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Towards the European Forum "Determined Desires for Democracy in Europe" - November 18, 2017 - **Turin**.

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New incarnations of the desire for democracy in Europe

Eric Laurent

Parliamentary democracy in Europe is running at full speed. Everywhere there are elections, promises of elections, referendums, promises of referendum. From the outset, it is important to note the difference in signification between elections and referendums, although both are part of the arsenal of the rule of law. In one case the emphasis is on parliamentary representation, in the other the call to the voice of a people is highlighted. Does the rule of law manage to treat the passions that are burning?

Europe and its representative democracies

Let us look at the latest twists and turns. At the end of September, during the German elections, the AfD, the identitarian party, of the populist extreme right, scored 13% of the vote. The most powerful head of state in Europe, Mrs Merkel, who was a favourite despite being at the end of a three-term roll, was paralysed. Several months of negotiations ensued. Germany will not be governed until January 2018, and it is unclear what the "Jamaica" coalition will be able to find in common. It is not enough to vote, the results of the votes must also be implemented. On the other side of the North Sea, on the Brexit post-referendum side, things are not improving, "The tone is turning sour between London and Brussels. A few weeks ago, Europeans and Britons were still hoping to ratify the move to a second phase of the Brexit negotiations on the "future relationship", including trade, at the Council of European leaders on Thursday 19 and Friday 20th October. It was not to be. The 27 should follow the recommendation of Michel Barnier, their chief negotiator, and note the lack of "sufficient progress" in discussions on divorce with the United Kingdom. And no way will a green light be given to the two-year transition period, demanded by the British Prime Minister, Theresa May, during her speech in Florence (Italy), on September 22. [1] " Meanwhile the British are keeping count of what for the past five years they have called 'hate crimes', aggressions motivated by racial motives, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. The category is new and comprises, for 80% of the tally, aggressions with racial overtones. They usually increase after terrorist attacks, but it should be noted that they peaked after the Brexit referendum. [2]

Let us return to a country which depends, to a large extent, on the German productive

machine for its prosperity. "The Austrians voted on Sunday, October 15, to renew their Parliament in early elections brought by the Conservative (ÖVP) Sebastian Kurz after he took the leadership of his party in May. He came first following a campaign dominated by the themes of immigration and the integration of Muslim refugees. This young 31 year-old man, who experienced a meteoric rise, must now start negotiations with the Social Democrats (SPÖ) who came second, and the Eurosceptic far right (FPÖ), who came third. In 2000, Austria had been the first member state of the European Union to bring a far-right party to government, which earned it European sanctions." [3] The elections are clearly marked by the rejection of immigrants, although the economic situation of Austria is at its best. "The growth forecasts of the country: it could reach 2.8% in 2017 and 2018. We must go back to the mid-2000s to find a comparable performance, 0.8 % higher than the rest of the euro zone ... Austrians also maintain a standard of living among the highest in the world: in 2016, per capita gross domestic product (GDP) stood at 40,420 euros, in this mostly Alpine country, with exemplary infrastructure, and more prosperous than neighbouring Germany, the economic giant from which it derives most of its activity. A large part of the Austrian economy depends on orders from the major German groups." [4] Prosperity, as we can see, does not prevent rejection. Austria has its Green President, but it is not he who will be in charge.

In the same style, and in the same area, elections were held this weekend in the Czech Republic, a small rich and egalitarian country, especially since it got rid of poor Slovakia (partitioned in 1993). It made Vaclav Havel sick. "With insolent economic health indicators - unemployment the lowest in Europe at 3.3%, sound public finances, small inequalities - the Czech legislative elections of Friday 20 and Saturday 21 October should have been a mere formality for the Social Democrat Party (CSSD), in power since 2014. But the anti-system protest wave that washes over Europe did not spare Prague: the CSSD does not dare to hope for more than 15% of votes, as it was steamrolled in the polls by the phenomenon of Andrej Babis, the flamboyant populist leader. Having the second largest Czech fortune and being the country's leading employer, at the head of the behemoth Agrofert, a financial institution of more than 200 companies operating in agribusiness and petrochemicals, Mr. Babis began his political rise in 2011 by creating a party with an evocative name, the Action of Disgruntled Citizens (ANO)" [5]. The fact that he is accused by Europe of massive embezzlement has only increased his popularity and his lead. The ex-communist countries produce decidedly strange oligarchs. He is known as the Czech Trump, we'd better say: the Czech Ryboloviev. [6]

Let's leave Germany and its backyard to go to southern Europe. This Sunday, a legal and consultative referendum was held, in Veneto and Lombardy at the initiative of the Northern League, without a lot of apparent passions. Voters must say whether they are in favour of "additional forms and special conditions of autonomy". 50% of voters are expected to turn out in Veneto. The date of October 22 is symbolic. It refers to October 22 1886, when Lombardy and Veneto joined the Kingdom of Italy. The new Mayor of Milan, Giuseppe Sala will vote yes. More classical, the great figure of Massimo d'Alema came from Mestre to denounce a useless referendum. The founder of the independentist Venetian party, the lawyer Alessio Morosin, wants to sound a more disturbing note and make the seriousness of the case heard: "The problem of this election is fear. Abstainers are afraid to hear the people." [7]

Austria and the Czech Republic have a weak desire for democracy, and a strong desire for populism. Germany, Brexit, Italy encounter difficulties with democracy, and desire has a hard time finding a way in. In all these cases, the fear of migrants is highlighted. They are not the same. In Germany, they are the million Syrians welcomed by Mrs Merkel, in England the Poles welcomed by the market. In Italy, the anxiety of Lampedusa is gaining ground, but the Vatican is watching! In the Czech Republic, where there are no migrants, and in the former GDR where there are few, it is the pure fear of the non-existent migrant.

Hello to Catalonia!

And then there is Catalonia. Hello to Catalonia! It is a tragedy that breaks the heart of Europe and depresses its bureaucracy. Some of its members could rejoice in private at Brexit, exasperated by the British way of preventing management to go unchallenged with their "I want my money back". But the allusive propositions of the Catalan separatists left them cold, and even petrified. The French President was allowed to say aloud what everyone was thinking. Nobody wants to touch to International Law and the borders of the States of Europe, a Law which is at present so fragile, so humiliated, since Putin's show of force in Crimea. Nobody wants, either, to get entangled in the bureaucratic concerto of a state the size of Greece with financial debt problems as impossible to solve as the calculation of the bill that the British will have to pay. The latest appeal of Carles Puigdemont on Saturday October 21, in the English transmission of his speech convening the Catalan Parliament, will likewise be ignored. Spanish nationalism and its immobile right are no more welcome in the European arena. The compromise drafted by the PSOE passed by the Catalan Parliament with the mixed support of autonomists and socialists has been blocked since 2010 in the name of the One-Spain, which is not without evoking the demons of Franquism. Moreover, the right was savvy enough to ally with the new PSOE and the new force of *Ciudadanos* to face separatist stubbornness in the name of the unity of the Spanish state. The separatists took advantage of the difficulties of the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis to blame every problem on the state. One thing led to another, and from elections to demonstrations, we came to the illegal referendum of October 1. The use of disproportionate force and police violence against a largely middleclass population, going to vote, has rightly outraged Europe, and allowed the separatists to push further. But then the fairy tale which sustained the ardour of the militants, in spite of the obvious unpreparedness of the next move, was exposed. In a week, 800 corporate headquarters, it is said, although the figures are not published so as not to cause panic, and the three big banks, have sheltered from financial and monetary uncertainty. The employers' organisations in Catalonia have been quietly lobbying. There is, of course, a gap between exporting industries and small businesses dependent on the local market (260,000 small and medium-sized enterprises in Catalonia), but still! The warning signals have been sent. "Citizen cash withdrawals" only precipitate the problem. No reasonable Catalan will want to share the fate that Argentina suffered from the *corralito* of 2001. Let's not talk about the wishes for a referendum in Val d'Aran which, as a Catalan territory, takes its planes and religion from Toulouse, nor about the difficulties of the Catalan food agriculture with the Andalusian tomato. Just as with Brexit, the industrial zones of Europe discover that cucumbers and tomatoes all come from the same place: Andalusia, with its flaws, its subsidies, its immigrant workers without documents, the gypsy district of Granada since the *Reconquista* etc. Vegans are all behind Andalusia! Will the organic question and the financial question calm minds as in France the exit from the Euro frightened far-right voters, so resistant to other arguments, especially ecological arguments? Globalised capitalism, of which we rightfully complain, also softens manners, at least the manners of those who have something to lose – Catalan pensioners being in this category. We will return to the issue of loss a bit later.

Let's add a question of importance. Who will support civil peace? Is there, or isn't there, a split within the *Mossos d'Esquadra*, the autonomous Catalan police officers who were the heroes of last summer's attacks? Nobody has forgotten the determination of this policewoman who shot down without fail those who threatened her and her citizens in Cambrils. Part of this autonomous police has clearly seceded from Spain during the demonstrations of September 20 and the referendum of October 1. But the unity of this institution, ancient in its name dating back to the eighteenth century, but young, (born in 1990), in its new incarnation, is not guaranteed. The touchstone will be in the evolution of the next days. [8]

I write in an uncertain time. The Rajoy government, on Saturday October 21, decided to apply Article 155 of the Spanish Constitution and, in the name of the constitutional rule of law, wants to regain control over Catalan Autonomy. Puigdemont is relying on street

demonstrations, with its English signs *Freedom for Catalonia*, and the mistakes that the *Guardia Civil* will commit, to move Europe and put Rajoy under watch. The clumsiness and isolation of the latter in the European summits does not bode well. On the side of the street, as Melenchon would say in France, it is the most determined who occupy it, militant virtues have a part to play, but they do not decide everything. Fragile International Law, the power of the financial argument, the loyalty of the forces of repression, and of community police, to a master signifier, will weigh just as heavily in the coming days. Miquel Bassols aptly opposes the Catalan symptom and the identitarian principle, but there is clearly a non-identitarian principle at work. The Catalans, even if they are not separatists, have a hard time recognising themselves in Spain. They have no Spanish symptoms. Even those who have an Andalusian grandfather who has come to look for work in the northern metropolis struggle. In Madrid, it's different. Some democrats recognise themselves in a certain national narration. Their voices are not easily transmitted. A symptom of that is that the strongest voice during the anti-independence demonstrations in Barcelona was the Peruvian Marquis, the liberal Mario Vargas-Llosa.

Ana Colau, the mayor of Barcelona has managed to find an original position. She indicated that she was not for the declaration of independence, and did not participate in the demonstrations that carried this statement. But on Saturday 21, she denounced "the most terrible day of the last forty years" and asked the Catalan PSOE "not to support the decision of Madrid to suspend Catalan autonomy [9]". Ms. Colau does not identify with mass camps, she is heretical and supports a determined desire for democracy. She speaks in the ears of analysts, who are all torn, upset, making clear the justness of Lacan's statement according to which "the Unconscious is politics", with the consequences that Jacques-Alain Miller was able to extract. [10] Be that as it may, the Forum of November 18 will be held in the midst of a fertile moment of the desire for democracy in Europe.

The desire for democracy and populism

Democracy is the ability to bear all these contradictions without being overwhelmed or depressed. It is wanting the debate, and putting the balance of power into words. This is not the only force, but it is to take it into account, by wanting to exceed it. That is why we dare to talk about the desire for democracy when we are constantly being told about the desire for populism. The title of our Forum is not obvious. How can we speak of a determined desire for democracy, when the word 'democracy' comes to name a loss and an impossible? If we limit ourselves to looking at France, whether we look at Marcel Gauchet, Raphael Glucksmann, Jean-Claude Milner, Jacques Rancière, Paul Ricoeur, we see that they who have nothing in common, especially not a political idea, agree on one point. Democracy is the mourning of the One. Populism is the enthusiasm for hegemony, for the restoration of the One.

Marcel Gauchet, in his book *Democracy against itself*, stated that "This is what politics specifically consists of: it is the place of a fracture of reality". Yet this phrase was stated at the time of the euphoria of democracies, after the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Thirteen years later, Tony Blair spoke in a darker atmosphere. In 2014, he gave a series of lectures entitled "Is democracy dead?". Marcel Gauchet [11] had already emphasised that the triumph of democracies did not engender any enthusiasm and rather a certain depressive affect, although it may have been lighter than today. He saw the cause in the fact that in a democracy truth is never again *one*, that it is divided into contrary opinions.

Raphael Glucksmann, whose father I knew when he ran the film club at HEC, with Jean-Jacques Brochier, before the development of his work, and later in the "events of 68", sees in the Catalan moment that we are going through the reminder of the tragic origin of political democracy, and the need to cross limitless discord. He formulates the dilemma with his usual talent with the pen: "This transcendence of tragedy in politics is told by Aeschylus' "Oresteia", our original and common story, that of the advent of Athens when the Erinyes, the goddesses of an endless and limitless discord, transform themselves into Eumenides and

take their place in the heart of the city, giving birth on stage to the first democracy in history ... In Catalonia, two legitimacies oppose each other. The right of a people to self-determination and the right of a State to enforce the law. The independentists, secure in the justness of their cause, played the card of the illegal *fait accompli*. The central government, secure in the justness of its cause, played the card of legal repression. The actions of both reinforce the certainty of the other to be "right". The ingredients of a tragedy are there. How could we not condemn the shameful beatings of peaceful citizens, armed with a simple ballot? How could we not see that a self-proclaimed independence would open a Pandora's box, that of the borders within the EU, a box that centuries of nationalist massacres had managed to close?"[12]. The only solution he sees is in an appeal to a desire for democracy, what he calls "politics as the only horizon".

Paul Ricœur, Emmanuel Macron's mentor, we are told, emphasises politics as the place of mourning, of renunciation, to the identity of the political subject. Non-existent identity must give way to *narrative identity*, a notion that owes much to the subject according to Lacan. The non-recognition of Ricœur's complex debts to Lacan had, in their time, provoked the anger of our master. As to *narrative identity*, it was produced after the death of Lacan, but Lacanians will recognise familiar accents. "This notion, which appears for the first time in Ricœur's work in the conclusion of *Temps et récit* (Seuil, 1983-1985), is based on the idea that every individual appropriates, or even constitutes himself, in an incessantly renewed narrative of self. It is not an objective story, but that which, as writer and reader of my own life, "I" tell myself about myself. Personal identity is thus formed through the narrations it produces and those it continuously incorporates. In doing so, far from being frozen in a hard core, the "I" is transformed through its own stories but also through those that are transmitted by tradition or literature that are grafted into it, continuously restructuring the whole of personal history. [13] The "punctual and vanishing" subject, as Lacan said, which cannot be defined by an essence or a fixed homeostasis, can only be articulated with the signifying chain, with what can be described as narrative history. But what, in Lacan, is above all logical existence [14], remains in Ricœur, a reader of the first Lacan like Habermas, historical existence: "Without the help of narration, the problem of personal identity is indeed doomed to an antinomy without solution: either one poses a subject identical to itself in the diversity of its states, or one holds, following Hume and Nietzsche, that this identical subject is only a substantialist illusion, the elimination of which reveals only a pure variety of cognitions, emotions, volitions. The dilemma disappears if, to the identity understood in the sense of the same (*idem*), one substitutes the identity understood in the sense of oneself (*ipse*); the difference between *idem* and *ipse* is none other than the difference between a substantial or formal identity and narrative identity. [15] ". This is what allows François Dosse to emphasise that Emmanuel Macron is trying to give France a narrative story in motion, one that would allow a future vision to emerge, by shaking some pillars of the conservative narrative story: "Emmanuel Macron gives a definition of France which refers to an incessant narrative construction and not, as some have said, to the simple revival of the Lavissian national novel glorifying the heroes of an epic." [16]. We must therefore want to tolerate the mourning of identity and desire this reworking constantly carried out by the Other who speaks in us, leaving a margin for the invention of *ipse*.

We leave aside the question of the articulation of the subject and *jouissance*, in the fantasy and its passions because I have spoken of them elsewhere. "Why is it that from Erdogan to Putin, to Xi Jin Ping, and through the crisis of the European democracies, we see a series of very different leaders emerge, but who have in common the trait of directing *alone* or of wanting to do it by differentiating themselves from the *system*. This word, *system*, is a screen to designate representative democracy in its multiple. This series of leaders can be considered not from a supposedly unified class under the label populism, but by considering in its diversity the type of fantasy they propose to share, by considering what *jouissance* is in play, what the body event is that is proposed by each. One could thus consider the series of leaders called populists without putting them all in the same bag, despite the fact that they arise everywhere, in all parts of the planet, in very different political regimes; they don't shy

away from relying on tradition and the Name-of-the-Father, but in order to make do without it"[17].

Jacques Rancière also underlines the mourning of the One at the heart of the desire for democracy. "The democratic scandal is simply to reveal this: there will never be, under the name of politics, one principle of the community, legitimising the action of the rulers on the basis of the laws inherent in the gathering of human communities. Rousseau was right to denounce the vicious circle of Hobbes, who claims to prove the natural unsociability of men by taking court intrigues and the scandal of salons as examples. But in describing nature according to society, Hobbes also showed that it is futile to seek the origin of the political community in some innate virtue of sociability."[18] This is what populism seeks, the innate virtue of identity that would abolish irremediable discord and make of the Hegemonic One the new law of the heart of the people.

The desire for democracy and migrants as a symptom

Elections in the Czech Republic and Austria have once again highlighted the break between Eastern and Western Europe. We remember how the Bush administration used it by speaking of a new Europe to designate this newly admitted East to the enlargement to twenty-seven of the EU. The 27 started by rejecting this view, but since the waves of migrants travelling on the Balkan roads in the summer of 2015, and the closures of the borders of Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia, provoking Mrs Merkel's welcome declaration, they have accepted the obvious conclusion. A new curtain of lead has fallen, separating the two Europes. In the West a powerful security filter has been set up, allowing an inter-state collaboration which was at first defeated by the multiple attacks sponsored by Daesh, then gradually became more effective in stopping the slaughter, although all of Europe continues to thwart multiple attacks each month. The fight against the fallen Caliphate does not stop with the fall of Raqqa, and as Althusser said, "The Future lasts a long time".

Two years have passed, with unexpected twists and turns. Germany, which unlike Austria had been denazified, has nonetheless had to live with the electoral rise of AfD, and Bulgarian political scientist Ivan Krastev gives voice to the point of view of Eastern Europe in a heterodox way, on the question of refugees, be they from civil wars in the Balkans, civil wars in the Middle East, or newcomers from sub-Saharan Africa. He gives human form to the terrible figures in question. In Syria alone, 7 million people have left the country out of a total of 22 million. Only a million and a half have reached Europe, the most qualified. For Krastev, irrespective of the differences in economic status, migrants are the "damned of the earth who, because of globalisation, change country since they cannot change their government. It is a rational decision. As predicted by Raymond Aron, *"inequality between peoples takes on the meaning that class inequality used to have"*[19]. He gives a version of the opposition between the good reception of refugees in Germany in 2015 and the rejection of the "Visegrad Group". "The speed with which Germany embraced cosmopolitan values was also a way for her to escape the xenophobic legacy of Nazism, while the anti-cosmopolitanism prevalent in Central Europe is partly rooted in an aversion to the internationalism formerly imposed by communism."[20]. On the other hand, it gives a parallel status to the refugee crisis, and to the lack of trust of populations towards their elites, making an explanatory link between rejection of the foreigner and rejection of the democratic division. "If many Europeans vote for populist parties, it is not only because of the refugee crisis, but also because, for several years now, they no longer trust their elites ... Now, the *"ever closer"* union between Europeans and *"deepened democracy"* have become two antinomic notions, Krastev acknowledges."[21] Europe is divided in the East and the European narrative of a unity re-found beyond the Iron Curtain collapses. Eastern Europe does not have the same history as that of the West in its relation to the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire. After all, the last siege of Vienna dates back to 1683 and we are waiting for a really nice novel or film to teach Europe what happened.

Our time is one of wars between dysfunctional or bankrupt states, other wars led by wounded hyper-powers, or wars of religion, all wars that send millions of migrants on the roads of exile. The issue of migrants is at the forefront of the rights issue. Some, like Giorgio Agamben, see it as the proof of the end of liberal parliamentary democracy, replaced by the permanent state of exception declaring that he who is no longer a citizen of anywhere is deprived of rights. Basing himself on Roman law, he sees in the migrant the actualisation of the figure of the banished, *the homo sacer*. [22] On the contrary, Jean-Claude Milner shows that this question of the migrant, of the one who is no longer a citizen, renews the *reading of the rights of man and citizen*. Let's follow his reasoning. Before asking the question of power, and before asking the question of the rights of the citizen, the Revolution poses the rights of *man* as such. Faced with critics who denounced the abstraction of this *man*, or, as in the Marxist tradition, his too clear embodiment of the ideal rights of the bourgeois, Milner maintains that these rights are perfectly embodied as the rights of the speaking being seized in his pure quality as speaking being. "Speaking beings are speaking bodies. Speaking beings are many because they have bodies." [23] And this reduction announces the sexuated speaking being of Freudianism, highlighted by the last teaching of Lacan under the name of the *parlêtre who has a body*. "If we think about it properly, the man of the Declaration announces the man/woman of Freudianism: unlike the man of religions and philosophies, he is neither created nor inferred, he is *born*; this is what his real amounts to." [24]

The Marxist objection to the abstraction of rights loses its consistency in the face of the increase in emergency situations and ill treatments: "Faced with refugee camps, Marxist language is frivolous. So rights would start with excrements and secretions? Why not? Freud would have asked [...] The rights of man/woman summarise what makes one not treat a man or a woman as an animal; they therefore begin closest to animal life. Even when individuals have been deprived of their merits and demerits, their innocent or guilty actions, their works in a word, what remains has rights. Rag, garbage, tomb, most religions, philosophies and heroisms despise this accursed share." [25]

If we accept that the rights of the *parlêtre* cover the taking into account of the accursed share thus formulated, we can go as far as to think that the rights of man make us understand that the rights of migrants imply those of the *parlêtre*. At the end of Seminar XXIII, Lacan substitutes the exile of bodies in history to the ex-sistence of the subject of the unconscious: "Joyce rejects that anything can happen in what the history of historians is supposed to take for its object. He's quite right, history being nothing more than a flight, none of which is told but the exoduses. Through his exile, he sanctions the seriousness of his judgment. Deportees alone take part in history: since man's got a body, it's by the body that he can be got. The flipside of *habeas corpus*. Reread history: this is all the truth to be read in it. Those who believe they stand for a cause in its hullabaloo are also misplaced without doubt by an exile they have deliberated, but in making themselves an escabeau they are struck haviorless." [26]

We can deduce, from this, not only a politics of rights, but also a politics of the symptom, which implies new desires for democracy. The misrecognition of the migrant symptom goes by way of the affirmation of populist communitarianism, with its narcissistic withdrawal. Faced with the narcissistic identification with the same, with communitarian identification, the politics of the symptom aims at the partner to be deciphered. Identitarian belief carries the germ of its madness, including in the logical form according to which "I hasten to identify with the *same* lest they do not recognise me as a man". Migrants are neither reducible to a "desire for the West" which would alienate them without remedies, nor to the opaque figure of a menacing crowd, reduced to mere numbers. They are case by case. To decipher the migrant symptom is to be able to treat it effectively. A little *Realpolitik* is necessary. Faced with the millions of migrants expected, we will have to build filters and humanitarian reception areas in the countries of departure. We will therefore have to improve the beginnings of the new policy put into place since this year by the French and Italians who are in the front line. The universal of the human right must always be measured

on a case-by-case basis with the multiple possible forms of immigrations trafficking. Pope Francis was able to find the words to be the voice of a new figure of the neighbour. He is making a powerful contribution to Italy's admirable resistance faced with the difficulties of hosting new waves of migration, particularly those from sub-Saharan Africa. The incidents of the summer in Rome left traces, but they were overcome. We will hear what will come next in Turin in November and Rome in February.

Translated by Alasdair Duncan
Revised by Véronique Voruz

- [1] Ducourtieux C. and Bernard P., "Brexit, the puzzle ahead of the European summit", *Le Monde*, 19 October 2017
- [2] Travis A., "Hate crime surged in England and Wales after terrorist attacks", *The Guardian*, October 17, 2017
- [3] "In Austria, the extreme right in ambush", *Le Monde*, 17 October 2017
- [4] "Austria approaches the parliamentary elections in insolent shape", *Le Monde*, October 15, 2017
- [5] Vitkine B., "Andrej Babis, populist billionaire to conquer power in the Czech Republic", *Le Monde*, 20 October 2017
- [6] See the article of the now famous duo Gérard Davet and Fabrice Lhomme in *Le Monde* of September 14, 2017.
- [7] Connan J., "Veneto, Lombardy: in Northern Italy, the other referendum", *Le Figaro* online, checked on October 20, 2017.
- [8] On all these questions, read the excellent articles on the blog of our Forum, as well as those of Zadig-España, Rosa Elena Manzetti, Ana Aromi, Miquel Bassols, Enric Berenguer, Paolo Bolgiani, Joaquim Carretti, Gustavo Dessal, Santiago Castellanos, Domenico Cosenza, Francesc Vila, and those whom I cannot mention in their extension. Many will be present at the Turin Forum. The discussion will be exciting.
- [9] Isabelle Piquer, Force demonstration of the Catalan separatists in the streets of Barcelona, *La Matinale du Monde* of October 22nd.
- [10] Miller J.-A., Course of May 15, 2002, unpublished
- [11] Gauchet M., *La démocratie contre elle-même*, Paris, Gallimard, 2002, p.192
- [12] Glucksmann R., "Catalonia: politics as the only horizon", *L'Obs*, October 12, 2017
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- [14] Miller J.-A., *L'être et l'Un*, 2010-2011 Course, Unpublished
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- [18] Rancière J., *La haine de la démocratie*, La fabrique éditions, 2005, p.58
- [19] Lemaître F., "Europe on the way to the abyss" (On the Destiny of Europe, by Ivan Krastev, Premier Parallèle editions, 2017), *Le Monde*, 11 October 2017
- [20] Lemaître F., "Europe on the way to the abyss" (On the Destiny of Europe, by Ivan Krastev, Premier Parallèle editions, 2017), *Le Monde*, 11 October 2017
- [21] Lemaître F., "Europe on the road to the abyss" (On the Destiny of Europe, by Ivan Krastev, Premier Parallèle editions, 2017), *Le Monde*, 11 October 2017
- [22] Agamben G., *Homo sacer*, Threshold, 2003
- [23] J.-C. Milner, *Relire la Révolution*, Verdier editions, 2016, p.254
- [24] *Ibid.*, P.263
- [25] *Ibid.*, P.261
- [26] Lacan J., "Joyce the Symptom", in *Autres écrits*, Seuil, 2001, p. 568, English translation A. R. Price, in *The Lacanian Review* issue 5, forthcoming.

References to Jacques Lacan in the text:

Lacan's statement according to which "the Unconscious is politics",
See Seminar XIV : 10th May 1967 : For notes & availability see [Seminar XIV: The logic of phantasy: 1966-1967: begins 16th November 1966 : Jacques Lacan](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=1455](#) : pXIX 205-206 of Cormac Gallagher's translation : It is, undoubtedly, not something un-disturbing or something that may not appear to us, on occasion, to require to be highlighted, to remark that one or other thing that may happen in the world, and for example, quite simply at the moment, in a certain little district of South West Asia. What is at stake? It is a matter of convincing people that they are quite wrong not to want to be admitted to the benefits of capitalism! They prefer to be rejected! It is starting from there, it seems, that there ought to be posed questions about certain meanings. And specifically the following, for example, which will show us - which will show us no doubt, but today is not the day that I will even take the first steps in this direction - that if Freud wrote somewhere that "anatomy is destiny", there is perhaps a moment, when people have come back to a sound perception of what Freud discovered for us, that it will be said - I am not even saying "politics is the unconscious" - but, quite simply, *the unconscious is politics!*

I mean that what binds men together, or what opposes them, is precisely to be justified by that whose logic we are trying for the moment to articulate.
Because it is for want of this logical articulation that these slippages can be produced. This means that before noting the fact that in order to be rejected, for the "to be rejected" to be essential as a dimension for the neurotic, the following, in any case, is essential: **that he offers himself.**

Note : "Anatomy is destiny" is from 'On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in the Sphere of Love' : 1912 : Sigmund Freud +++++

See "[The Unconscious is Politics](#)", today : [LQ518 \(Lacan Quotidien 518\) : May 2015 : Éric Laurent](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12173](#) for notes and information.

The "punctual and vanishing" subject, as Lacan said, which cannot be defined by an essence or a fixed homeostasis, can only be articulated with the signifying chain, with what can be described as narrative history. But what, in Lacan, is above all logical existence [14], [14] Miller J-A, *L'être et l'Un*, 2010-2011 Course, Unpublished

From [Science and Truth: 1st December 1965 session of Seminar XIII: The Object of Psychoanalysis : Jacques Lacan](#) : See [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=739](#) for information and notes : p6-7 of Bruce Fink's first translation : I am saying that this way never shed the ideals of scientism, as it is called, and that the mark it bears of this latter is not contingent but, rather, essential.

Its credit us preserved by this mark, despite the deviations to which it gave rise, Freud having opposed these deviations with timely sureness and inflexible rigor.
Witness his break with the most prestigious of his followers, Jung, as soon as the latter slipped into something whose function can only be defined as an attempt to reinstate a subject endowed with depths (with an "s"), i.e. a subject constituted by a relationship – said to be archetypal – to knowledge; the said relationship was not reduced to that exclusively allowed by modern science, being no other than the one I defined last year as punctual and vanishing; that relationship to knowledge which, since its historically inaugural moment, has retained the name "cogito".

Note : Science and Truth is the first presentation of [Seminar XIII: The Object of Psychoanalysis: 1965-1966 : from December 1st 1965: Jacques Lacan](#) : See [here](#) for notes and information. [http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=284](#)

And this reduction announces the sexuated speaking being of Freudianism, highlighted by the last teaching of Lacan under the name of the *parlêtre who has a body*. "If we think about it properly, the man of the Declaration announces the man/woman of Freudianism: unlike the man of religions and philosophies, he is neither created nor inferred, he is *born*; this is what his real amounts to. "[24]

[The Unconscious and the Speaking Body : Paris : 17th April 2014 : Jacques-Alain Miller or here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=11959](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=11959)

The Unconscious & the Speaking Body : 17th April 2014 : Jacques-Alain Miller

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Quote: Two years later, however, he'd changed his mind, if we are to go by his written text, "Joyce le Symptôme", where he puts forwards the neologism I just mentioned, which he prophesises will replace the Freudian word "unconscious": the *parlêtre*. [18]

This is the operation which I suggest can provide us with our compass for the next congress. This metaphor – the substitution of the Lacanian *parlêtre* for the Freudian unconscious – fixes down a scintillation. I propose that we take it as an index of what is changing in psychoanalysis in the twenty-first century, when it has to take into account an *other* symbolic order and an *other* real besides those upon which it was established.

Psychoanalysis is changing and that's a fact. Lacan remarks rather mischievously that it has changed because first it was practiced on a solitary basis by Freud, and then it came to be practiced in couples. But it underwent many other changes which we can take stock of when we read Freud, and even when we re-read early Lacan. It changes factually, in spite of our attachment to the old words and schemas. It is an ongoing effort to stay as close as possible to the experience in order to say it, without crashing into the wall of language. To help us to get over this wall, we need an (*a*)*mur*, I mean an agalmatic word that will pierce through the wall. I find this word with *parlêtre*.

This word will not feature on the poster for the next congress. Amongst ourselves we will know that the *parlêtre* is at issue in so far as it has replaced the unconscious, in so far as analysing the *parlêtre* is no longer quite the same thing as analysing the unconscious in Freud's sense, nor even the unconscious structured like a language. I would even say that we can bet that we are already analysing the *parlêtre*, and it is up to us to find out how to say so. We're learning how to say so. For example, when we speak about the symptom as a *sinthome*. This is a word, a concept, that comes from the era of the *parlêtre*. It translates a shift from the concept of the symptom of the unconscious to the *parlêtre*. As you know, the symptom as a formation of the unconscious structured as a language is a metaphor, it's an effect of meaning, induced by the substitution of one signifier for another. On the other hand, the *sinthome* of a *parlêtre* is an "event of the body" [19], an emergence of jouissance. Moreover, there's nothing to say that the body in question is your body. You can be "another body's symptom", should you be a woman. [20] And then, there is hysteria when there is a symptom of the symptom, when you form a symptom from "someone else's symptom", that is to say, a symptom raised to the second power. The symptom of the *parlêtre* certainly stands in need of further clarification in its relationship with the clinical types. I'm just mentioning, following Lacan's indications [21], how it applies to hysteria.

We shall not manage this by forgetting the structure of the symptom of the unconscious, just as Freud's second topography does not cancel out the first, but rather is composed with it. Likewise, Lacan has not come to efface Freud, but to extend him. The modifications in his teaching are made without any tearing, using the resources of a conceptual topology that ensures continuity without forbidding renewal. Thus, from Freud to Lacan, we shall say that the mechanism of repression is made explicit for us by means of metaphor, just as from the unconscious to the *parlêtre*, metaphor gives us the formal envelope of the body-event. Repression made explicit by metaphor is a ciphering, and the operation of this ciphering

labours away for the jouissance that affects the body. Our reflection is woven from this kind of cobbling together of various pieces from different eras, borrowed from Freud and from Lacan, and we should not shrink back from this kind of patchwork in order to move ahead in tightening our grasp on psychoanalysis in the twenty-first century. Here I would point out another word, after *sinthome*, which is from the era of the *parlêtre* and which I would place alongside the *sinthome*. It is a word that forces us to proceed to a new classification of notions that are familiar to us. The word that I shall place alongside the word *sinthome* is the word *escabeau*, which again I'm taking from "Joyce le Symptôme". [22] In Spanish, it is *escabel*. The *escabeau* is not a ladder, it's smaller than a ladder, but it's got steps. What is the *escabeau*? I mean the psychoanalytic *escabeau*, and not just the one that you use to reach books in a library. Generally speaking, it is what the *parlêtre* hoists himself onto, hauls himself onto in order to make himself *beau*. It is his pedestal, which allows him to raise himself to the dignity of the thing. This, for example (*pointing at the dais*), is a little *escabeau* for me.

18-Lacan, J., "Joyce le Symptôme (II)" in *Autres écrits, op. cit.*, p. 568. : See [Joyce the Symptôm \(Sinthôme\) I & II : 16th June 1975 : Jacques Lacan](#) or [here](#) for notes and availability. & [Autres Écrits: 2001 : Jacques Lacan](#) or [here](#) <http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=756>

See too: Lacan, J., *séminaire livre XXIII, Le sinthome, (1975-1976)*, Paris: Seuil, 2005, p. 56: "the subject is sustained by the *parlêtre*, which is what I denote as the unconscious". Probably [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> Seminar XXIII : 16th December 1975 : pIII 13 of Cormac Gallagher's translation : On the other hand, the enjoyment described as phallic is situated there, at the conjunction of the Symbolic with the Real. It is in as much that in the subject which is supported by the *parlêtre* in the sense that this is what I designate as being the unconscious, ...

19-*Ibid.*, p. 569.

20-*Ibid.*

21-*Ibid.*

22-*Ibid.*, pp. 565-569.

23-*Ibid.*, p. 568.

For further notes and references see

[Habeus Corpus : 28th April 2016 \(Rio de Janeiro, Brazil\) : Jacques-Alain Miller or here](#) <http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12038>

[The Stepladder \(Escabeau\) and Freudian Sublimation. From forcing to manipulation : A reading of «Joyce the Symptom» : \(Paris\) 3rd February 2015 : Éric Laurent](#) or [here](#) <http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12027>

At the end of Seminar XXIII, Lacan substitutes the exile of bodies in history to the existence of the subject of the unconscious: "Joyce rejects that anything can happen in what the history of historians is supposed to take for its object. He's quite right, history being nothing more than a flight, none of which is told but the exoduses. Through his exile, he sanctions the seriousness of his judgment. Deportees alone take part in history: since man's got a body, it's by the body that he can be got. The flipside of *habeas corpus*. Reread history: this is all the truth to be read in it. Those who believe they stand for a cause in its hullabaloo are also misplaced without doubt by an exile they have deliberated, but in making themselves an *escabeau* they are struck havisionless." [26]

[26] Lacan J., "Joyce the Symptom", in *Autres écrits*, Seuil, 2001, p. 568, English translation A. R. Price, in *The Lacanian Review* issue 5, forthcoming.

See [Joyce the Symptôme \(Sinthôme\) I & II : 16th June 1975 : Jacques Lacan](#) or [here](#) for notes and availability. & [Autres Écrits: 2001 : Jacques Lacan](#) or [here](#) <http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=756>

& [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>

Seminar XXIII : 17th May 1976 : possibly pXI 11-12 of Cormac Gallagher's translation : He, be had, it is something that is psychologically valid, he had a reaction of disgust. And this disgust concerns his own body in short. It is like someone who puts in parenthesis, who drives away the bad memory. This is what is at stake. This is altogether left as a possibility; as a possibility of the relationship to his own body as foreign.

And this indeed is what is expressed by the fact of using the verb 'to have'. One has one's body, one is not it to any degree. And this is what leads to belief in the soul. As a consequence of which there is no reason to stop there. And one also believes that one has a soul, which crowns it all. This form of letting drop, of letting drop the relationship to one's own body, is very suspect for an analyst. This idea of self: of self as body has something weighty about it. This is what is called the ego. If the ego is said to be narcissistic, it is indeed because there is something at a certain level which supports the body as image. But in the case of Joyce is the fact that this image, on this occasion is not involved, is this not what marks that on this occasion the ego has a quite particular function. How can that be written in, in my *noeud bo*?

So then here, I trace out, I am breaking through something which you might not necessarily follow. How far, as I might say, does this *père-version* go? As you know since the time I have been writing it, that is what the *noeud bo* is. It is the sanction of the fact that Freud makes everything depend on the function of the father. The *noeud bo* is only the translation of this, the fact is, as I was reminded last evening, love and, into the bargain, the love that one can qualify as eternal, is what is referred back to the function of the father, which is addressed to him, in the name of the fact that the father is the carrier of castration. This at least is what Freud put forward in *Totem and Taboo*, namely, the reference to the first horde. It is in the measure that the sons are deprived of women that they love the father.

It is in effect something quite singular and breathtaking and that is sanctioned only by Freud's intuition. But !o this intuition, to this intuition, I am trying to give a different body, precisely, in my *noeud bo* which is so well designed to evoke Mount Nebo or, as they say, the Law. This Law which has absolutely nothing to do with the laws of the real world, the laws of the real world being moreover a question that remains completely open, and the Law, (170) on this occasion, is simply the law of love, namely, perversion.

& Seminar XXIII : 11th May 1976 : pXI 16 of Cormac Gallagher's translation : You must indeed have realised that what I told you of the relationships of man to his body and which depend entirely on what I have told you: in the fact that man says he has the body, his body, he has. Already to say his, is to say that he poses=esses it, of course, like a piece of furniture. And that this has nothing to do with anything whatsoever that allows the subject to be strictly defined. The subject is only defined in a correct way from what ensures the relationship, from what ensures that a subject is a signifier in so far as he is represented to another signifier.

I would like here to tell you something that may perhaps all the same slow down a little bit what creates a gulf, in what we are permitted to circumscribe by the use of this Borromean knot, of this *père-version*.

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