renewing it as a form of communication that doesn't tie with the Other.

Under what condition is it possible to knot with the Other?

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At the institution, in the "Atelier della parola"- the **Laboratory**^{vi} of the Word – there are two guitars, one for the children and one for the **facilitator**^{vii} [JE:facilitator has replaced educator throughout the text]. When a child receives the "Children's guitar" he/she has the floor and can say whatever he/she wants, remain silent or sing. The facilitator uses his guitar to comment only with music on the child's words, his/her mumbling or his/her silence.

Every time it is Tano's turn, the "Children's guitar" remains on the table while he goes on, impassive, with his pantomime.

Lacan points out that something in the autistic child "freezes". On the one hand, he is busy with an "operation of self-defence" from everything that relates to the Other; on the other hand, he is busy through his pantomime, with an "Operation of self-construction".

How is it possible for Tano to use the facilitator as a tool, as a "New Other"? How can we make sure that the invention of **the** [a] subject **be** [is] **consistent**^{viii}? How can we engage in a conversation with him without his having to defend himself?

A silent conversation - Every time Tano hits against the wall with his stick I play a few notes on my guitar. If he stops, I stop. If he goes on, I go on. After a while, he stops hitting the wall, he turns and looks at me. When his glance meets mine, I happily sing: "Here comes Tano!"

These are the three steps: 1st step, Tano hits against the wall; 2nd step, I play the guitar; 3rd step, Tano stops, turns himself and looks at me.

This goes on until one day he stands up and, leaning against the table, he looks at me while tapping on the "Children's guitar".

During the next **laboratory** [workshop], he comes quickly close to me, he leans against my guitar and taps on it. After a while, he grabs my guitar, climbs on my lap, takes my guitar's place and taps on my shoulder. In the end, all of a sudden, he smiles, hugs me and bites my shoulder.

To act as a facilitator so that there is significance [JE: the signifier – an S1]. What happened?

1. Tano has already invented something but it is something that doesn't tie in.
2. The facilitator serves as a tool for Tano's invention by learning Tano's private language. (**Antibes**, page 266).
3. In the interaction with the facilitator, who acts as a partner-symptom and not as a partner-knowledge, Tano opens up to the Other pursuing an embodiment.
4. The invention of his **sinthome** implies a two-step operation: first, he makes the Other incomplete (the wood, the wall, the facilitator's shoulder) and then he tries to become the missing part of the Other.
5. The minimal articulation between the tapping (S1) and the guitar tune (S2), in **après-coup**, has the effect to create a subject (S), traceable in the hole between S1 and S2, when Tano stops tapping, turns himself and looks at the facilitator.
6. His **sinthome** is a minimal knowledge, it's a knotting of language crossed by a specific meaning, meaning that could be related to his father's occupation.

Doing without it. Using it - "Without symptom, there is no subject" says Jacques-Alain Miller, (**Pièces détachées**, lesson on 1st December, 2004). In the passage from the Structural categorization^{ix} of his clinic to the Borromean one, Lacan turns the relationship between **signification** [JE: the signifier] and jouissance completely. In the first stage, the question is: "Is the-Name-Of-The-Father active or not?"; in the second stage, the question is: "Is or isn't there, the element that gives meaning?", be this a **sinthome** like a knot of non-standard elements, or the Name-Of-The-Father as paternal metaphor.

As in Lacan's first stage, is The-Name-Of-The-Father, the **significant** [JE:the signifier S1], the father of mankind, the tool who orders the world? In the second stage, is the **sinthome** the condition of the operativity of the **significant** [master signifier S1]. From this point we can say "**significant's creatures** [JE: signifier's creations]" or "children of our own sinthome".

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Even Tano isn't without **sinthome**. A minimal **Sinthome** which gives him a place, which tames the jouissance in a **peculiar** [JE: unique?] knotting, built of Imaginary and Real Presence.

Sinthome that, if wounded, leaves Tano at the mercy of the invasion of the jouissance. The Sinthome in autism, sign of the **singleness** [singularity] of the subject, is the way for the subject to make something with the real of jouissance.

We can conclude that, if in the autism there is not symptom, Freudian symptom, there is Sinthome as in Joyce. Tano's father is not the **significant** [JE: master signifier], but **he** [JE: Tano] is a child of his **own** [JE: father's] **Sinthome**. [JE: builder]

The condition of this being someone who lends themselves to incarnate the knotting of Tano's Sinthome,

Tano's smile is the sign of this, **(is)** the sign of his humanization, the sign that he is saying "yes" to the Other.

Translation team from Italian: Daniele Maracci, Marco Bani, Chiara Tartaglione, Monica Vacca, Daniela Simone with amendments by Julia Evans (April 2012)

Baio Virginio: Cito tute iucunde : A Clinic with an Autistic Subject: 1993:

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References:

pX 11 of Cormac Gallagher's translation, availability [Seminar XXIII: The Sinthome or Joyce and the Sinthome: 1975-1976: beginning on November 18th 1975 : Jacques Lacan](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=971](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=971) p 136 of French edition : p116 of Adrian Price's translation :

13th April 1976 : From Cormac Gallagher : Question : *If according to Genesis - I am reading the things that people have been good enough to write to me, it is not the worst way to do it given what I have said: that the Real is linked to writing - if according to Genesis as translated by André Chouraqui, God created a help for man, a help against him, what about the psychoanalyst as a help against?*

J. Lacan: I think that effectively the psychoanalyst cannot conceive of himself otherwise than as a sinthome. It is not psychoanalysis that is a sinthome, it is the psychoanalyst. That is how I will reply to what was put to me as a question earlier. The fact is that it is the psychoanalyst who is, when all is said and done, a help of whom, in the terms of *Genesis*, one can say that that he is in short a reversal (*retournement*). Since moreover the Other of the Other is, what I have just defined now as the little hole there. That the little hole might be able to provide a help all by itself, [pX 12] it is precisely in this that the hypothesis of the Unconscious has its support. The hypothesis of the Unconscious as Freud underlines, is something which, which cannot hold up except by supposing the Name-of-the-Father. Supposing the Name-of-the-Father, certainly is God. It is in this that, that psychoanalysis, by succeeding, proves that one can moreover do without the Name-of-the-Father. One can moreover do without it provided one makes use of it.

Jacques Lacan: Conference a Geneve sur le symptome: Le bloc-notes de la psychanalyse: no 5; p5-23 : See [Geneva lecture on the symptom: 4th October 1975: Jacques Lacan](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=331](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=331)

The work referred to has since appeared under the title: L'autiste, un psychotique au travail: in Preliminaire no 5: 1993: p7-18

Leo Kanner: Autistic Disturbances of Affective Contact: Acta Paedo-Psychiatrica No 35: 1968: p98-139: Originally published in Nervous Child No 2/3: 1942-43: p217-230

AMP: Scilicet del Nome-del-Padre: Testi preparatori al Convegno Roma 2006: [here http://www.gianfrancobertagni.it/materiali/psiche/scilicet.pdf](http://www.gianfrancobertagni.it/materiali/psiche/scilicet.pdf) p50

ⁱ JE notes: There are difficulties with this translation. I have no access to it in its original language or French. Not that access would help me! This word is either sintom(e)-atic or symptomatic.

ⁱⁱ JE notes: 'Significant chain' should probably be a 'chain of signifiers'

ⁱⁱⁱ JE suspects that this should read: At first, his invention seems to repeat constantly in an **eternal present** and doesn't find a point of anchorage.

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- iv JE alters it to: In the first phase of Lacan's clinic which uses structure to organise, we don't find the Name-Of-The-Father.
- v JE suspects that this is what is meant: If we refer to the second phase of Lacan's clinic, organised by the Borromean knot, we can say that there is the equivalent of the Name-Of-The-Father in the form of a **sinthome**,
- vi JE thinks that Workshop is nearer to Atelier than Laboratory.
- vii JE thinks that Educator needs to be replaced by what? Group practitioner? Or Groups analyst? But not Educator.....
- viii JE is worried by consistent, so alters this to: How is it possible for the subject's invention to be [made] consistent?
- ix JE transcribes: In Lacan's passage from his clinic based within a classification using Structure to one using the Borromean knot,