

SCRÍOBH 2



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Editorial *SCRÍOBH 2*

*There's man all over for you, blaming on his boots the
faults of his feet¹.*

Vladimir, *Waiting for Godot*



Images and Doubles

This second issue of the ICLO-NLS online Newsletter *Scríobh* makes available in English the previously un-translated article of Guy Poblome entitled *The Child in the Mirror and His (its) Double*, presented at the Bulgarian Society in 2015. This translation was produced by members of the ICLO-NLS Special Interest Group (SIG) for Child and Adolescent Lacanian Psychoanalysis. The article offers an in-depth interrogation of the theoretical and clinical consequences of Lacan's elaboration of the Mirror stage in particular with regard to the image of the body and the appearance of its double in the title, which spans psychological structure. Poblome interrogates this vast question via the registers of *RSI* and the later works of Lacan to offer a truly contemporary and clinically relevant reading.

The question of images and their function is what captivated Véronique Voruz and those that

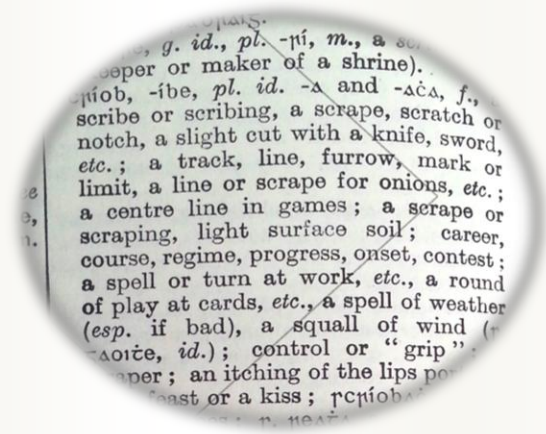
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The ego
is the image
of the other

– Lacan

¹ Beckett, S., *Waiting for Godot, a Tragicomedy in Two Acts*, Grove: Atlantic Incorp., 2011.

attended her seminar in Dublin entitled *The Place of Images in an Analysis*. Cecilia Saviotti's report follows the themes of the seminar, namely the rise of the scopic drive in hypermodernity, and the alienating consequences of such in terms of the contemporary subject, who is "parasited" and "lured" and as such fails to encounter the Other. The consequence which follows is the One-all-Alone whose enjoyment is bound to autoeroticism. Voruz asks, "What can analysis do in the face of the proliferation of images that diffract the real without treating the gaze [...]"².



And finally we encounter Beckett's "double" in the form of Vladimir and Estragon the two main characters in *Waiting for Godot*. Might we say that Estragon "embodies" the subject in all its failure and anxiety? As he looks to Vladimir, the image of sense and reason, to hold him together – without whom Estragon would be "nothing more than a little heap of bones". Sheila Power reviews the latest production by Garry Hynes of Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. Power finds a point of connection between the tragic statement of Estragon "I can't go on like this", and the potential point of entry into psychoanalysis.



Joanne Conway



² Report on *The Place of Images in Analysis*, in this issue.

The Child in the **Mirror** and His [its] Double¹

Guy Poblome

On the occasion of the third meeting of the year, on the theme of *The Child and His Body*, Vessela Banova and Véronique Mariage proposed the question of the child's relation to his image. The question of this double inserted in the title implies the whole field of phenomena related to the image of the body which we find in all structures, neuroses as well as in psychoses, which are not always easy to differentiate in terms of the imaginary and overlie the phenomena present in schizophrenia and in autism. Lacan says it in the text which we are going to address: "if we take note of the role of the mirror apparatus in the appearance of *doubles*, in which psychical realities manifest themselves that are, moreover, heterogeneous"². It is clear that approaching the imaginary in isolation from its relation to the symbolic and the real is very difficult. It is indeed not advisable and perhaps even impossible, as we would no longer be able to orient ourselves at all. So this title, which is apparently simple, opens up a vast field of research and I will only have the opportunity today to present a sketch of it to you.

An Experience of the Image...

The most straightforward approach, if I may say, seemed to me to be to take as a point of departure Lacan's text *The Mirror Stage as Formative of the I Function*. I want to say from the outset that this "I"

of the title bears an equivocation³. I think that today we can propose that the function which is formed in the experience of the mirror is that of the "ego" [*moi*] as an imaginary agency and not that of the "I" [*Je*] which refers rather to the barred subject determined by the symbolic order. Moreover, Lacan himself defines this during the course of his text. If the "I" is present in the title, it seems to me that this is due to the moment in which it appeared in Lacan's teaching. In fact, it dates from 1949. It is prior to the development of, and the insistence on, the primacy of the symbolic as the instance which determines the subject in so far as it is represented by the signifier.

That being said, let's examine the text. Lacan references an experience as observed by psychologist, Henri Wallon; that of a small child, around six months old, in front of the mirror. The child is attracted by his image in the mirror and he is jubilant. He very quickly notes, from the movements he makes, that this image has a link with what it reflects, the people and objects around him, as well as his own body. He cannot yet stand at that age and as such he does not master his body; he "lags behind the chimpanzee in instrumental intelligence"⁴. His neuro-motor system has not yet reached maturity. He is invested in this image as ideal and his movement will be to attempt to rejoin this image and to identify himself with this ideal image. This is the identification of the mirror stage, namely "the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image"⁵. This image constitutes the ideal ego, an identification which, according to Lacan, precipitates the agency known as the ego [*moi*].

The jubilation, this satisfaction that accompanies the experience of the mirror, stems from the fact

¹ Presented in Sofia, on 26th September 2015, at the Bulgarian Society of Lacanian Psychoanalysis

² Lacan, J., *Écrits, The First Complete Edition in English*, Ed. J.-A. Miller, Trans. B. Fink, WW Norton and Co. London and New York, 2002. p. 77.

³ [TN] *Moi*: ego, self. *Je*: I

⁴ Lacan, J., *op cit.* p. 93.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 76.

that the child can thus anticipate, get ahead of – through the total form of the body – , the maturation of his potency [power]. Indeed, it is as if the image somehow obeys him. When he lifts his arm, the image lifts its arm, etc.

The formation of the ego thus gives the child a sense of potency, while the lived experience of his body confronts him with the impotence [powerlessness] of his pre-maturation.

But, Lacan adds, this is a mirage, it's a fiction, permanently irreducible. It is precisely this lure that allows the little man to overcome this prematurity of birth that severs a “natural” link to his environment, to nature. All in all, this is what is proper to man. An animal, from the moment it is born, knows what it has to do; the programme of its life instinct is immediately initiated. The animal has a direct link to its environment, its world. “In man however this relationship to nature is altered [...]”⁶ and the mirror stage makes up for this deficiency by means of anticipation. To quote Lacan: “the mirror stage is a drama whose internal pressure pushes precipitously from insufficiency to anticipation—and, for the subject caught up in the lure of spatial identification, turns out fantasies that proceed from a fragmented image of the body to what I will call an “orthopaedic” form of its totality [...]”⁷. I note that in this phrase Lacan uses the term “machine”, which serves to evoke the machines invented by some psychotic subjects, or certain objects which are paired with the body in order to obviate fragmentation [éclatement].

This anticipation thus gives a sense of potency to the child. It is on this that Lacan founded the fundamentally paranoid dimension of the ego, the sentiment of omnipotence. Megalomania is a well-known trait in paranoia, which is rooted in

the mirror stage. This is how paranoia can be distinguished in the register of the imaginary from schizophrenia or autism, according to whether the subject is situated beyond or before [en-deçà] the mirror stage.



It is as ego that the child will become a social being. Indeed, as Lacan says, “This moment at which the mirror stage comes to an end inaugurates, through identification with the imago of one's semblable [...] the dialectic that will henceforth link the *I* to socially elaborated situations”⁸. It is not without a primordial jealousy, he adds, which “this moment that decisively tips the whole of human knowledge [savoir] into being mediated by the other's desire, constitutes its objects in an abstract equivalence due to competition from other people [...]”⁹. Take for example the child in the crèche who wants the little red car that his peer has in his hands. It does not matter how hard we try to give him another identical little red car, it does not work, because the one he wants is the others. It is therefore through the experience of the mirror that Lacan introduces that which we so often repeat, namely, that man's desire is the desire of the other.

Thus, we find there the other side of the sentiment of power given by the image to the ego.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 78.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 79.

⁹ *Ibid.*

The image, insofar as it is idealised, marks the ego with a fault [*marque le moi d'un défaut*]. In short, it's what Jacques-Alain Miller notes in a text to which I will later refer; the pre-maturation of the human being pushes him, via anticipation, towards an identification with the image which gives him a sense of power, but at the same time, this ideal image points at the fault on the side of the subject. In fact, the image robs him of something of his being and what we find is not megalomania, but rather an aggressivity with regards to this other who is better than me [better than the ego], this other who holds that of which the ego is therefore deprived.

So, there are two poles in the mirror stage. The first one is constitutive, formative; it provides the subject with an ego, unified, which supplements the primordial fragmentation of the bodily experience. But this first pole is not without the second, which, in its slope of rivalry, is destructive and which can be (re) found in madness. As Lacan says, alluding to the paranoiac tyrants who occupy certain regions of our planet, "the kind found within the asylum walls as well as the kind that deafens the world with its sound and fury"¹⁰.

Lacan says it, and it is evident that the ego is not the centre of the perception-consciousness system; it is not this [some] function of synthesis that would make of the ego the central core of personality, the control tower that would manage everything in an attempt to reach a balanced harmony. On the contrary, the ego is a fiction, a mirage, a lure, all terms which indicate that it is the seat of a fundamental and misleading misrecognition [*méconnaissance*]. Nevertheless, he introduces the term "reality" within this experience of the mirror stage. "The function of the mirror stage thus turns out, in my view, to be a particular case of the function of imagos, which is to establish a relationship between an organism

and its reality [...]"¹¹ Its reality is the *Umwelt*, it's the external world, the environment, the objects, the people surrounding the child. But what kind of reality is this, knowing that the basis of the experience of the mirror is a lure and that the image will never "resolve the discordance of the I [ego] with its own reality"¹², rather, Lacan adds, it is on the side of fragmentation.

All in all, if we remain at the level of the imaginary in this experience of the mirror, we confirm that something fails to stabilise. Lacan points out in his text that "The very normalization of this maturation is henceforth dependent in man on cultural intervention, as is exemplified by the fact that sexual object choice is dependent upon the Oedipus complex"¹³.

... Not without the Symbolic

This is what introduces an instance which transcends the purely imaginary level and we see here an emergence of the symbolic.

The Unary Trait

The first point which I will highlight in regard to the symbolic dimension is the one that Lacan developed in his Seminar *Identification* and which he calls the unary trait. Rather than elaborate on it, I will just mention it. The child going through the experience of the mirror stage is not alone. Indeed, as he cannot stand on his own, he is often held by someone, for instance his father or mother. And this Other comes to name the child in the mirror, "Look, there in the mirror, that's you". This nomination comes to fix, in the symbolic, the being of the subject in his identification with the image. It's the symbolic identification, the unary trait, that allows the

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 80.

¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 78.

¹² *Ibid.* p. 76.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 79.

raising of the ideal ego [i(a)] into the ego Ideal [I(a)]. It is the trait that allows for the unification of the image beyond its multiple variations. Indeed, when we present ourselves in front of the mirror we are never the same as the previous time, whether we are dressed differently, had our hair cut, or if we are wearing make-up. However, we recognise ourselves as one. There is also time, which leaves its trace on the body and makes our body - imperceptibly change over time. I say imperceptibly because, despite this transformation, each time we recognise ourselves in the mirror. In order for this to be possible what is required, despite the multiplicity of images, is the trait that makes One. I recall the work of a photographer who had captured on film the same man's face each year from early childhood to old age. When one looked at the first and the last images it was very difficult to affirm that it was the same person but if one looked at the images one after the other, the change between them was tiny, imperceptible. This was an attempt to show, through the image, the symbolic trait that makes the One of this man which traverses the transformation or the changing multiplicity of images over time.



The failure of the symbolic in psychosis does not allow for the establishing of this symbolic

identification, of the ideal ego that puts in place the One of the image. I am reminded of a young girl who once fled from the *Courtil* wearing a moustache she had made using some felt. When she was found, perplexed, she asked us how we had managed to recognise her given that she had this moustache. In another instance this other young person did not recognise one of the staff who had changed his glasses.

Lack

The second point concerning the symbolic in its relation with the mirror stage is the introduction of lack. It is not anodyne to remark that Freud himself had already highlighted the intervention of a symbolic structuring in relation to the experience of the mirror when he explores the game of Fort-Da of his grandson. This is the game through which the child represents the coming and going of his mother and through which he symbolises the absence of the primordial Other by means of an object, which he makes disappear and reappear. The accompaniment to this movement is a vocalisation that Freud identifies as a “fort - da”, “gone - back”, which Lacan situates as a primordial symbolic opposition. In a footnote in his text *Beyond the pleasure principle*, Freud notes: “One day the child's mother had been away for several hours and on her return was met with the words ‘Baby o-o-o-o!’ which was at first incomprehensible. It soon turned out however that during this long period of solitude the child had found a method of making *himself* disappear. He had discovered his reflection in a full-length mirror which did not quite reach to

the ground, so by crouching down he could make his mirror-image ‘gone’”¹⁴

In fact, this introduces the question of absence, of lack, in the relation with the mirror. Éric Laurent, in his book *La bataille de l'autisme* [The Battle of Autism], which many of you may know, highlights a note from regarding the mirror stage from Lacan’s Seminar RSI. It is therefore a revisiting of the mirror stage thirty years later, on the occasion of the presentation by Jenny Aubry of a film about the reactions of children in front of the mirror. According to Lacan, “for the subject, the assumption of the image goes together with the fact of wanting to take the organ, to remove it. The child put his hand in front of what could perhaps be a phallus, or perhaps its absence, and then clearly takes it out of the image. As if for the child what was at stake was to erase something of the body or to erase himself from the mirror (as the example of Freud’s grandson shows). At the moment when the subject assumes this *plus* [*en-plus*] that the body is, it is necessary that he marks a less [*en-moins*]”¹⁵, adds Éric Laurent.

Lacan had already introduced this point in his Seminar IV, *The Object Relation*, in which we know that he centres its development around the lack of object. I quote: “The relation to the other’s image gives the subject the matrix around which his experienced incompleteness [*son incomplétude vécue*] is organised. It is in relation with this image which presents itself as whole that he realises that he may lack something”¹⁶. He adds: “It is insofar as the imaginary comes into play that this can appear, that both the mother and himself may

imaginarily lack something”¹⁷. The specular relation thus introduces a lack in the subject, but also in the other. This object of lack is, we know, the phallus as signifier of the lack. The child may be led to substitute himself, to propose himself as the [imaginary] object that fills up this lack, without ever succeeding in doing so.

This introduction of the lack through the intervention of the mirror has an effect on the child which is different from the jubilation produced by the mastery he experiences over his relation with his own image. This other effect is another affect, which is rather that of depression. This is due, Lacan says, to the fact that “when the child is in the presence of this totality in the form of the maternal body, he must realise that it does not obey him. When the mirror stage comes into play, the omnipotence [is on the side of the maternal Other] only returns to the subject in a distinctive depressive position, and then it’s the sentiment of powerlessness of the child”¹⁸.

Jacques-Alain Miller goes back to these questions in a text published in the journal *La Cause freudienne* 68, entitled: *L’image du corps en psychanalyse* [The body image in psychoanalysis]¹⁹. What he indicates in this text is that in fact the relationship with the body image in the mirror introduces us to lack while veiling it at the same time. This explains the contrast between jubilation and depression. And this lack, which Lacan links initially to the human being’s prematurity and then to the lack in the Other symbolised by the phallus, is subsumed in castration. It is castration that is the principle of the mirror stage and of the identification with the body image. Castration causes interest in the

¹⁴Freud, S., (1920-1922), *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. In J. Strachey (Ed. And Trans.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. XVII., London: Hogarth Press. 1955, p. 15.

¹⁵ Laurent, É., *La bataille de l'autisme: De la clinique à la politique.*, Navarin, Le Champ Freudien, 2012, p. 80.

¹⁶ Lacan, J., *Le séminaire livre iv, La relation d’objet*, Ed. J.-A. Miller, Paris: Seuil, 1994, p. 176.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.* p. 186.

¹⁹ Miller, J.-A., *L’image du corps en psychanalyse*, In *Notre sujet supposé savoir, La cause freudienne* No. 68, Paris: Navarin, 2008.

image and in return this body image conceals or acts as a stopper of castration.

This means that castration and its principle, namely, the paternal metaphor, the Name-of-the-Father, is the fundamental support of one's body image and of the images of the bodies of others. "Without this support, [Jacques-Alain Miller argues] a person cannot see any fellowman [*semblable*], or himself in his place"²⁰. This is where we come back to the question of reality. "The consistency of perceptual reality is founded on the Name-of-the-Father"²¹.

The symbolic operation is therefore essential to the stabilisation of reality, to the fixing of images, otherwise we find disturbances in the perception of images. It is here that we enter the field of psychoses, where the relationship with the image is disturbed. There are a plethora of examples, e.g. in the case of a child who is asked what he sees in the mirror and answers "a jacket", the image is fragmented. What is constituted as totality is the clothing but the limbs are dislocated. In another case a boy, let's call him David, sees his image captured on a slide and projected on a screen, turns around excited saying: "Guy did you see? There are two Davids!" Yet another example; the child, sitting in a restaurant facing a mirror and who changes seats saying: "he annoys me that one!"

...and the Real

If we take up the Borromean perspective of the later Lacan, which knots the three registers of the imaginary, symbolic and real, we must still articulate the dimension of the real with the other two. How is this dimension introduced in the mirror stage in the relationship with the body image? It is clear that the jubilation experienced

by the child in front of his image bears witness to the fact that libido, or to put it in Lacanian terms, satisfaction, *jouissance*, is at play.

The question is to know how this *jouissance* is situated in the relation with the mirror stage. Jacques-Alain Miller offers a good example which illustrates just how *jouissance* is situated. It is the example of a 7 month old child whose parents state that he is not interested in the mirror, that he does not recognise his image in the mirror. However, he recognises the faces of his parents, he is very sensitive to the grimaces his father makes and this makes him laugh a lot. Something else his father did was to take him in his arms and put him upside down. He thus saw the world upside down which also gave him great satisfaction. According to Jacques-Alain Miller, for this child, the visual field was intensely libidinalised while, at the same time, it is the object of manipulations. That is to say that his whole body is taken as an object of *jouissance*. The whole body of the child can be enjoyed and this *jouissance* is shared by the child himself. It is a *jouissance* of the body as such. Jacques-Alain Miller notes, this happens before the mirror stage, before the child invests the image of his own body in the mirror.

What happens when the child accesses the mirror stage and he is structured through an identification that forms the ego [*moi*]? Well, the libido of the body passes towards the other, it is externalised, extracted from one's own body to invest the image of the body; it is localised outside of the body [*hors corps*]. This is entirely consistent with the idea that the image, in order to be formed, to be stabilised, to be able to constitute the reality of the world, requires the presence of a lack, of castration. What is the consequence of castration on *jouissance*? It is that *jouissance* is extracted from the whole body to be localised in a part of the body which is the phallus. There, it is a *jouissance* which is localised, limited, circumvented,

²⁰ *Ibid.* p. 98.

²¹ *Ibid.*

closed on itself; it is not a jouissance which invades the body in its entirety. In this sense, Jacques-Alain Miller states: “it is justified to say that phallic jouissance is not found in the jouissance of the body, it is out-of-the-body”²². He illustrated this in another paper by saying - in order to indicate the out-of-the-body localisation of phallic jouissance -, that the phallus does not obey the body as organism, “that it does its own thing”²³.

Lacan’s next step is to localise jouissance in the object small *a*. What is the object small *a*? Well, it’s a piece of the body, a little bit, says Lacan, on which jouissance is localised, condensed. Let’s think for instance of “Dora the sucker”, Freud’s Dora who loved to sit beside her brother to stroke his earlobe while she frantically sucked her thumb. We know that many of Dora’s symptoms concerned the oral sphere. The oral drive had therefore been localised on this bit of the body, the thumb. This “bit of the body” also implies, like the phallus, a certain outside-of-the-body, an extraction of the body taken as a whole. It is the extraction of the object small *a*. It’s not the jouissance which invades the body, it’s a little bit of jouissance, a *surplus-jouissance* says Lacan: the meagre reward returned to the subject who has undergone castration.

In fact, the object *a* is what comes to respond to the lack engendered by castration of castration. One can thus see all that is behind the reflection of the image. The body image is invested by the libido but in fact it veils; it conceals behind it the mechanism which is the localisation of jouissance in the object *a* against the backdrop of lack. It’s on this condition that the image can become stabilised and reality constituted. The condition is that jouissance is regulated, extracted from the body to become localised in an object. Otherwise

this jouissance circulates erratically in the body and, as previous examples have shown, causes disturbances of the body image. We can also take the example of President Schreber, Freud’s major case on psychosis which Lacan takes up in his Seminar III- and also in his text *On a question prior to any possible treatment of psychosis*. The moment when Schreber’s world collapses around him, the moment when libido detaches itself from the external world, the world becomes de-realised, reality unravels, the people he meets are nothing but “fleeting-improvised-men”²⁴. The reality of his image is also destroyed - to quote Lacan: “an identity reduced to a confrontation with its psychical double, but which, moreover, renders patent the subject's regression—a topographical, not a genetic, regression - to the mirror stage, insofar as the relationship to the specular other is reduced here to its mortal impact”²⁵. Indeed according to Lacan, the voices gave him the faithful portrait of himself, - I underline the term “portrait” to emphasise the dimension of the body image, of a “leper corpse leading another leper corpse”. It is indeed the moment when, according to the medical notes, Schreber was plunged into a catatonic state. “This was also the time [Lacan adds] at which his body was merely an aggregate of colonies of foreign “nerves,” a sort of dump for detached fragments of his persecutors' identities”²⁶. We can verify that jouissance, because it could not be localised in the phallus, (this is due to the non-action of the Name-of-the-Father, the non-action of castration, the non-installation of the lack), mortifies the image of the body while at the same time the jouissance returns in the body in an erratic, wild, deregulated way, causing its fragmentation.

²² *Ibid.* p. 95.

²³ Cf. Miller J.-A., *L’orientation lacanienne. L’Un tout seul*, Teaching delivered at the University Paris VIII, Lesson of 30 March 2011. Unpublished.

²⁴ Lacan, J., *Écrits*, op. cit. p. 813.

²⁵ *Ibid.* p. 473.

²⁶ *Ibid.*



The Double

Since we will have the opportunity to examine several clinical cases in detail this afternoon and tomorrow, I decided to focus on the issue of the *double*. We saw it exemplified in Schreber, when his world collapses the body image is destroyed and with it the subject's narcissism, his ego dissolves. Simultaneously, the body is the seat of phenomena of fragmented *jouissance* which wildly invade it. This last point is found quite often in our practice where we meet children who are in bits, driven by an unbridled *jouissance* which runs through them. At other times they may appear disconnected, emptied of any vital force, of any libido, as if they were absent; but that does not mean, as Schreber testifies, that their body is not the seat of disturbing phenomena. We can consider the disconnections as a radical defence against the invasion of libido, as a wild extraction of *jouissance*. This is the case, as Éric Laurent points out, of the "autistic shell", taken from Frances Tustin. These are "subjects who don't have a bodily envelope, who do not react to the image of their body, and who have established, instead of the mirror which does not function, a bodily *neo-rim* within which they are completely enclosed"²⁷ [...]. "The subject has his capsule, his protective bubble which allows him to defend himself from the manifestations of the

Other in its place"²⁸. The body image is therefore not constituted in the mirror, the body has no form and, because it is not marked by any lack which would come to inscribe a hole in the body, it has no limit. But for there to be a hole a rim is necessary, something that can open and close, something that allows objects to be exchanged with the Other. In autism the body is not pierced, and this is what could explain, for instance, why the child cannot separate himself from the objects of the body such as the faeces, the excrements.

Thus one can say that the body of the autistic child has no rim and that the shell is a *neo-rim*, which constitutes a defence, an impenetrable barrier. As Laurent adds, It takes a long time "for this *neo-rim* to loosen, to displace, constituting a space where exchanges of a new type can take place, linked to a less threatening Other"²⁹.

This perspective allows us to distinguish between schizophrenia and autism. In schizophrenia, *jouissance* returns in the body, the schizophrenic body is the site of disturbing phenomena. His organs are detached and are invaded by a *jouissance* that is not localised in the phallus. After the subjective collapse, after his image in the mirror has dissolved and he has experienced narcissistic death, Schreber's delusion allowed him to reinvest the world and his image under the form of a transformation into a woman. His image is very heavily invested with libido and he dresses up as a woman in front of the mirror. However, and this is the schizophrenic dimension I would like to emphasise, there is not one organ that is not touched by the divine action to effect this transformation. Here we see clearly the return in the body. I can also give an example of an adolescent who presented with an anxiety attack. He said: "I have balls", a French expression to indicate that one's throat is blocked, as it can be the case when one is anguished and, as Lacan

²⁷ Laurent, É., *La bataille de l'autisme... op. cit.* p. 65

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 69

states, the lack lacks and the object a emerges. It is usually a metaphor. But for this young man, the balls began to travel through his body and eventually he ended up wondering if it was not his testicles that had moved up to his throat. He comes back one day at lunchtime saying that he must eat “bloody meat” because his nose had bled in the morning.

In the “autistic shell”, the libido is extracted from the body and returns on a border, on a rim of the body, it does not return in the organs.

Thus, as Jean-Claude Maleval has highlighted in his book *L'autiste et sa voix*³⁰ [The voice of the autist], this rim of autism can be constituted by different elements. There is the autistic object, the double, and the small islet of competence. I will not develop the latter on this occasion. Regarding the object, he highlights the way in which a child - in order to operate an extraction of jouissance and to localise it on a rim, outside of the body - may complete himself with a more or less complex object, which can go as far as the machine. There are two famous examples: Bettelheim's case of Joey, who has to plug himself to a complex machine to avoid the explosions in his body; and then there is Temple Grandin with her hug machine, which contains the body and provides it with a limit, a boundary. Éric Laurent demonstrates in his book how this also leads to a whole clinic of the circuit. I will move on and focus on the question of the double.

J.-C. Maleval develops the question of the double in autism through a very fine and detailed description of this phenomenon in Donna Williams, an autist who became well-known by writing several books in which she shares her experience.

As a young girl, Donna Williams had installed two doubles, two characters which she called her

“puppets”. She names them Willie and Carol. Willie embodies her fury and fighting spirit, she is the one who has a defensive function against the threatening Other that is her mother. It's a double who has role of protecting her against the outside world. Carol, on the contrary, is a shell emptied of emotions, who incarnates her sociability and ability to take on different roles and this gives Donna the possibility of some social adjustment. The particularity with Carol is that Donna sees her in the mirror instead of her own reflection. We can see the link between the image of the body in the mirror, on this side [*en-deçà*] of the mirror stage, since Donna perceives it as a living person, not as an image. This double, as Donna herself says: “was the only possible escape of my inner prison”³¹; it's a rim that gives her a certain access to the Other. Meanwhile, Willie has the function of protecting Donna against the outside world.

The double allows Donna be a living being by proxy: by projecting her emotions, which she absolutely cannot bear as being inside of her, onto the outside. The libidinal investment of a double constitutes a sort of extraction of jouissance, which makes it bearable. But at the same time, this solution has a price: it cuts Donna off from her being as living. Take for example the following quote: “I had created for myself a self, different from that which was paralysed by emotions. That became more than a game, more than a comedy. It was my life, within which I had to eliminate what resembled personal emotions and at the same time Donna made Donna disappear.”³² In short, Donna realises that her life escapes her. But at the same time, if there is no double, if there is no rim, it's worse, because then it is, as she says, the “Big Black Nothing”³³, the abyss that opens beneath her feet. Éric Laurent writes it with a very clear phrase: “The hole with

³⁰ Maleval, J.-Cl., *L'autiste es sa voix*, Paris: Seuil, 2009.

³¹ *Ibid.* p. 118.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

no rim that accompanies Donna closes itself over the living of her being as pure presence of death”³⁴; Donna has not chosen this, it is rather a forced choice. The localisation of the libido in the double implies that life is situated in the double, and that she loses her bond with her being as living [*être de vivant*], with its emotions and with its body; but at the same time that’s what she seeks, she seeks to extract a jouissance that invades her body in a totally unbearable way. When, in a moment of anguish, Carol disappears from the mirror, it is Donna’s own face that emerges there, as a spectre, a living corpse, causing horrified panic. She then slashes her wrists.

Donna’s doubles will evolve. Due to the failure of the symbolic, she attempts to find an identification in the imaginary. She goes from her puppets to soft toys, which are parts of herself and have the same function of protection and social adaptation as Carol and Willie. Afterwards she comes to apprehend her reflection in the mirror as a “person”, reassuring, predictable and familiar. She seeks to reach her living being by identifying it to the image in the mirror, she tries to traverse the mirror to reach it, or expects desperately that the image, as real, comes out of the mirror and –as she writes: “that it will be with me or it will become me”³⁵. We have there the testimony of transitivity in its pure state. As J.-C. Maleval states: “Donna’s reflection [in the mirror] is not an image, it is always that of a living scopic being”³⁶.

J.-C. Maleval also finds in Donna Williams a third stage which bears witness to a certain crossing [*franchissement*]. It follows the publication of her first book in which she shares her experience as an autistic. To play on this word, we could say that,

through this book [*livre*] she delivers [*livre*] to the Other her pound [*livre*] of flesh. That is to say that the publication of her book implies a loss, she is separated from an object and this has effects on her relationship to the body. For the first time she manages to inhabit her body and to experience it. Nevertheless, she has sensations which immediately appear to her as “awful” and which she doesn’t “understand”. “I can feel my leg”, she cried out in fear. “I can feel my hand and my leg!”³⁷; the body becomes more articulated, is less fragmented. “I moved my hand to my arm and fearfully whispered, “I’ve got an arm””³⁸; she is no longer a body traversed by jouissance, but she now has a body. “I felt it not on my hand from the outside [...] but from the inside. ‘Arm’ was more than a texture; it was an inner sense.” [...] “I had never felt so alive”³⁹. Thus, it is the loss of an object that allows the subject to integrate his image to her ego [self], to identify himself to finally experience his body as alive [*vivant*].

Translated by *Hugh Jarret, Stephen Mc Coy, Cecilia Saviotti* and *Florencia Shanahan*

Reviewed by *Joanne Conway* and *Raphael Montague*

³⁴ Laurent, É., *La bataille de l'autisme* [...] op. cit. p. 84.

³⁵ Williams, D., *Somebody Somewhere*, Crown Publishing Group, Broadway Books, 2005, p. 127

³⁶ Maleval, J.-Cl., *L'autiste et sa voix*, op. cit. p. 118.

³⁷ Williams, D., op. cit. p. 223.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

Report on ICLO-NLS Open Seminar

“The Place of **Images** in an Analysis” with Véronique Voruz

by Cecilia Saviotti

Saturday 11th February 2017

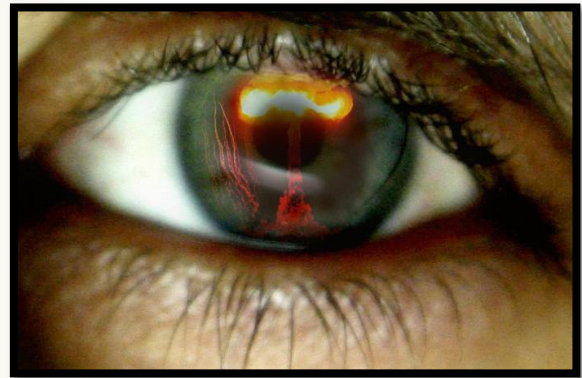
The second of the 2016/2017 ICLO-NLS Clinical & Theoretical Seminar was presented by Véronique Voruz who is a psychoanalyst member of the *École de la Cause Freudienne* (EFC), the New Lacanian School (NLS) and of the World Association of Psychoanalysis (WAP) and currently Analyst of the School (AE, 2016-2019).

Florencia F.C. Shanahan opened the event welcoming everybody; especially those attending for the first time, and introduced the axis for the ICLO-NLS Annual Seminar: “A Lacanian Clinical Practice” which constitutes the work frame towards the WAP Congress in 2018. Florencia noted that the Lacanian clinic is eminently a praxis, a way of operating in the real by means of the symbolic.

Véronique began her presentation saying that the title of this seminar “touches today’s clinic” as psychoanalysis learns from contemporary modes of existing. Her question about the function of the images that are not reducible to the symbolic register in analysis was interrogated from two angles: “The triumph of the image from the perspective of psychoanalysis” and “Images in analysis”.

Véronique presented curator and psychoanalyst Gerard Wajcman’s ideas, in his book *L’Œil absolu*¹ who takes an interesting angle by not focusing that much on the image but on the rise of the scopic drive in hypermodernity. The technological objects that reflect the eye, the organ of sight, are everywhere. We are constantly captured on multifunction screens. Wajcman articulates this argument with the slip between the eye and the

gaze (correlated with the desire of the Other) identified by Lacan in *Seminar XI*. Wajcman concludes that the more we watch – with the blind eye of technology and the scientific discourse – the less we see. Watching is no longer trying to see what is there but it simply provides “surplus-jouissance”.



For Lacan in *Seminar XI*, what is at stake in the visual field is for the subject to “be in the picture” by means of his form in order to insert himself in a function that grasps him thoroughly². In his later work (*Seminar XXIII*) Lacan would add that man adores his image “because his actual body is a hole”³. Therefore man makes a world for himself with the image he has of his body. Lacan returns to the imaginary in his teaching as it is a defence against the vanishing of the subject, it is what gives consistency to the speaking being. However it also implies alienation, the danger underlined by Lacan is that we are being captured by images and parasited by the scopic drive and consequently, being lured, we fail to encounter the Other, the Other sex and we are left with the One-all-alone, who has a body that enjoys autoerotically.

In the second part of her presentation Véronique articulated these concepts with the question of “Images in analysis”. She started by interrogating what can an analysis do in face of this

² Lacan, J., *The four fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis. The seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XI*. Jacques-Alain Miller (Ed.) A. Sheridan (Trans.), Norton: New York and London, 1998. p. 96.

³ Lacan J., *Le phénomène lacanien*, conference of 30th November 1974, *Cahiers cliniques de Nice*, June 1998, reprinted in 2011.

¹ Wajcman, G., *L’Œil absolu*. Denoël, 2010.

proliferation of images that diffract the real without treating the gaze, the gaze which can be referred to as “there is always someone watching” of the subject’s fundamental fantasy.

Jacques-Alain Miller says: “[...] in an analysis, there is nothing to see and everything to say [...] In this shipwreck of images, some nonetheless remain”⁴. For Jacques-Alain Miller these images are three: the image of one’s body; the image of the body of the Other; and the phallus. These images, that are present in the fundamental fantasy, do not represent the subject but “are coordinated with his jouissance”⁵. Miller calls them ‘phrase-images’: immobile, suspended, fixed. It is this fixity of jouissance, captured in a signifier and anchored in the imaginary, which saves the subject from the flight of sense stemming from the absence of a referent for language.



In *Seminar VI* Lacan reconstructs his early formulation of desire, arguing that if desire is the metonymy of the want-to-be and the analyst always interprets elsewhere then the effect of analysis is to leave the subject vanishing at the signifying chain, fading, since desire does not have an object. That’s when Lacan introduces the idea that the subject defends himself with his ego, drawing the resources for his defence from the mirror stage. However, in the fantasy, it is not the

subject as specular image which is at play but the barred subject of the signifier who is supported by the imaginary other at the moment at which he vanishes as speaking subject. “It is in the fundamental fantasy that the subject maintains his existence, maintains the veil which allows him to continue to be a subject that speaks”⁶.

Véronique concluded by saying that the fantasy - understood as a screen which supports the subject - is not interpreted but traversed at the end of analysis, allowing the subject to see what is at stake in his relationships with the imaginary other and how jouissance is coordinated with his body.

Véronique made references to her own experience and how her fantasy showed this coordination at the end of her analysis. In Véronique’s own words “the unconscious provides the solution that you need, it has the capacity to invent the solution you need to treat the real, the more you believe in it, the more you can expect from it, and psychoanalysis operates by supporting this invention”.

The seminar concluded with very interesting questions from a moved audience that thanked Véronique for her lively presentation.

⁴ Miller, J.-A., *L’image reine. Sur l’écran des nos fantasmes. L’objet caché. La Cause du Désir no. 94*, Ecole de la Cause freudienne. Paris: Huysmans, 2016.
⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Lacan J., *Le Séminaire livre VI, Le désir et son interprétation*, Paris : Seuil, 2013. pp. 108-109.

Waiting for Godot

Review by *Sheila Power*

“A masterpiece written straight out of the starting blocks, roundly rejected and soon hailed as a modern classic, Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* is now nothing like its famous no-show – it turns up quite frequently. You would have hoped that this recent deregulation in the Beckett industry, which flooded the world’s theatres with productions, had allowed for infinite revealing and rewarding variations. You would have been disappointed. Nothing to be done. [...]

All of which makes Druid’s exceptional new production more miraculous. Chosen for staging by its superb cast, directed with vigour and heart by Garry Hynes, and realised with insightful, artful simplicity by designer Francis O’Connor, this is the freshest, funniest and most affecting production of the play in at least a quarter of a century.”¹

Waiting for Godot is a play in two acts. The main characters in the play are two poorly clad men who are passing away the time, “nothing to be done” while waiting for Godot. Godot never arrives, though at the end of each act, there is hope in the message delivered by a young boy each evening that “Godot won’t come this evening, but surely tomorrow”. Godot has been the source of much fascination, he never appears. He could be a farmer and he could be death. The play displays the repetition of life and waiting-for death.

The main characters Vladimir nicknamed Didi and his counterpart Estragon nicknamed Gogo wait somewhere in a barren remote setting. This couple wait and wait, time passes, in fact they have lost sight of time, one day flows into the next. The clay road has dried and is cracked, the only prop being a stone and a leafless tree that looks dead, however, in the second act, the tree sprouts leaves, indicating a new beginning and another repetitive day. Perhaps, that is the beauty of the play, its hidden meaning- its mystery. In the end, Estragon says “I can’t go on like this”, this, for many, is the

point of entry into psychoanalysis. We hear within the play how Estragon a number of years previously had a *passage à l’acte*, from which Vladimir rescued him from the Rhone. Estragon continually wants to leave the scene, Vladimir always giving him reasons why they must stay.

In this Druid, Garry Hynes production, the stage is set like a post card, a defined frame of white light producing this effect. The stage lighting is calm, for day it is ochre giving a Mediterranean feel, at night the sky is a midnight indigo blue as is in warm surroundings on the night of a full moon.

Waiting for Godot is both a tragedy and a comedy and this production draws on the comic element of speech. Expressions and games made light of the tragic element of waiting and repetition with nothing happens- encore. Life can be about waiting and passing time, getting through the day, repeating from one day to the next- a sameness connecting each day, one rolling into the other, there is something of the real in action in the play. Vladimir tells us that “one day we are born and one day we shall die, the mother giving birth astride of a grave, the light gleams an instant, then its night once more”. The two other characters, Pozzo and Lucky, keep on the move as master/slave, whereas Vladimir and Estragon remain together on stage in the one frame. They tell us their relationship spans half a century. Many times they think they would be better off without each other, but they are unable to separate and unable to move on – there is nothing certain about their staying or leaving, so “since they are incapable of remaining silent” they embark on conversing until death arrives: Estragon saying that “there is no lack of void”, they play games to fill the void. Words fill the silence.

Vladimir says “we have nothing more to do here” to which Estragon says “nor anywhere else”. There is no action to relieve them from the boredom, Vladimir says that “habit is a great deaden-er”. To go is to be punished, to stay is the hope that Godot will save them, Estragon again says “he can’t go on like this” to which Vladimir replies “that is what you think”, deciding to hang themselves the following day if Godot doesn’t come. Both acts end in a similar manner with “shall we go – let’s go” but neither move from the stage. The silence of Godot

¹ Crawley, P., *Waiting for Godot review* [...] in *The Irish Times*, Wed. 12th July, 2016.

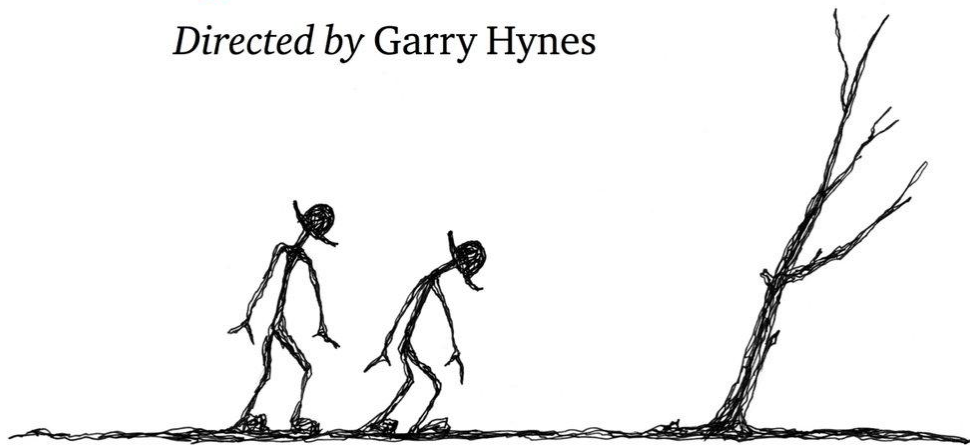
makes his absence more present. The human need to find the meaning of life is ever present. Godot as a signifier has different meaning to different people, Godot holds the promise and the answer – a sort of guarantee, however, as we know, there are no guarantees.

Druid

WAITING FOR GODOT

by Samuel Beckett

Directed by Garry Hynes



EVENTS	What's Coming Up?	WHERE
SEPT 15 th FRI	ICLO-NLS Inaugural Event	PSI Grantham St, D2
OCT 06 th SAT	ICLO-NLS Cartel Event	PSI Grantham St, D2
NOV 17 th FRI	<i>Black Mirror</i> Series (Part 1)	PSI Grantham St, D2
DEC 01 st /02 nd FRI/ SAT	ICLO-NLS Annual Clinical and Theoretical Seminar With Yves Vanderveken	PSI Grantham St, D2
DEC 08 th FRI	<i>Black Mirror</i> Series (Part 2)	PSI Grantham St, D2
FEB 02 nd FRI	<i>Black Mirror</i> Series (Part 3)	PSI Grantham St, D2
FEB 16 th /17 th FRI/ SAT	ICLO-NLS Annual Clinical and Theoretical Seminar With Neus Carbonell	PSI Grantham St, D2

MAR 02nd	Scilicet Event	PSI
FRI		Grantham St, D2
APR 20th	ICLO-NLS Teaching Seminar	PSI Grantham St, D2
FRI		PSI Grantham St, D2
MAY 11TH	ICLO-NLS Teaching Seminar	PSI Grantham St, D2
FRI		
MAY 26TH	ICLO-NLS Study Day	PSI Grantham St, D2
SAT		
JUN 08TH	ICLO-NLS Teaching Seminar	PSI Grantham St, D2
FRI		
JUN 22ND/23rd	ICLO-NLS Annual Clinical and Theoretical Seminar With Anna Aromi	PSI Grantham St, D2
FRI/ SAT		

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