

Circulated:

**From:** NLS-Messenger <[nlsmessenger@gmail.com](mailto:nlsmessenger@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** [nls-messenger] 2277.en/ 4+one - The NLS Cartels' Newsletter / La Newsletter des cartels de la NLS - No. 1

**Date:** 12 December 2016 at 23:29:50 GMT

**To:** [nls-messenger@amp-nls.org](mailto:nls-messenger@amp-nls.org)

**Reply-To:** [nls-messenger@amp-nls.org](mailto:nls-messenger@amp-nls.org)

<http://www.amp-nls.org/doc/4plusone-Newsletter%201.pdf>

**4+one - n°1 - december/décembre 2016 The Realism of the Cartel**

par Rik Loose

In an intervention at an inter-cartel days in 1975, published as *Religions and the Real*, Lacan states: « It seems that there is no limit on the number of people a religious community can gather. » He continues by saying that anonymity prevails in religious communities. Anonymity can only favour a vertical (hierarchical) relationship to the leader. This contrasts with the strictly limited number in cartels in which, as Lacan said, « each member bears his or her own name » and which therefore promotes horizontal identification, but, only in relation to the task at hand.

lire la suite

**Site de l'AMP/ WAP website :** <http://www.wapol.org>

**Site de la NLS/ NLS website :** <http://www.amp-nls.org>

**Le comité de lecture de « 4 + One »/**

**« 4 + One » reading Committee :**

Ruzanna Hakobyan, Michèle Harroch, Carole Niquet, Glenn Strubbe, Frank Rollier (plus 1).

### **The Realism of the Cartel**

#### **Some Reflections on Lacan's Religions and the Real and Eric Laurent's The Real and the Group**

**Rik Loose**

In an intervention at an inter-cartel days in 1975, published as *Religions and the Real*, Lacan states : « It seems that there is no limit on the number of people a religious community can gather. »<sup>1</sup> He continues by saying that anonymity prevails in religious communities. Anonymity can only favour a vertical (hierarchical) relationship to the leader. This contrasts with the strictly limited number in cartels in which, as Lacan said, « each member bears his or her own name »<sup>2</sup> and which therefore promotes horizontal identification, but, only in relation to the task at hand.

The aim of a cartel is very different from that of a religious community. The religious community, according to Lacan, is based on a myth<sup>3</sup> : something that provides meaning on the basis of a combinatory of elements. Religion attempts to unite people by bringing them together on the basis of a shared meaning and to unite the object with the S1. Thus, the aim is to make the (cause of) desire the ideal that is God. This is like the vertical identification with the leader in a group. Laurent in *The Real and the Group* : « If the Second World War demonstrated anything it was the horrifying docility of modern man, ready to enrol under the banner of ideologies of nothingness ».<sup>4</sup>

Lacan compares the religious community to the cartel to highlight that in the cartel there is a limitation. This limitation is related to Lacan's «realism» in his article *British Psychiatry and the War*.<sup>5</sup> What he is aiming for with this term, as Laurent suggests, are the compromises that some of the politicians were trying to make with

the Nazis. Laurent writes that Lacan wishes to demonstrate that there exists a realism that is not made of compromise but which confronts the «dark powers of the superego». Lacan was interested in what was going on in Britain in terms of preparing soldiers for the war effort. This preparation took place in small groups and it concerned a victory not only over the nihilism of the Nazis but above all against the powers of the death-drive in civilization. These small groups are the forerunner of the cartel. The «realism» that Lacan refers to is not one of adapting the subject to the environment but allowing the subject to develop tools to struggle against the death-drive present in our culture. This real of the drive is not just present in our culture but also within each of us. Laurent lists what can happen as a defence against this real: «(p45) As soon as there is a cartel, there are people who don't come to the meetings, this is a reaction of flight. There are people who come in a bad mood, ready to criticise everything that anyone will present, these are reactions of attack. There are those who want to take over to organise everybody's work" those who want to incarnate the function of direction in place of the plus-one, or again there are effects of a push-to-the-leader. All these effects are expected from the beginning. ...»

1. Lacan, J. (1975), Religions and the Real, in *Lacanian Review, Hurly-Burly*, 2016, issue 1 (est. J.-A. Miller, trans. R. Grigg), p. 8. [Availability [Religions and the Real \(Paris\) : 13th April 1975 : Jacques Lacan](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12024](#) ]

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.* p. 9.

4. Laurent, E. (2000), The Real and the Group, in *Psychoanalytical Notebooks*, issue 4 (trans. V. Voruz). p. 36. [Availability [The Real and the Group : 2000 : Éric Laurent](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=2644](#) ]

5. Lacan, J. (1947), British Psychiatry and the War, in *Psychoanalytical Notebooks*, issue 4 (trans. P. Dravers and V. Voruz). p. 10. [Availability [British Psychiatry and the War: 1947: Jacques Lacan](#) or [here: http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=384](#) ]

6

### ***The NLS cartels' Newsletter***

#### ***La Newsletter des cartels de la NLS***

and so forth. Bion asserted that when you form small groups you invite trouble. With groups come crises and these crises must be allowed to surface so they can be interpreted. So Bion articulated Lacan's idea that the group is treatable like the subject; «... what is true at the collective level is also true at the individual level»<sup>6</sup>. Through interpretation of collective troubles subjects are confronted with their own problems, but, these will only have the desired effect if the group consists of a limited number of people. Without this limit interpretations cannot have an effect on the individual *cartelisand*. Group effects are interpreted so that they do not interfere with the task to be carried out by each individual *cartelisand*. In Lacan's cartel everyone is equal in relation to a task that needs to be done. This is everybody's responsibility and it favours horizontal identification, but, one that does not lead to a universal equality. One is not the same in relation to an ideal as we see in religion, but, there is, as Laurent says, a pragmatic quest for homogeneity in a group. So, it is crucial not to understand this homogeneity as «we are all the same». The homogeneity is in relation to the task to be done but for each under her name and in relation to her own questions. The latter also implies the real of the death-drive which requires the «realism» of the cartel. The «realism» of the cartel is predominantly related to the following aspects: The real of the death-drive of the individual *cartelisand* ; the

imaginary or defensive reaction against the collective, and the emphasising of the individual task or trait. But, no cartel without crisis, no Psychoanalytic School without crisis.

6. Lacan, J. (1960-1961), *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan* Book VIII, *Transference* (est. J.-A. Miller, trans. B. Fink), Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015, p. 395. [Availability [Seminar VIII : Transference : 1960-1961 : Begins 16th November 1960 : Jacques Lacan](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=6124](#) : See Seminar VIII : 28<sup>th</sup> June 1961 : p337 of Cormac Gallagher's translation : Quote [Jacques Lacan is referring to Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego : 1921 : Sigmund Freud]

In order that collectively all the subjects, at least for an instant, should have this same ideal which permits<sup>[1]</sup> anything and everything for a rather short time, what is necessary, he says to us? It is that all these exterior objects, äusseres Objekt should be taken as having a common trait, the einziger Zug.

Why does this interest us? It is because what is true at the collective level is also true at the individual level. The function of the ideal, in so far as it is around it that there is accommodated the relationship of a subject to his objects, it is very precisely in so far as, in the world of a subject who speaks, it is a pure and simple matter of a metaphorical attempt to confer on all of them a common trait. The world of the subject who speaks, which is called the human world, corresponds to the following: it is that for all objects, to take them in this animal world that analytic tradition has made the exemplary operation of defensive identifications, it is a pure matter of decree to fix this trait common to the diversity of objects, whether they are dogs, cats, badgers or deer. To decree that in order to subsist in a world where the i(o) of the subject is respected they all, whatever they are, go "bow-wow", this is the function of the einziger Zug.

### **Further texts**

On Groups and Cartels [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=650](#)

By Éric Laurent [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=237](#)

By Jacques Lacan [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=235](#)

By Rik Loose [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=666](#)

[The cartel and the real : 14th March 2014 : Catherine Lacaze-Paule](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=2804](#)