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The Ordinary Psychoses and the Others, Under Transference

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World Association

of Psychoanalysis

XIth Congress – Barcelona

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Ordinary psychosis has been around for some time. This term first made its way into the analytical city in 1998, the year that Jacques-Alain Miller invented it and put it into circulation[1]. When the 11th Congress of the WAP is held in 2018, ordinary psychosis will be twenty years old. It is a good moment to take stock: what have psychoanalysts learned from it, to what uses has it been put, and what might there still be to discover from it?

That the moment is felicitous is also indicated by the enthusiasm with which the Congress's proposed theme has been received. "The Ordinary Psychoses and the Others, Under Transference" has the virtue of interpreting, or at least questioning, a vital aspect of the current psychoanalytic clinic. It is something alive, a piece of the real which the analytic experience does not cease encountering. To continue the work opened up by Lacan's teaching, the last and the other, is to refuse to draw back from this properly analytical real. The Rio Congress approached it from the perspective of the unconscious and the mystery of the speaking body. The Barcelona Congress will continue to follow its trace, this time with the help of the ordinary psychoses.

Structural clinic, clinic of the sinthome

For a whole era, psychoanalysis was based on the solidity of a structural clinic that allowed cases to be distributed between two distinct fields: neurosis and psychosis. Leaving perversion to one side, the

dividing line operating in this structural clinic was clear-cut: the presence or absence of the signifier of the Name of the Father in the place of the Other[2] divided the waters - on one side, the ones, on the other side, the others. The primacy of the symbolic granted the signifier the power of difference and order.

With this clinic of the signifier, binary and discontinuous, Lacan ordered the analytic field left to us by Freud, reducing the Freudian Oedipus to the Lacanian Name of the Father. Psychoanalysis subsequently expanded its range with what Jacques-Alain Miller, at the Rio Conference, highlighted as an unconscious of pure logic[3], with the logic of the fantasy and the object little *a*, tools that the clinic can no longer do without, because they allow it to establish the field of the subject and orientate itself in its modes of enjoyment. Several generations of psychoanalysts of the Freudian Field and beyond were formed in this clinic. But this period of Lacan's teaching, which is both structuralist and logical, based on the prevalence of the symbolic over the imaginary and the real, is not his last word. There is more Lacan.

On his way to the real, Lacan found that not all enjoyment is negativized by phallic signification. Psychoanalysis had to let go of the hand of the father as the only operator in order to respond to the challenges of a praxis that has to "counter" the real[4]. First with the pluralization of the Names of the Father and then with the consideration of the

singular solutions opened with Joyce[5], the function of the Name of the Father lost its exclusivity as a treatment of enjoyment and should be included, whether as a semblant or as a symptom, in a broader perspective. A perspective that overflowed the binary structure and where the limiting power of the symbolic order on the real of enjoyment was, literally, inter-dicted [*entre-dicho*].

One does not go from structure to the knots in a single jump. The moments of Lacan's teaching are strung along a thread whose logic has been articulated by the meticulous work of Jacques-Alain Miller in the courses of the Lacanian Orientation. Here we will abbreviate: the impasses of feminine enjoyment, developed in *Encore*[6], pushed Lacan to take the hand of Joyce in opening his late and very late teaching. Here the starting point is redrawn: from then on the neurosis will be read from psychosis and not the other way around.

Foreclosure is then generalized: foreclosure of the signifier of (the) woman for all speaking-beings, restricted foreclosure of the signifier of the Name of the Father for psychosis. If each has its foreclosure, then each has its solution, or rather its treatment, since there is no solution. There is only the generalized clinic of the *sinthome*. Hence Lacan's irony: "everyone is mad, that is, delusional"[7], which does not mean that we are all psychotic, but that "all our discourses are a defence against the real." [8] This means that taking the singularity of *sinthomatic* responses as our guide does not

exempt us from specifying the difference between neurosis and psychosis.

The clinic of the sinthome, the clinic of degrees and of singularity, does not cancel the earlier clinic. Between the clinic of structures and that of the knots there is no opposition: it is a question of making this tension fruitful. The singularity of subjective inventions calls for an instrumental and flexible clinic that today is still (we must acknowledge) at the babbling stage. It is this clinic that we are learning to speak about.[9] It is an ethical choice.

The title of the Congress produces a reversal that serves as a guide. It shows that the ordinary psychoses have now come to the fore, which is where we find them: before practitioners, in their daily experience. But although the other psychoses are no longer the only reference with which to think the field of madness, we cannot do without them. The foundations for the Joyce case can be found in “On a Question Prior to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis”[10].

This is the field of research that is opened up as a result of having put enjoyment and its singular treatments in the foreground. This implies a reconsideration of the general perspective of the clinic, with the resource offered by the ordinary psychoses.

Ordinary psychoses

Before becoming a resource, ordinary psychoses appeared as a shadow zone. Accompanying the decline of the Name of the Father and the ascent of the object *a* to the zenith of civilization, analytic practice has witnessed an increase of cases in which we do not find precise and conclusive elements of a neurosis[11]. Rare cases that did not seem to fit into either of the categories of the binary clinic. These cases, which were initially considered to be "unclassifiable [cases] of the psychoanalytic clinic"[12], populated the border zone of the structural binary, widening it. A shadow zone that Jacques-Alain Miller began to illuminate with the term "ordinary psychosis" (as opposed to the *borderline* category used in the IPA), opening it up to investigation.

Ordinary psychosis is therefore not a new clinical category but rather a supplementary epistemic device. The ordinary psychoses, from the beginning, are not circumscribed, they can be found everywhere, even where they are least expected. But they are not in no man's land, they are psychoses. And placing them in this field throws the whole grouping of psychosis into question.

It is necessary to clarify that the ordinary psychoses do not dissolve the field of neurosis but somehow resolve it, since they rid neurosis of any supposed equivalence with the idea of "normality". The idea of normality is no longer sustainable when the phallic norm has lost the hegemony of its tradition and is instead included as one more among other solutions

orienting enjoyment. Thus, the segregative claim, which can in no way look to Lacan's teaching for support, that neurotics are the normal ones and the others are psychotic is not sustainable from any point of view.

The ordinary psychoses allow for a widening of the range of possible solutions for the hole of foreclosure. In the extraordinary psychoses, we find the repair of the hole in the form of a delusional metaphor when it has already manifested itself, triggering in the form of a real that erupts, whereas in the ordinary psychoses the modes of repair multiply and diversify when taken in their rarity, with their small inventions, in their radical singularity. What these singular solutions have in common is the possibility of a do-it-yourself repairing of the hole that prevents or defers its manifest outbreak. Whether ordinary or extraordinary, what we always find are the indices of "a hole, a deviation or a disconnection perpetuating itself." [13]

These indices of the hole of foreclosure may be spectacular, explosive, extraordinary, in which case they are not difficult to recognize by the subject and those around him. But they can also be discreet, subtle, in a manner that easily goes unnoticed by the subject himself, by those around him and above all by the clinician. Only under transference can these discreet signs be located as such.

The triggering of a psychosis, in the structural clinic, is the effect of a bad encounter with the One-father

who appears in symbolic opposition to the subject[14], which provokes an unleashing of the signifier in the real[15]. While the so-called neo-triggerings[16] are those that are located on the basis of certain points of slippage that indicate small disengagements from the Other, producing a delocalisation of enjoyment. The triggering, whether neo- or patent, is then crucial as an index of the hole of foreclosure that characterizes all psychosis. Jacques-Alain Miller in a text that will be essential to orient the work of the Congress, proposes three externalities to organize this question: the social externality, the bodily externality, and the subjective externality[17].

In this text, we can read that what we seek to grasp with ordinary psychosis is what Lacan calls "a disturbance that occurred at the inmost juncture of the subject's sense of life"[18]. This disturbance, a true diagnostic index, affects the feeling of being alive as an effect of the non-inscription of phallic signification. In the triggered psychoses, this disorder is evident, but in the ordinary psychoses? It is this that, under transference, a psychoanalyst can grasp from the presence of some discrete signs. Under transference means *thanks to*, given that it is transference that allows one to locate them, but also *within*, which is to say that they are grasped in the analytical relation. It is a subtle clinic, woven with finesse, which considers tonality and degree, one that aims at locating the effects of foreclosure.

Under transference

In both neurosis and psychosis, the psychoanalytic clinic is put into play under transference, which requires the presence and the act of the analyst.

In the first part of his teaching, the position that Lacan proposes for the analyst in psychosis is that of the secretary to the insane[19]. In the first instance, the psychoanalyst has to listen to the one who is speaking, given that the message of the psychotic comes from a “speech beyond the subject”[20]. But this secretary does not simply take minutes since he must try to put a stop to the infinite metonymy, as well as avoiding the bad encounter of the psychotic with his malignant Other. On the other hand, it is also a matter of encouraging the investigation of the arrangement that sustained the subject until the irruption of the hole, in order to mend that supplementary device and, if possible, to help build a more consistent version.

In the ordinary psychoses, the hole only manifests itself discreetly. The effectiveness of a sinthome as a defence seems undeniable. That is why the analytical work consists rather in inviting the subject to elaborate the nature of the problem in order to locate there, with him, the elements that can act as staples that knot the three consistencies together, so that they stand out as quilting points, and acquire prominence. It is a question of placing these elements as far as possible at the disposal of the psychotic, encouraging their use and

accompanying him in the development of a pragmatic solution. A trajectory in which it will also be important to find a place for the events of body.

Under transference means choosing an option without alibis. Tracing the edge of the hole in knowledge that sustains an analytic experience means choosing to submit daily practice to a particular orientation. For this reason, we cannot as analysts be eclectics, therapists or (re-) educators: we can only practice psychoanalysis by treating the jouissance of the *parlêtre* with *l'apparole*, seeking the possibility of an existence that is not without the pathway of some desire. Following Lacan in the Lacanian orientation is an act of transference, and as such an act of love.

Each Congress is an opportunity for the School One to come together, a moment of intimacy that is not without joy. It is time to get caught up in the desire to make One with the multiple that gave rise to a worldwide association; a desire that finds, in these Congresses, an opportunity to renew itself, against the current of the death drive that does not need to be renewed since it is always active.

The pass accompanies and provides a focus for each Congress, not only so that the members of the WAP can take the pulse of the present moment and its perspectives, but also so that each delegate can be touched, reached, so that each AE conveys the experience of an analysis and of its end, obtaining effects of formation in relation to the proposed

theme. At the 11th Congress we will continue learning what the pass teaches us about the knotting with which a *parlêtre* sustains itself, the singularity of the solutions found, and even their lability.

What we are interested in examining are the ways in which a subject invents a knot with the imaginary, the symbolic and the real that is sustained without the aid of the Name of the Father, either because of its radical non-inscription, or because it has been grasped in its being of semblance.

Pass and psychosis could not be thought without invention since invention – as well as anguish – accompanies the transit through the zone beyond the father, although not beyond the *sinthome*, which is where an analytic real can be grasped.

(Translated by Philip Dravers in collaboration with María Cristina Aguirre and Roger Litten)

[1] J.-A. Miller et al, *La Psychose ordinaire, La Convention d'Antibes, Agalma-Seuil*, 1999.

[2] J. Lacan, "On a Question Prior to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis", *Écrits*, p. 465.

[3] J.-A. Miller, "Habeas Corpus",
text available here

http://www.wapol.org/publicaciones/images/articulos/2775/16-07-04_Habeas-corpus_EN.pdf

[4] J. Lacan, "La Troisième". *Lettres de l'Ecole Freudienne*, 1975, (also available online).

[5] J. Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XXIII: The Sinthome*, Cambridge, Polity, 2016.

[6] J. Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XX: Encore*, London

& New York, Norton, 1998.

[7] J. Lacan, "There are Four Discourses", *Culture/Clinic*, 1 (2013), p. 3.

[8] J.-A. Miller, "Ironic Clinic", *Psychoanalytical Notebooks*, 7 (2001), p. 9.

[9] J.-A. Miller, "The Unconscious and the Speaking Body", *Hurly-Burly* 12 (2015), p. 126.

[10] Orientation given by J.-A. Miller in an exchange of emails concerning the choice of title for the Congress.

[11] J.-A. Miller, "Ordinary Psychosis Revisited", *Psychoanalytical Notebooks*, 26 (2013), p. 36.

[12] J.-A. Miller et al, "The Conversation of Arcachon: Parts 1-3", *Psychoanalytical Notebooks*, 26 (2013), p.61.

[13] J.-A. Miller, "Ordinary Psychosis Revisited", *op. cit.* p. 47 (translation modified).

[14] J. Lacan, "A Question Prior...", *op. cit.*, p. 481.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 459.

[16] J.-A. Miller et al, *La Psychose ordinaire*, La Convention d'Antibes, *op. cit.*

[17] J.-A. Miller, "Ordinary Psychosis Revisited", *op. cit.*, p. 42-45.

[18] J. Lacan, "A Question Prior...", p. 466.

[19] J. Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book III, The Psychoses*, p. 206-213.

[20] J. Lacan, "A Question Prior...", *op. cit.*, p. p. 479

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The Blog of the 2017 NLS Congress:
<http://nlscongress2017.org/en/>

Availability of References – see www.LacanianWorks.ORG &
www.LacanianWorksExchange.net

[2], [14], [18], [20] J. Lacan, “On a Question Prior to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis”, *Écrits*, p. 465.

Information & availability : [On a question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis : 1958 : Jacques Lacan](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=658](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=658)

[3] J.-A. Miller, “Habeas Corpus”,

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[4] J. Lacan, “La Troisième”. *Lettres de l’Ecole Freudienne*, 1975, (also available online).

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[5] J. Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XXIII: The Sinthome*, Information and availability

[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](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=971)

[6] J. Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XX: Encore*

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[7] J. Lacan, “There are Four Discourses”,

Information and availability [Transfert à Saint Denis? : Lacan pour Vincennes ! : Il y a quatre discours. : 22nd October 1978 : Jacques Lacan](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=11989](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=11989)

[9] J.-A. Miller, “The Unconscious and the Speaking Body

Availability and references : [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)

[11] & [13] & [17] J.-A. Miller, “Ordinary Psychosis Revisited”,

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[19] J. Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book III, The Psychoses*,

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Further texts:

On Ordinary Psychosis. See www.LacanianWorks.org /Ordinary Psychosis (1 A Lacanian Clinic)