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François Ansermet,
Amelia King, Éric Laurent,
Annaeve, Laura Sokolowsky,
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Russell Grigg, Dan Shalit Kenig,
Ramel, Dominique Rudaz,
Bogdan Wolf

De Filippi, Janet Haney,
Wright

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Josefina Ayerza, Santanu Biswas,
Tim Dean, Russell Grigg,
Hamilton, Maire Jaanus,
Ellie Ragland, Renata Salecl,
Spnerdson, Henry Staten,
Senele, Natalie Wülfing

idents
Poland: Barbara Kowalow,
Maria-Cristina Aguirre,
Laceur. *Israel*: Sharon Zvili,
Greece: Argyris Tsakos,
Francesco

cyrus.saint@gmail.com

The Lacanian Review

PARANOIA

Issue **10** / FALL

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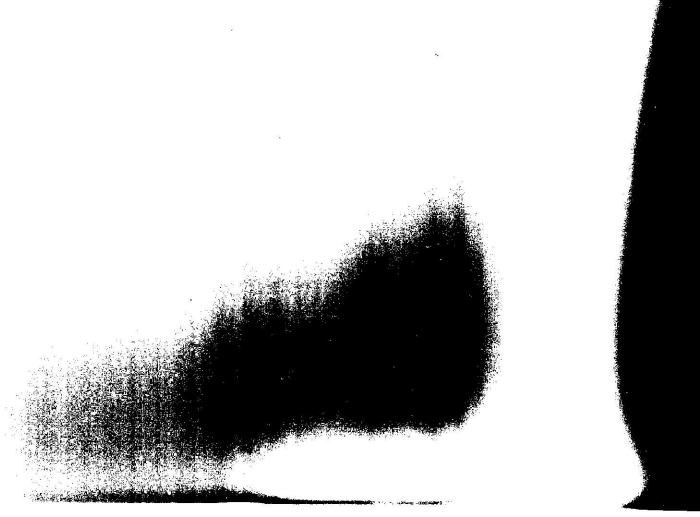
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René Raggenbass, *The Moment of the Act*

THE MOMENT OF THE ACT AS UNPREDICTABLE: IN CRIMINOLOGY... AND ELSEWHERE

René Raggenbass

KEYWORDS: *Criminology, Jouissance, The voice, The act*

Nothing Is More Human than the Act

“Nothing is more human than crime.”¹ The human is defined here as the conflict between the law and jouissance. Let us paraphrase J.-A. Miller and maintain that, because it is rooted in language, nothing is more human than the act. An act which one abominates, since in the moment of its realization, one disappears as a subject. That may be the reason why we insist on dealing with that horror in a passion for thought which is but ignorance. Here is the frame within which we will examine the logic of the moment of the act in its link with criminology. This logic articulates two heterogeneous, disharmonic, and irreconcilable dimensions, the symbolic (the calculable) and the real (the incalculable).

The Moment Is Ahistorical and Therefore Incalculable

There is “an antinomy between thought and action.”² However, criminology and psychiatric assessments, which rest on “the ideal of rational behaviour,” try to calculate and make predictable the moment of the criminal act. That ideal subsumes action into thought, more particularly into statistics. It does away with the contingency of the moment since “once the adequate calculation has been made, the act would logically ensue as the conclusion”³ of a story, of a demonstration.

That, however, is invalid which demonstrates on the one hand that of the passage to the act in a state of urgency, and that the moment of the act, as a symbolization, outside history, the moment of triggering is structurally singular and the consequences of the act are not identical.

To make thought and action presupposes in them a relation between the two sides of the act and the universal, which is to be seen in each individual as unique. In the act/offence, the biography and the behaviourist items involving the act on crime.⁴ If that reduction to a formula it says nothing about the truth of the act.

If the effect of significance on the other hand, no meaning of the subject can therefore be calculated. Jacques-Alain Miller sets it as a principle [...] is that there is no calculation that can be calculated, but not held.

We will illustrate the antinomy with two examples, which had to do with the moment of a passage to the act, the act ending an analysis. It is clear that the passage to the act is not to suppose that those two acts are the same. In other words, as we have said, one must first extract the

Building a Case: Approaching the Act

Criminology attempts to extract the act from a series of statistically processed

René Raggenbass is a psychoanalyst practicing in Martigny, Switzerland. He is a member of the ASREPNLS and the WAP.

1. Jacques-Alain Miller, “Société de surveillance et ses criminels,” *Mental*, no. 21 (September 2008): 7–14.
2. Jacques-Alain Miller, “Jacques Lacan: remarques sur son concept de passage à l’acte,” *Mental*, no. 17 (April 2006): 17, 28.
3. *Ibid.*, iii.

4. Jacques Lacan, *D’un Autre à l’autre*, Paris: Seuil, 1964, p. 10.
 5. Jacques-Alain Miller, *Les années de la parole*, Paris: Seuil, 1997, p. 46.
 6. Cf. Jacques-Alain Miller, “Jacques-Alain Miller,” *Mental*, no. 21 (September 2008): 17–14.

René Raggenbass, *The Moment of the Act as Unpredictable: In Criminology... and Elsewhere*

OF THE ACT AS PREDICTABLE: IN AND ELSEWHERE

René Raggenbass

Criminology, Jouissance, The voice, The act

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son concept de passage à l’acte,” *Mental*

That, however, is invalidated by any clinical examination of the act, which demonstrates on the contrary that the moment of the act, as well as that of the passage to the act, is fundamentally set in the temporality of urgency, and that the moment when the act is triggered is outside primary symbolization, outside history, and is therefore incalculable. If the moment of triggering is structurally similar in both cases, we will show that the aim and the consequences of the act, with regard to the passage to the act, are not identical.

To make thought and act congruent with each other, criminology presupposes in them a rational and continuous story. It does not distinguish between the two sides of “One”: the “One” of “all alike,” of standardization and the universal, which it will quantify, and the “One” of “all different,” each individual as unique, unquantifiable. It will proceed by reducing the act/offence, the biography, and the words of the criminal to diagnostic and/or behaviourist items involving risk, and then putting forward a metalanguage on crime.⁴ If that reduction throws a light on the phenomenology of the act, it says nothing about the jouissance, which is unique, at work in the act.

If the effect of signification is susceptible to being predicted, we have, on the other hand, no means whatsoever of quantifying the value of jouissance which the subject grants to the effect of signification. The jouissance of the subject can therefore not be deduced from the signifying chain.⁵ Jacques-Alain Miller sets it as a principle: “The principle which I lay down [...] is that there is no calculating libido. The signified and the subject can be calculated, but not libido,”⁶ because it is contingent and outside the law!

We will illustrate the unpredictability of the moment of the act with two examples, which had opposite consequences. The first example is the moment of a passage to a criminal act, and the second is the moment of the act ending an analysis. If we follow Jacques-Alain Miller, who claims that the passage to the act reveals the structure of the act,⁷ it is legitimate to suppose that those two acts have a common structural point. That being said, one must first extract their logical points.

Building a Case: Approaching the Jouissance of the Subject

Criminology attempts to extract the objective cause of the criminal act from a series of statistically established phenomenological and criminogenic

4. Jacques Lacan, *D’un Autre à l’autre: Seminar XVII* (Paris: Seuil, 2006), 34.

5. Jacques-Alain Miller, *Los d’une cure* (Paris: Navarin, 2018), 45.

6. *Ibid.*, 46.

7. Cf. Jacques-Alain Miller, “Jacques Lacan: remarques sur son concept de passage à l’acte,” *op. cit.*, 17.

clues.⁸ That method does away with the subject as “barred,” with his speech, his libido, the drive, *jouissance*, the psychic causality, which are incalculable, unquantifiable. We do not build a case within that frame of mind. We rather try to highlight the unique subjective dimension of the one who commits the act.

To begin with, let us specify that the act and the passage to the act, with regard to acting out, are characterized by their being not knotted to, not meant for, the Other. That does not mean that the passage to the act takes place outside the symbolic, since it is always caught in a signifying frame. Yet, it is not meant for the Other. It is outside the laws of speech and language. It is only addressed to the one committing the act, or more precisely to the *jouissance* intruding into his/her body, which precipitates him/her into a state of emergency. The act too is only addressed to the one that acts, but since it is not caught in an irruption of *jouissance*, the consequences are not identical. As regards acting out, it is an answer to a subjective emergency originating in a breach of the signifying fabric and a knotting to the scene of the Other.

That being said, it is not conceivable to examine a crime without considering the symbolic structures of society. That is the reason why Lacan claims that, for any passage to the act, we have to make reference to the symbolic context that precedes it.⁹ But let us repeat that the shaping of the act (what is made visible) is not the moment when the act is triggered (the moment of emergency, of haste).

To extract the logic underlying the passage to a criminal act, one certainly has to identify the symbolic chain preceding it, but that formal envelope of knowledge is not enough, since the drives prompting the act, the *jouissance* at work in it, remain beyond the reach of knowledge. Besides knowledge, one has to consider the symptom (*jouissance*) and the series of *objets a*, inside or outside the body, which Lacan calls “surplus *jouissance*.”¹⁰ Is that construction sufficient to predict the moment of the passage to the act, or of the act?

8. Jacques-Alain Miller & Jean-Claude Milner, *Voulez-vous être évalué?* (Grasset, 2004); Jean-Claude Milner, *La politique des choses* (Paris: Verdier, 2011); Jean-Claude Milner & Jacques-Alain Miller, *Evaluation, entretiens sur une machine d'imposture, L'instant-de-voir* (Paris: Agalma, 2004).
 9. Jacques Lacan, “A Theoretical Introduction to the Functions of Psychoanalysis in Criminology,” in *Écrits*, trans. B. Fink (London: Norton, 2008), 108, 103: “Neither crime nor criminals are objects that can be conceptualized apart from their sociological context.”
 10. Jacques-Alain Miller, *Un effort de poésie, 2001-2002, L'orientation lacanienne* (annual course within the framework of the Department of Psychoanalysis, The University of Paris VIII), lesson of 5 December 2001, unpublished; Jacques Lacan, *D'un Autre à l'autre: Séminaire XVI* (Paris: Seuil, 2006), lesson of 21 May 1969, “Apories et réponses,” 327–337; Jacques-Alain Miller, “Une lecture du séminaire d'un Autre à l'autre,” *La cause Freudienne*, no. 66 (2007): 53–89.

In my opinion, the answer, otherwise, anybody could predict the moment on the basis of the symptom, the symptom of a given subjective mental dimensions of anxiety, as well as the unfathomable decision modality of the relation between them. That coordinate is central in the act, it be criminal (unanalyzed act).

A Subject Overwhelmed by Separation Without the

This fifty-year-old man was condemned for strangling his wife for four years outside prison walls, and because of a love affair he became concerned with himself and imprisoned again.

We are asked to “predict” the act, and to give a verdict on it, incalculable, as in the film *Memento*. In a clinical reading we can enlighten the particular case, the crime and the particular of the invasive voice of his partner precluded any relation to the act meant separating himself from any attempt at entering into a subsequent use of the “object.”

A few words on the signification of the instruction of the case, the “refuse,” “wreck,” “miserable” and a severe personality disorder: They describe him as particular.

As for the judgment, it reads: “behaviour. Here, the act bears the eyes of justice, the offence.”

11. Jacques-Alain Miller, *Le moment de la décision* (Paris: Agalma, 2006), lesson of 29 November 2006, unpublished.

subject as “barred,” with his speech, the causality, which are incalculable, within that frame of mind. We perceive the dimension of the one who

act and the passage to the act, with their being not knotted to, not that the passage to the act takes days caught in a signifying frame. Outside the laws of speech and the committing the act, or more his her body, which precipitates too is only addressed to the one corruption of jouissance, the consequence out. It is an answer to a subject of the signifying fabric and a

examine a crime without considering the reason why Lacan claims to make reference to the symbolic that the shaping of the act (what the act is triggered (the moment

passage to a criminal act, one in preceding it, but that formalize the drives prompting the act, the reach of knowledge. Besides the (jouissance) and the series of Lacan calls “surplus jouissance.”¹⁰ the moment of the passage to the

In my opinion, the answer is no. This is not how we read Lacan. Otherwise, anybody could predict the moment of a crime or the end of a treatment on the basis of the symbolic coordinates, the surplus jouissance and the symptom of a given subject. That would mean forgetting the fundamental dimensions of anxiety, of certainty, of urgency, of contingency, as well as the unfathomable decision of being. A key element seems to be the modality of the relation between the speaking being and his jouissance. That coordinate is central in considering the moment of the act, whether it be criminal (unanalyzed acting) or not (analyzed acting).

A Subject Overwhelmed with the “Sonority” of Voice: Separation Without the Ethics of a Use

This fifty-year-old man has been in detention for sixteen years. He was condemned for strangling his concubine. When we met him, he had spent four years outside prison walls, but because of a relapse in drug and alcohol use, and because of a love affair just started, the executive authority has become concerned with him. He is considered dangerous and so he is imprisoned again.

We are asked to “pre-dict” the risk of a repetition of a similar passage to the act, and to give a verdict on measures that will avoid it. Are those points calculable, as in the film *Minority Report*? Certainly not. But from our clinical reading we can enlighten the judicial authority by showing that, in this particular case, the crime aimed at silencing “the purely sonorous form”¹¹ of the invasive voice of his partner. At the moment of the crime, that sound precluded any relation to the Other, to a woman, and the passage to the act meant separating himself from the real of that invasive voice, without any attempt at entering into a civilized relation with the other, or at another subsequent use of the “object-voice.”

A few words on the signifying envelope framing that man. During the instruction of the case, the following epithets were used to name him: “refuse,” “wreck,” “miserable and false.” The experts connect the crime to a severe personality disorder, to paranoid traits and heavy substance abuse. They describe him as particularly dangerous.

As for the judgment, it reaches a conclusion of rational and intentional behaviour. Here, the act bears witness to an “evident homicidal will.” In the eyes of justice, the offender endured his victim’s reproaches about the

10. *Le moment de l'acte?* (Grasset, 2004); Jean-Claude Milner & Jacques-Alain Miller, *Le moment de l'acte* (Paris: Agalma, 2004).
11. “Elements of Psychoanalysis in Criminology,” 2006, 113. “Neither crime nor criminals are in a biological context.”
12. *Orientation lacanienne* (annual course within the University of Paris VIII), lesson of 29 November 2006, unpublished.
13. *Le moment de l'acte: Séminaire XVI* (Paris: Seuil, 2006), 27–337; Jacques-Alain Miller, “Une lecture de l'acte” (2007): 53–89.

11. Jacques-Alain Miller, *Le tout dernier Lacan, 2006-2007, L'orientation lacanienne* (annual course within the framework of the Department of Psychoanalysis, The University of Paris VIII), lesson of 29 November 2006, unpublished.

state he was in as soon as he returned home. He then replied by beating her and then he strangled her. The motive is jealousy. The proof is as follows: "his determination, and having kept enough clear-mindedness to make three phone calls, giving the same version each time to his interlocutors." At that time, he had reached a paroxysm of brutality. Two and a half months before, he had been taken in and questioned for savagely beating his friend, attempting to strangle her, and uttering death threats against her.

My reading and construction are different. What can emerge when the case is constructed by integrating the symptom (jouissance) and the series of objects inside and outside the body which Lacan calls "surplus jouissance"?

The man does not "historicize" the course of his life. He says he prefers us to ask him questions: "I feel more at ease if I must answer questions." Consequently, I have access to the coordinates of his biography mostly through his criminal case file. From his childhood, I note constant sleep disorders (presence of a real that keeps him awake?), an idealized mother (a way of treating anxiety?), and a father disqualified by his voice felt as all too real (a drive object causing anxiety). As an adolescent, he fails in all his attempts at professional integration (integration into a social bond experienced as overly ordered?). He struggles to emancipate himself. He begins to use and abuse alcohol and drugs (objects procuring surplus jouissance?). For ten years, he is errant (avoiding the link to the Other?), leads a marginal life made of "petty trafficking" (points of satisfaction through transgression?) and repeated violence on his partner. There are testimonies of attempted strangulation six years before the crime. He maintains that he "simply wanted to shut her up by pinching the vocal cords after a technique well-known to all who practice martial arts." At the time of the crime, alcoholic impregnation is permanent (self-treatment of anxiety?). All that goes along with body phenomena: "He feels strange, alien to the outside world, he feels he has plenty of energy to spend. He has a strange vision with shades of colours moving before his eyes" (an intrusion of jouissance rather than a symptom?). During those ten years, he was taken to hospital three times for psychotic decompensation connected with drug withdrawal. At 31, he committed the murderous act. The strangulation is described as savage and brutal. As for us, we point out the certainty as well as the urgency of "hushing" which this statement made to the police seems to support: "If I acted as I did it was to prevent her from harming me verbally." We can maintain that in that moment, his world had collapsed, in other words that the symbolic had collapsed faced with the real¹² of his partner's voice.

12. Jacques-Alain Miller, *Le tout dernier Lacan, op. cit.*, 23.

What happens after the calm, sitting on the floor having brought about a state that he appreciates the situation.

Although we are not in a situation that situates this passage to the locus where things are known as object-voice. Can we maintain the urgency of "the unspeakable" if it is not possible to determine a particular moment.

The subject is invaded by the meaning of what he is going through, which goes along with it) through a passage to the something of his real. He has the real of the invasive voice being feasible, or thought of him, that point has never

The End of a Psychoanalysis of the Thing in the L

This is the treatment of the subject by being a dialogue with his imaginary debt and will. The scopical drive object and (surplus jouissance) worked and fostered the illusion of a treatment in front of a father's demand for love by offering

The direction of this treatment are few. The treatment tests

13. Jacques Lacan, *D'un Autre à l'autre*, "Séminaire I, 1953-1954, Les cahiers de la psychanalyse", 327.

14. Eric Laurent, "Les traitements de la psychanalyse" (February 2003): 7-20. "What is the passage to the act. The act is only through leaky transmission of the passage to the act. One can make who struck the Other. The passage

me. He then replied by beating me with jealousy. The proof is as follows: in clear-mindedness to make three come to his interlocutors." At that time, two and a half months before, he savagely beat his friend, with threats against her.

What can emerge when the subject (jouissance) and the series of Lacan calls "surplus jouissance"? He says he prefers to answer questions." His biography mostly childhood, I note constant sleep (awake?), an idealized mother disqualifies by his voice felt as all as an adolescent, he fails in all his separation into a social bond expect to emancipate himself. He begins (procuring surplus jouissance?). (the link to the Other?), leads a points of satisfaction through his partner. There are testimonies of the crime. He maintains that using the vocal cords after a technical arts." At the time of the (self-treatment of anxiety?). "He feels strange, alien to the energy to spend. He has a strange "fire his eyes" (an intrusion of those ten years, he was taken compensation connected with drug act. The strangulation is point out the certainty as well ment made to the police seems prevent her from harming me ment, his world had collapsed, faced with the real¹² of his

What happens after the act? He calls the police. The patrol finds him, calm, sitting on the floor of the hall, drinking a beer (the passage to the act having brought about a resolution?). The doctor who examines him finds that he appreciates the situation with complete indifference.

Although we are not in the context of a treatment, our construction situates this passage to the act in the articulation between knowledge (the locus where things are known), jouissance (cf. body phenomena), and the object-voice. Can we maintain that this passage to the act occurs in the urgency of "*the unspeakable relation to jouissance*"?¹³ We certainly can, but it is not possible to determine why the passage to the act is triggered at this particular moment.

The subject is invaded by an unnameable tension which causes the meaning of what he is going through to fly away. He tries to treat this intrusion, which goes along with anxious perplexity (he can say nothing about it) through a passage to the act which bypasses the social link, but names something of his real.¹⁴ Here, the moment of the act separates him from the real of the invasive voice, but without any other use of this object-voice being feasible, or thought of, in connection with the other. When we meet him, that point has never been broached.

The End of a Psychoanalysis: Ethics of the Other Use of the Thing in the Link

This is the treatment of an obsessional who enjoys thinking and fantasizing that by being a diligent analysand, he will be exempted from paying his imaginary debt and will nevertheless be adopted by his psychoanalyst. The scopical drive object and its phallic and solipsistic out-of-body extensions (surplus jouissance) worked as an imaginary stopgap healing his division, and fostered the illusion of evading castration anxiety. Being diligent in his treatment in front of a father-master figure also enabled him to sustain a demand for love by offering him his pseudo-castration.

The direction of this treatment is not based on interpretations. They are few. The treatment rests fundamentally on the presence in actuality of

13. Jacques Lacan, *D'un Autre à l'autre: Séminaire XVI* (Paris: Seuil, 2006), lesson of 21 May 1969, "Apories et réponses," 327.

14. Éric Laurent, "Les traitements psychanalytiques des psychoses," *Les feuillets du Courtil*, no. 21 (February 2003): 7–20: "What is annoying is that one of the fundamental modes of nomination is the passage to the act. The way in which the subject situates itself in the flight of sense is not only through leaky translation, though that too, but it is also through the short-circuit of the passage to the act. One can make a name for oneself through the passage to the act: 'I am the one who struck the Other.' The passage to the act is (thus) itself always possible, always present."

the analyst in the position of *objet a*, materialized in small noises such as clearing one's throat or breathing, which the analysand cannot relate to any meaning but which he can hear, a situation which keeps open the gap between the imaginary and the symbolic while allowing the emergence of the real of the analysand.

After two first analyses, this analysand continued on with a third analysis that lasted for over ten years. Every week he went to the sessions. On that day he did not know that it would be the last one. He felt something had changed in his relation to the analyst. That the fantasy which upheld his benign diligence no longer worked. Yet he realized that he enjoyed still believing in it. But something else pressed him on, he felt in his body a surge which had nothing to do with the word, or with saying. Something in the register of evidence/certainty, urgency, which returned him not to meaning, but to his essential solitude and to his relation to his cause.

The big Other which he had built up, constructed during all those years, with which he played and enjoyed his part, had progressively dissolved; he was alone. As he entered for the second session, he heard himself say: "I am not lying down, I am putting an end to it." It seemed to him he noticed a slight surprise in the analyst before he left. The moment had not been elaborated, it was unpredictable. As such, the act is indifferent to its future, to what will come next, it is beyond sense.¹⁵ Its being in itself has nothing to do with the effects and consequences of the previous case. What is at stake here is not separation from an invasive jouissance but bringing into play, in the link to the analyst, an object that the analysand has given up for the purpose of making an ethical use of it ("speaking well"), i.e. other than that of the idiotic "One alone." Here the act does not aim at expressing a thought, but at causing it.¹⁶

How to calculate this act? That unique and contingent moment supported by certitude, by urgency and the satisfaction of an "I want" in a context where a void is the basis of communication, and where transference to the analyst has dissolved. How to predict that it is at that very moment that the analysand will act? It seems to us that, as in crime, that is not predictable. Yet the consequences and the use made of the act are different in so far as a parlêtre has made himself responsible for it.

Let us specify that the signifying hypotheses we are putting forward here do not correspond to what was going on at the moment of the act. What is presented here is a construction, a fiction built after the event of that

15. Jacques-Alain Miller, "Jacques Lacan : remarques sur son concept de passage à l'acte," *Mental*, no. 17 (April 2006): 25.

16. Jacques Lacan, *D'un Autre à l'autre: Seminar XVI* (Paris: Seuil, 2006), 13.

moment in which the speaking subject, at that moment, he does not think. It is a moment of alienation that he sustained with the analyst. That is how we read Lacan with respect to the structure on "the object being acted upon." The missing in this quotation is the word "in haste," but that sentence by Lacan corresponds to the described above and the end of the act.

For an Ethical and Therapeutic Act

If "the act is always *acte*, and not *action*, from the Other,"¹⁷ the consequences of the act have presented.

To what effect? If the crime is committed. The question was, in a state of radical jouissance which he located in the act, he cannot claim that by silencing the Other, he and knows now how to make a use of it.

For the analysand too, the act, is that he continues to keep the act, which is a nuisance to him, and the formula: "I act and I think." This is the idiot's jouissance. This concept is heterogeneous in their connection. It is the formula of an agitation. We are in the cession of jouissance which was casting on his own through the object-gaze and its phallic extension. It is the time to act and the time to repeat. One and repeats, in the name of the Other for him but is continued in the act. It is the event that the analysand is responsible for the moment per se of his act. Act on the object. That *sinthome* cannot be reduced to an accepted certainty—which signifies the absence of his radical difference.

17. Jacques Lacan, "La méprise de l'acte," *Mental*, no. 17 (April 2006): 23.

18. Jacques-Alain Miller, "Jacques Lacan : remarques sur son concept de passage à l'acte," *Mental*, no. 17 (April 2006): 23.

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at the moment of the act. What
n built after the event of that

moment in which the speaking subject was acted by his real. At that moment, he does not think, but yields something of his jouissance, of the alienation that he sustained which enabled him to make his Other exist! That is how we read Lacan when he founds the act of a paradoxical structure on "the object being active in it and the subject subverted."¹⁷ What is missing in this quotation is some mention of certitude and urgency, of haste, but that sentence by Lacan shows that the moment of the crime described above and the end of an analysis are structurally identical.

For an Ethical and Therefore Discursive Destiny

If "the act is always *auto*, that is to say it is precisely what separates him from the Other,"¹⁸ the consequences are not identical in the two cases I have presented.

To what effect? If the criminal's act is not analysed, it is indeed *auto*. The question was, in a state of urgency, to separate himself from a destructive jouissance which he located and reached in the body of his victim. We cannot claim that by silencing it he separated himself from the object-voice and knows now how to make an ethical and civilized use of it.

For the analysand too, the act is *auto*. But the subjective effect, after the act, is that he continues to keep as close as possible to that separate object which is a nuisance to him, but of which he now makes new use through the formula: "I act and I think in the other's presence," which excludes the idiot's jouissance. This contraction of thought and act, which remain heterogeneous in their connection with each other, does not provide the formula of an agitation. We consider it as the byproduct, the left-over from the cession of jouissance which the analysand found in the idiotic gaze he was casting on his own thought. Actions and thoughts supported by the object-gaze and its phallic extensions. The effect of that contraction of the time to act and the time to think is to maintain him, in a way which is One and repeats, in the moment of certainty of the act, which takes place for him but is continued in a precarious link to the other. It is only after the event that the analysand has been able to ascribe a signification to the moment per se of his act. Acting/thinking because there is a cession of an object. That sinthome connects him to a point of certainty—a fully accepted certainty—which supports him in the use he makes of the experience of his radical difference.

17. Jacques Lacan, "La méprise du sujet supposé savoir," in *Autres écrits* (Paris: Seuil, 2001), 332.

18. Jacques-Alain Miller, "Jacques Lacan: remarques sur son concept de passage à l'acte," *Mental*, no. 17 (April 2006): 23

19. "Le concept de passage à l'acte," *Mental*, no. 17 (April 2006): 13.

If, for structural reasons, in both cases to act is to “wrench its certainty from anxiety [...] to achieve a transference of anxiety,”¹⁹ the effects are not similar. We cannot either argue that the act ending an analysis or the passage to the act are subjective achievements. No ideal in that. That is what Lacan reminds us of when he hammers out the fact that “it is a personalist myth to articulate the act in the field of subjective realisation by eluding the prominence of *a*.” The stakes, so it seems to me, are present afterwards, as is made clear by the end of Lacan’s quotation: “*a* opens up the field of the subject’s realisation, and from then on keeps its privilege therein, so that the subject as such is only realised in the objects (surplus *jouissance*) that belong to the same series as *a*, similarly bound to that matrix.”²⁰ The real stake is in the ethics of the use made by the subject of the object he is separated from.

If the act, incalculably, hinges on the certainty of the urgent need to be separated from *jouissance*, what is then the finality of that separation? Getting over something, falling, traversing, transgressing? Certainly not, for that real can neither be traversed nor suppressed. The end is rather to be found in an ethics that we define as a use that can be made. How each one of us manages and ties knots in that disharmonic space between body and signifier. “I am as I enjoy.” Thus the act is not only an urgent matter of separation, of surrendering the *jouissance* of the body, or of libidinal disinvestment. The analyzed act takes its place in a series which is a unique matter of identification and of use of the left-over. An ethics of the use made of that object, which belongs to the same series as *a*, which one never gets rid of, but which the analyzed subject stages again and again to create a social link.

Translated by Annie Ramel, Josiane Paccaud, and Véronique Voruz

19. Jacques Lacan, *Anxiety: The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book X*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. A.R. Price (Cambridge: Polity, 2014), 77. At the end of an analysis, the anxiety that accompanies the urgency is only the signal of a drive impulse to which the analysand responds by an act which is always renewed insofar as this drive impulse is constant.

20. *Ibid.*, 367.

PARAN THE NO

In his 1977 text “Teach
Miller spoke of paran
to a 1976 patient prese
it as an “illness of the
I’ll divide my work into
“illness of the non-barred
precipitous manner, the
closely as possible. Seem
operate in our practice with
non-barred Other.” To do

Foreign Body

So how are we to read
that’s ill? That’s not plaus
it’s not the Covid that’s
in the sentence.

I propose to write the
illness of the Other.” We
we would in “speaking be
this Other does not exist
porated by the speaking b
speaking being can’t be m
body”: as Lacan puts it in
symbolic that must be un
by the fact that nothing
that in which the being s
that gives it to him, to th

Dominique Rudaz is a member of the
forensic psychiatry at a hospital, and
Jacques-Alain Miller. “Enjeu
13–24.