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Report on the VIth Congress of the New Lacanian School of Psychoanalysis "The Body and its Objects in the Psychoanalytic Clinic"

March 15 and 16, 2008

Ghent, Belgium

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Words were missing after sitting spell bound by the artistic production of "Milk;" a performance by "In Vitro and Hermes Ensemble." Based on Ovid's "Metamorphosis," this event punctuated the first days work on the object a. "Milk" was a declarative statement of one women's sense of estrangement from her body during pregnancy and the use of the breast to feed the baby. A fragmentation, a foreignness of the body was explicitly exposed on the stage. Something of the body was given up, lost, and disconnected. Was it pleasant to watch "Milk?" No. Was it a vivid and evocative portrait of the body's extimacy? Yes.

Gil Caroz opened the Congress with; "We are gathered for a party to celebrate the work of the year." He opened the first plenary session with a summary of the ethics of the object a in our society today. Advertisements glorify the perfect, imaginary body as being within our reach thus creating a surge of plastic surgeries and injections of poisonous substances which actually paralyze muscles to create the ideal image. He stated that medicine cannot change the character of the object a, in fact it creates a wider gap, a further foreign character to one's own skin. Ann Lysy- Stevens set the stage for the Congress, going from the erogenous zones of the object a; knotting of the RSI with the sinthome; to delineating the subjects relationship to jouissance in the character structure of the neurotic, psychotic and perverse subject.

The work of the year within the NLS was evident in the clear clinical material presented in the plenary sessions. The work of those cases was distilled through the cartels of the societies, groups, and circles. Despina Andropoulou presented a case, (which is included in the newest NLS Bulletin) of how a subject created a symptom with her writing as she constructed a web site. The web site kept the intrusive Other at bay. The next case by Lieven Jonckheere describes how a "gut feeling" got symbolized into a desire to be abandoned. The transference reconstructed this desire. In her treatment the analysand began to write to herself; a very private exclusion of the Other and a symptom of her psychosis.

Each of the cases represented the specificity of the symptoms constructed in the analysis. The creativity of each of the analysands was elucidated in the use they made of the object a in their libidinalized body's erogenous zones. The interpretations and silences of the analyst powerfully evoked new openings for each of the subjects.

Eric Laurent's presentation, "The Object a and the Pragmatics of the Cure" was concise and to the point. In his opening remarks, he gave credit to the intellectual community of Ghent and the Flemish Movement which rediscovered a way to use the body, reflecting a void. Laurent then posed a question: Is there a Möbius strip between art and analysis? Does each reflect the side of the other? Carefully he spoke of sublimation and metamorphosis in the cases heard that day. Fetishes were spoken of as an imaginary transportation of a thing into the libido. Wulfing's case was the representation of the object a lost, children taken from a woman, and then seen everywhere outside herself.

In the "cure" Laurent saw the use of language as worthy of study for the next Freudian Field event. He talked about extracting the object a from the interior to placement in the exterior, sometimes through sublimation. Lacan's last teachings focused on the speaking being's imaginary belief that he has a mentally consistent body. The analyst must extract himself out of the web of the repetition of the signifiers of the unconscious and the object a. The analyst must be up to the job to act with interpretation to cut, to create a hole in meaning for the subject. The analyst must fade away as the analysand deconstructs "The Subject Supposed to Know."

The theme of the VIIth Congress of the New Lacanian School of Psychoanalysis will be "Lacanian Interpretation." This seems a logical theme to follow the object a. Lacan's desire was for his theory not to be a technique but a wager on the subjectivity of the analysand and the analyst, case by case. The deconstruction of the symbolic and of meaning for the subject is what is at risk. Psychosis can result if the analyst does not carefully listen to hear the underlying structure. The beginning of the analysis is marked by the belief in the unconscious and the analyst as "The Subject Supposed to Know." The end is marked by their fall. The analyst must be up to the job of offering interpretations that change the meaning in the symbolic for the subject; his very sense of who he has always thought he was. The real jouissance of the body becomes bearable along with some satisfaction with one's life, when the analysand becomes aware of the symptom he constructed. Interpretation can open up a space for our analysands to find some breath of freedom. Let us look forward to The VIIth Congress of the NLS in Paris, France, an event to work toward with pleasure