

Other texts by Jean-Louis Gault <http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=762>
On the clinic <http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=160>

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Communiqué No. 4

This electronic list has been specially designed for the VIIIth Congress of the NLS in Paris, and is widely circulated. It will publish in the forthcoming weeks not only announcements and practical information but also a series of texts on the theme of the Congress. Following the two presentation texts from Pierre-Gilles Guéguen and Alexandre Stevens, previously circulated, we will find a series of texts written by our colleagues, in particular from seminars of preparation such as the itinerant Seminar of the NLS, "Nouages/Knottings" and other seminars from the Societies and Groups. All of these contributions are testimony of the work that is underway in the NLS and could inspire the work of preparation of each one of us.

This issue presents an intervention from Jean-Louis Gault delivered at the beginning of our year of study on "Lacanian interpretation" in Ghent on 4th October 2008.

Alexandre Stevens, scientific director of the VIIIth Congress

Interpretation Beyond the Pleasure Principle

Jean-Louis Gault

Our reflection on interpretation remains marked by the talk given by Jacques-Alain Miller during the Study Days of the School in the Autumn of 1995. This intervention, entitled 'Interpretation in Reverse', went against the grain of an opinion commonly shared by analysts about the place of interpretation in the analytical act. It had always been established that psychoanalysis has to do with the practice of interpretation, for which the task depends on the analyst who directs the treatment. From the beginning, it was considered that in an analysis, the one who interprets is the analyst.

Contrary to this widespread notion, Jacques-Alain Miller addresses his listeners making resound some surprising remarks. He declares that: “interpretation is the unconscious itself [...] it is included in the very concept of the unconscious” and that for this reason, there exists an “equivalence of the unconscious and interpretation”, such that “interpretation is primarily the interpretation of the unconscious [in the sense that] it is the unconscious that interprets. Analytical interpretation comes second”. Elsewhere, he indicates that “the age of interpretation is behind us. [...] Interpretation is dead. It will not be resuscitated. If a practice is truly contemporary, it is ineluctably post-interpretive”.

What was that about? The thesis admitted by all analysts, no matter what their leanings, has always been to consider that in an analysis, the one who interprets is the analyst. In the direction of the treatment, it is the psychoanalyst who uses interpretation to reveal and to decipher the patient’s unconscious. It was like that from the beginning and that’s the way things began.

Freud discovered the unconscious by interpreting it. If he had not been there to reveal and interpret it, we would never have known anything about this new continent that he caused to emerge, precisely by interpreting it. In the direction of the treatment, he used dreams, slips of the tongue, faulty acts and jokes to show that they could be interpreted to reveal the unconscious content. Lacan quite rightly called these psychic productions formations of the unconscious in that they offer a privileged access to the unconscious.

In the treatment there surely is this revelation of the unconscious through its formations and their interpretation, but Jacques-Alain Miller insists that the analytical experience teaches something else. In relation to this doxy, that in the treatment the one who interprets is

the analyst, the actual experience of psychoanalysis causes us to discover that the unconscious is an interpretation. The unconscious is, itself, an interpretation and the analyst's interpretation –that certainly has its place in the direction of the treatment– only comes second in relation to this first interpretation which is that of the unconscious. Moreover, adds Jacques-Alain Miller, Freud was the first to realize this.

Hence, we are lead to the question of how to situate the analyst's interpretation. In revealing the unconscious, is the analyst not limited to taking over the interpretation made by the unconscious? And if the unconscious is already an interpretation, maybe there is a specific way whereby to inscribe the analyst's proper interpretation? And what might that consist of?

Freud himself came up against this problem. After the first period of enthusiasm tied to the revelation of the unconscious, he discovers that the unconscious can constitute an obstacle to the progress of the treatment, in that it is a producer of interpretations. This begs the question of how to handle this interpretation. How is this interpretation of the unconscious to be interpreted? The first signs of difficulty appear to Freud in the form of a drying up of the effects of interpretation, which will later lead to a certain decline in interpretation among analysts. Once the instant of their emergence is past, the interpretations of the unconscious became banal. They have lost the splendor of the new and no longer surprise. They are routinely used but no longer produce effects. It finally comes around to not really knowing how to interpret.

Was this interpretation that began to decline in this movement of 1910 condemned to disappear? At the beginning of the 1920s, Freud's first students responded to this drying up of interpretation by

renewing the perspective of interpretation. Freud interpreted the unconscious, well now, they interpreted the ego, aggressiveness, the anal-sadistic. And Melanie Klein opened the path, often followed by those who came after her, of the oral drive. This is how, for a while, an attempt was made to oppose the decline of interpretation by exploring new interpretive repertoires.

From the outset of his teaching, Lacan noted a persistent quandary among analysts about interpretation. He pointed out that the post-Freudian analysts had a lot of difficulty in agreeing on what to think about the idea of what an interpretation is. He mentions it in his text on the direction of the treatment, where he ends by noting the lessened importance given to interpretation in contemporary psychoanalysis. Interest in interpretation had given way in the face of the importance given by psychoanalysts to transference phenomena, especially to the manifestations of what is theorized as counter-transference. In the direction of the treatment, the analysis of transference and of counter-transference was substituted for the practice of interpretation.

We see the gap in relation to Freud's discovery, where the earliest period of psychoanalysis had witnessed the triumph of interpretation. In the beginning, we interpreted dreams, slips of the tongue, faulty acts and symptoms. A few decades later, the interpretation of the formations of the unconscious had lost its luster and was supplanted by the analysis of transference and counter-transference.

Lacan however, never turned away from interpretation. There is no decline of interpretation in Lacan. He is the exception to this tendency centered on the transference and always maintained the central role of interpretation in the direction of the treatment. He never stopped exploring its paradoxes, its difficulties and its aporia. He was

constantly exercised by the just solution to be given to the problem of interpretation. Beginning in his Rome Report, he formulated a first doctrine on interpretation that occupies thirty pages of the third and last part of this text. Little by little, as he advanced in his elaboration of the analytical experience, he endeavored to situate interpretation in correlation with successive conceptions of what he could propose concerning the unconscious. We see him once again, in the last period of his teaching, taking on the question of interpretation, trying to progress in his elaboration, in order to give a renewed formalization.

Let's return to Jacques-Alain Miller's intervention in 1995. It was for him the opportunity to interpret the Lacanian orientation in its approach to interpretation. Lacan's doctrine, as regards interpretation, is in fact post-interpretive, even if it conserves the term. The Lacanian practice of interpretation is post-interpretive. In what sense is it post-interpretive? The Lacanian interpretation is post-interpretive in that it functions inside out [*à l'envers*] to the unconscious. There is an interpretation that reveals the unconscious, that goes along with the unconscious, and that causes something of the unconscious to emerge, giving it free rein by raising the barriers of repression. That's how Freudian interpretation was born and it is in this way that it allowed the unconscious to gain its status. This first movement belongs to the moment of the birth of psychoanalysis and of the emergence of the unconscious.

Once the unconscious is installed in psychoanalytical practice, another problematic appears, tied to the fact that the unconscious is itself an interpretation and that it demands in its turn to be interpreted. Lacan's teaching begins within this context, after half a century of psychoanalytical practice during which psychoanalysts had had ample

opportunity, in their confrontations with the guiles of the unconscious, to encounter the dead-ends and aporia of interpretive practice. Lacan's conceptions of interpretation can be said to be post-interpretive to the degree that they confront the paradox of an unconscious-interpretation. Lacanian interpretation is meant to be post-interpretive in that it tries to get out of the infinite circle of interpretation. Lacan attempted to conceive of an interpretation that would proceed the other way round from the unconscious. He doesn't always go about it in the same manner because he doesn't always have the same conception of the unconscious.

This post-interpretive practice does not nourish the unconscious; on the contrary, it aims to dry it up. The question that Jacques-Alain Miller asks at the end of his exposé in 1995 is this: when then did this post-interpretive practice begin? To this question, he answers that it began with Freud himself. Already, in Freud, we can see the development of this post-interpretive practice. Jacques-Alain Miller makes this remark that to interpret like the unconscious is to remain in the service of the pleasure principle, and to interpret in the service of the pleasure principle can only lead to an interminable analysis. What is left therefore is to say what it might be to interpret beyond the pleasure principle, another way of situating the interpretation that would be the reverse of the unconscious, if we bear in mind that the unconscious is governed by the pleasure principle.

The interest in this question has found itself rekindled in recent months. Jacques-Alain Miller's presentation dates from 1995; there was an Encounter of the Freudian Field in July, 1996; there were Clinical Evenings of the ECF devoted to the unconscious interpreters in 1997, and then it must be said that not much more was heard about interpretation in our field. Suddenly in Spring of last year, Jacques-

Alain Miller put this question back on the agenda in March, in Ghent, proposing the title “Lacanian interpretation” for the forthcoming Congress of the NLS to be held on the 9th and 10th of May.

In his seminar of March 2008, and March 26th in particular, he restored the topicality of interpretation. He was led to return to Freud’s starting point in order to point out that it should not be forgotten that the interpretation and the deciphering of the unconscious are what allowed Freud to give its status to the unconscious. Freudian interpretation is what permitted the unconscious to exist; it rendered the unconscious credible and allowed us to believe in it. Freud made the unconscious credible by the way he deciphered it. Through the handling of language, by the interpretation of the patient’s utterances, Freud caused a new object to appear that from that very moment became something that exists and that we believe in.

Jacques-Alain Miller went on to point out that making the unconscious exist, making it believable, is still attainable in all analyses when we go to the trouble. He developed this statement saying that if today, there are analysts who think that dreams are not worth deciphering because, for example, they’re counting on the status of the unconscious as being already well established in our culture, and that it’s not worth laying it on, they should think again. It is not so sure that for the contemporary subject the unconscious is something that exists and that is believed in; it is more likely that this subject believes in neuronal mechanisms. Whence the need for the psychoanalyst to make the unconscious exist and to make it credible, through the interpretation of unconscious formations like Freud did. Jacques-Alain Miller observes that the practice of dream interpretation seems to be diminishing among analysts. The Lacanians do not interpret dreams anymore, he says, adding that he never lost his taste for the practice

of dream interpretation.

These remarks are of the kind that grab our attention. Could we, we Lacanians, be in the situation of the post-Freudians of the 50s, that is, left at the point of having abandoned the Freudian practice of interpreting unconscious formations as part of the direction of the treatment? The theme of the next Congress of the NLS invites us to restore all their topicality to the problems raised by the practice of interpretation in psychoanalysis.

Let us resume: it is a question of making the unconscious exist in the treatment if we want the analysis to be possible. To do so, it must be interpreted to reveal it. Interpretation must be present from the beginning, to make the unconscious exist by interpretation, to make it credible to the patient in a way that allows him to believe in it. We can't stop there. It's not enough to interpret in the same direction as the unconscious to reveal it. The interpretation should be the other way round from the unconscious if we want to wake the subject from the dream that is the unconscious, to tear him away from his unconscious as sleep – because that is after all, the aim of an analysis. Here, then, is the problem we have to examine and which is the wager of every treatment. How, at the same time, to make the unconscious exist as a condition of the analysis and to practice a use of interpretation that proceeds the other way round from the unconscious, that aims at undoing it, decomposing it and disarticulating it? Since Jacques-Alain Miller has indicated that this was a problem already perceived by Freud, let's have a look at that. The turning point happens at the moment Freud makes the discovery of beyond the pleasure principle. He perceived the limits of the pleasure principle to account for the symptoms in the treatment when

he hit up against the negative therapeutic reaction, where the displeasure of the symptom persists despite interpretation, and which goes against the rules of the pleasure principle. In 1920, in a famous article, he makes the hypothesis of a beyond the pleasure principle.

This concept of beyond the pleasure principle will prove decisive to the examination of the status to be given to interpretation in the direction of the treatment. But before going further, I'd use a slightly earlier Freudian reference as a starting point. It's an article from 1912, called "The handling of dream interpretation in psychoanalysis". It was a paper destined for the training of beginner analysts. Freud here exposes his conception of the interpretation of dreams as it comes to play in the direction of the treatment.

He insists that it is not a question of the technique of deciphering dreams, neither the way of interpreting nor the use of interpretations, but of the art of using interpretations in the course of an analytical treatment. In this way, Freud brings out a tension between the interpretation of dreams on the one hand, and the goal of the treatment on the other. The interpretation of dreams is not an end in itself; it should be subordinate to the objectives of the analytical treatment. This subordination of the technique of dream interpretation to the ends of the treatment comes from an opposition between analytical technique and the politics of the treatment, or again, between the technique and the ethics. The technique is supposed to serve the desire that orients the analyst in the direction of the treatment.

A contradiction is not long in appearing. The goals proper to the direction of the treatment are thwarted by the demands made by the interpretation of dreams. In an analysis, a first dream is soon followed by others that the analyst does not manage to interpret during the

course of a session. Their analysis can be deferred, but new dreams appear for which the interpretation cannot be put off. Very quickly, the dream production is so abundant that it ends up constituting an obstacle to the analytical work. The patient turns away from his symptoms and takes refuge in his dreams. What interests the subject here is the enjoyment of the unconscious, that is, the enjoyment of ciphering and deciphering. Each new dream shows up like an enigma that is to be deciphered, but only to better cipher it by burying it under another dream, and so on, infinitely. The interpretation of dreams, in this case, feeds the unconscious delusion. In this insatiable demand for interpretation Jacques-Alain Miller has situated the principle of an interminable analysis.

Freud is led to legislate in the following terms: it is not desirable for the therapeutic goal to give way to the interest aroused by the interpretation of dreams. What Freud calls the therapeutic goal is the finality of the treatment, that is, the resolution of the symptoms. How then, in the course of an analysis, does one reconcile the elucidation of dreams with this rule on the primacy of the treatment? Freud considers that we must resolve to renounce the attempt to account for the totality of the signification of dreams. In the course of a session we must accept putting an end to the interpretation of a dream before it is complete, without it being necessary to pick it up the thread again, uninterrupted, in the following session.

Freud thus makes a cut in the interpretation of the dream, a cut in this interpretive inflation that arouses the interest in dreams and their interpretation. He realizes that he had put an infernal machine into operation and that it needed to be stopped if one didn't want the analytical enterprise itself to be threatened. He comes to consider that in cases where dreams become too numerous, it is better not to

be too interested in them. The patient could believe that there is no other road than that of dreams, and resistance would be translated by the end of dream production. It's up to the analyst to convince the patient that, in the absence of dreams, the analysis can continue, that it is never without materials.

Freud comes face to face with this paradox: the royal road to the unconscious can reveal itself to be an impracticable path if it is encumbered with too great an abundance of dream productions. But this paradox is one inherent to the existence of the unconscious and internal to Freudian analysis itself. Analysis causes the unconscious to exist, nourishes it and makes it grow to a point where it becomes so cumbersome that it becomes impossible to analyze and ends by impeding any progress in the treatment. This is Ionesco's rewriting of Freud in 1954: "the unconscious or how to get rid of it".

Nonetheless, in submitting dreams to such severe restrictions, are we not at risk of passing up on the best road to the unconscious? In fact, the loss is not so great. Dream production implies the content of the neurosis in its entirety; therefore it is vain to try to get to the end of it by means of an interpretation that aims at being exhaustive from the start. Only a treatment brought to its conclusion may allow the hope of its complete elucidation. So the analyst must accept to advance by fragmented stages and make do with bits of analysis.

It is preferable, then, in the meantime at least, to renounce a perfect interpretation of the dream. This, particularly in as much as:

- 1- The different scenes in the same dream can have the same content. If all the scenes in the dream have not been analyzed, it is not a problem since they come back to the same content, which can be approached by the analysis of a single scene.
- 2- More than one dream in a single night can be attempts to

represent an identical content. Here also, the analysis of a single dream element is sufficient.

3- A desire, which is the source of a dream, for as long as it remains unanalyzed, will produce other dreams. It is useless to wish to be exhaustive; what has not been analyzed will reappear.

4- Ultimately, the best way to perfect the interpretation of a dream is to interrupt it. What was not analyzed will return, possibly in a more accessible form.

So then, there is a tension between the interpretation of the unconscious and the analysis of the neurosis. If the interpretation of dreams is the royal road to the unconscious, it does not follow that the interpretation of the unconscious is the royal road to the analysis of the neurosis. Freud comes up against the opposition between the signifying deciphering of the unconscious and the analysis of the symptom. What looms on the horizon, and which he will soon discover, is the negative therapeutic reaction, the beyond the pleasure principle, primary masochism; that is, what remains unanalyzable and which remains unapproachable following the road of the semantic analysis of the unconscious.

Indeed, in 1920, there is this article on *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Once he has situated the problem in the first two chapters, in the third Freud gets into the details of his speculation and opens by saying that in the beginning psychoanalysis was above all an art of interpretation. It was a matter, then, of divining and of revealing the unconscious to the patient. The second point, adds Freud, is that there is also the therapeutic endeavor. We find here again the same tension between the unconscious and the goal of the treatment. In Freud's terms, the aim of the treatment is the cure. For Lacan, the goal goes beyond the

cure; it's not just the cure. Freud makes this distinction: on the one hand, there is the goal of the treatment, which he measures by examining whether or not the patient is cured, whether or not the symptoms have disappeared; and on the other hand, there is the revelation of the unconscious through interpretation.

He perceives that there are two different things at stake and that at a certain moment, the revelation of the unconscious creates an obstacle to the progress of the treatment. So he displaces his mode of intervention on to what he calls resistances. This will be the starting point for a series of misunderstandings in the history of psychoanalysis that will continue almost to this day, since his students will throw themselves into the analysis of resistances. But for Freud it is more complex, since he says that it is now about displacing the operating mode onto the resistances by using the transference. That too will be a source of misunderstanding. Freud notes something quite particular: the goal fixed for the treatment cannot be attained because the patient can't remember everything. He can't remember everything that is repressed.

Freud observes that one cannot remember everything, that there is something in the unconscious that remains inaccessible to recollection, that is, that remains inaccessible to signifying articulation. He then notes that what the patient repeats is what he cannot remember. He repeats the repressed and puts it to act. In particular he puts it in act in the treatment and in his relationship to the analyst. Freud indicates that this reproduction always has as its content a fragment of infantile sexual life, therefore, of the Oedipus complex. But it uses the transference instead of memories. And that's where he sees the necessity of intervening for the analyst. The analyst must operate at this level: there where he is included in the

transferential repetition, he is called to intervene, not by interpreting, but by handling the transference. That was a source of numerous misunderstandings; it led to the interpretation of the transference and of the counter-transference. But we also see how this opens a different road that is more authentically Freudian. It opens the road to the action of the analyst. This is what Lacan will theorize as the analytical act.

Freud brings up a point that touches on the question of the pleasure principle: the resistance of the ego that opposes itself to the revelation of the unconscious is in the service of the pleasure principle. The repetition compulsion, that is, what tries to manifest itself despite the ego, can only bring displeasure in as much as it actualizes repressed motions of the drive. Freud says that it is a source of displeasure for the system of the ego, but that it is a source of pleasure for the drive. That is what he had believed until then, that the displeasure was displeasure at the level of the ego but that ultimately it was a pleasure at the level of the drive. The system of the pleasure principle was safe. What's new to Freud's perception, and which he insists on at this point, is that the repetition compulsion also brings back experiences from the past that hold no possibility of pleasure. And that, even at the time, could not have brought any satisfaction. He puts his finger on a certain form of relationship to satisfaction that is not a pleasure. It is this that will justify the introduction of the concept of *jouissance* by Lacan, to qualify this paradoxical satisfaction that is situated beyond the pleasure principle and that is never a pleasure, not even at the level of the drive. Nonetheless, it is a satisfaction from which the subject cannot easily extract himself.

Freud ends this chapter of his article indicating that there exists a

repetition compulsion in psychic life situated above the pleasure principle. So there subsists a residue to the return of the repressed in consciousness. This seems enough for him to justify the hypothesis of a repetition compulsion that is more original, more elementary and closer to the drive [*plus pulsionnel*] than the pleasure principle that it holds back. From then on, there is a new perspective that opens beyond the pleasure principle, and that will determine Freud's last elaborations on interpretation.

In 1923, shortly after the discovery of beyond the pleasure principle, Freud seizes the opportunity of a new edition of the *Traumdeutung*, to complement it with an article entitled 'Remarks on the theory and the practice of dream interpretation'. Once again, Freud situates the interpretation of dreams within the direction of the treatment. From there he is led to distinguish on one hand the interpretation of the dream proper, that is, its translation, and on the other hand, the value that this translated dream has in the progress of the treatment and the analysis of the neurosis. He makes an important distinction between the text of the dream and the context in which it is inscribed, that is, the treatment. The interpretation of a dream is decomposed according to two planes. There is what the dream is saying and there is what the dream wants to say. The dream is the translation of the unconscious text that is meant to be restituted by a deciphering of signifiers. This is the first sense of dream interpretation, the interpretation translation. This is the one that reveals the unconscious delusion, but it is not the last word of the analysis of the dream. Freud insists on this point and warns analysts about the dangers of an excessive respect for what he calls "the mysterious unconscious". The dream is no more than a thought like any other, and that goes for the

translated dream as well. This means that the dream is not a meta-language, and neither is the unconscious.

There remains the second plane of interpretation, the one that operates the other way round from the unconscious, if we follow Freud's logic. This is the one that aims at the meaning of the dream, as opposed to the first that reveals the signification of the dream. From this standpoint, there are dreams that are meant to lead us astray, letting us believe that there is a cure, so that the subject can avoid continuing the analysis and the unveiling of the cause of the symptoms. There are also dreams that present themselves as the solution to a conflict in which the subject is held. Freud does not give them the value of an ultimate truth, and recommends leading the subject back to his division in the face of his desire.

It is in following the trail of this manoeuvre that Freud encounters the person of the analyst, when he worries about the possible suggestion that the analyst could exert on the subject. The analyst does not suggest the neurosis or the symptoms to the subject. They were already there before the encounter with the analyst. In the same way, the subject dreamt before undertaking an analysis; it's not the treatment that taught him how to dream. That having been said, it is true that with the installation of the analytical device, the analyst has become a part of the subject's unconscious. He occupies a particular place, that of the agent of the analysand's work of course, but the action he develops cannot be reduced to simple suggestion. He incarnates the instance of the Other, which is correlative to the function of speech and to the field of language. On this subject, Freud evokes his dealings with one of his analysands, no doubt Ferenczi, who keeps bringing this figure of the Other back to the same.

The dream in itself is not meant to serve the analysis of the neurosis,

the way the analyst would like; it is meant to serve the unconscious desire of the dreamer. Fundamentally, the dream allows the dreamer to go on sleeping, whereas the aim of the analysis is the other way round. It is looking to awaken. Therefore the analytical enterprise depends on the action of the analyst, and more precisely, on the analyst's desire that the analysis happen. Then, it is ever so possible that dreams be produced in response to the analyst's desire. This is not only unavoidable, but even desirable, because from then on those dreams inscribe themselves in a new finality that is no longer the satisfaction of the unconscious.

This accent put on the analytical act appears decisive with the discovery of the beyond the pleasure principle. Freud reminds us what it was that brought him to this hypothesis. He was wondering how painful experiences of childhood sexual life could, despite their unbearable nature, reach consciousness. They do so through what he calls the repetition compulsion, which is a force capable of overcoming repression, which is in the service of the pleasure principle. Beyond, it translates the insistence of the traumatic signifier that Freud correlates with the first experience of *jouissance* in childhood. It manifests the recurrence of elementary phenomena linked to the experience of this primordial signifier, and it must be referred to the drive.

The unconscious repressed that wants to become is fundamentally correlated to a displeasure, to a beyond the pleasure principle. What is this repressed? It is tied to the infantile sexual traumatism, and to the drive. This repressed is not translated in memories, which is why it is not accessible to a signifying deciphering. It reappears in the course of the analysis in the relationship to the analyst. Only the analyst's action can permit the emergence of this repressed. For this,

Freud insists that the direction of the treatment be engaged in a direction opposite to the pleasure principle.

The last of Freud's papers on our subject dates from 1925 and is entitled 'Some additional notes on dream-interpretation as a whole'. This article is very interesting in that it begins with a first part that deals with what Freud calls "the limits of the interpretable". This returns to the question of the interpretation of dreams and to the possibility, or lack thereof, of interpreting all the elements of a dream. Can we entirely translate a dream into the elements of waking life, asks Freud? This brings up the question of the limits of the interpretation of a dream. Freud makes a distinction between two groups of human activity: those that tend to be useful and those that seek pleasure. A distribution Lacan seizes in at the beginning of his *Seminar XX, Encore* where he distinguishes what is useful from what is not, which he calls *jouissance*. He says that *jouissance* is useless. Freud remarks that the dream is in the service of the satisfaction of pleasure by safeguarding sleep. So considered, the most efficient dream is the dream we don't remember. It completely fulfilled its function of satisfaction by guaranteeing the dreamer's sleep without leaving him any memory. On the contrary, he points out, we remember our dreams each time the repressed unconscious has broken through the economy of the pleasure principle. The repressed appears in the dream, but without waking the dreamer. However, this repressed will not cease to be reminded to the dreamer during his waking hours. And Freud emphasises once again that the interpretation of dreams cannot be separated from the analytical work, and must be subordinate to it.

For Freud, the interpretation of dreams for its own sake and without

the perspective of the treatment holds no interest. These Freudian reflections always put the emphasis on the goal of the treatment; what do we want for our analysand in the treatment? And they help us to see the ways in which the unconscious is neither on the side of revelation nor of awakening, but is more of a nature to prolong the sleep of the subject. Freud is not animated by any hermeneutic passion, or by any fascination for the unconscious. He knew how to get beyond the decipherable unconscious – which he none the less helped to bring into existence – in order to institute a post-interpretive practice that proceeds the other way round from the unconscious.

Lacan formalized these Freudian discoveries with his theory of discourses. He assimilated the discourse of the unconscious to the master's discourse and distinguished the discourse of the analyst as its inverse. The discourse of the unconscious that accounts for the formations of the unconscious translates the submission of the subject to a master signifier that is both unconscious and identificatory. The direction of the treatment and the task of interpretation put the subject in the position to produce this signifier of identification, in order to detach himself from it. What emerges is that the discourse of the analyst is the inverse of the discourse of the unconscious and that analytical interpretation functions the other way round [*à l'envers*] from the unconscious.

There is an inverse of the unconscious, but there is also a beyond of the unconscious. That is what Freud, in his practice of interpretation, situated beyond the limit of the interpretable, and which he designated as that which could not be recalled. Lacan translated this uninterpretable as the incompatibility of desire and speech, or again as that of *jouissance* which is opaque to meaning. In his seminar *D'un*

Autre à l'autre he explains what interpretation must be in order to respond with accuracy to this limit of the power of words [*parole*]. He comes back to the importance of the dream in the direction of the treatment. He remarks that the dream is certainly an interpretation, one he qualifies as wild to distinguish it from the reasoned interpretation that the psychoanalyst intends to substitute for it. Then comes the question of knowing what it is we're doing when we substitute our reasoned interpretation for this wild one. What is important is not to wonder what the dream means, but to localize the flaw in what is being said. The reasoned interpretation is nothing more than a reconstructed phrase. It operates only as a phrase, and not at all as meaning, in as much as it allows the perception of the flaw point where what doesn't fit shows. And what doesn't fit is desire.

Translated by Julia Richards

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