
Presentation on Psychological Causality

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This presentation was given on September 28th, 1946, at the psychiatric conference held in Bonneval that was organized by Henri Ey on the topic of psychogenesis. A collection of the presentations made at the conference and of the discussion that followed them was published by Desclée de Brouwer in a volume entitled *Le Problème de la psychogenèse des névroses et des psychoses* ("The Problem of the Psychogenesis of the Neuroses and Psychoses"). My presentation served to open the meeting.

1. Critique of an Organicist Theory of Madness, Henri Ey's Organo-Dynamism

Having been invited by our host, three years ago already, to explain my views on psychological causality to you, my task here will be twofold. I have been asked to formulate a radical position concerning this topic—a position that people assume to be mine, and indeed it is. In addition, I must do so in the context of a debate that has reached a degree of development to which I have by no means contributed. I hope to meet your expectations by directly addressing both facets of this task, although no one can demand that I do so thoroughly here.

For several years I avoided all opportunities to express my views. The humiliation of our times, faced with the enemies of humankind, dissuaded me from doing so. Like Fontenelle, I gave myself over to the fantasy of having my hand filled with truths all the better to hold on to them. I confess that it is a ridiculous fantasy, marking, as it does, the limitations of a being who is on the verge of bearing witness. Must we view it as a failure on my part to live up to what the course of the world demands of me, when I was asked anew to speak at the very moment when even the least clairvoyant could see that the infatuation with power had, once again, merely served the ruse of Reason? I'll let you be the judge of how my research may suffer from this.

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At least I do not think I am failing to live up to the requirements of truth

in rejoicing at the fact that my research can be defended here in the courteous forms of verbal debate.

This is why I will first respectfully bow before the enterprise of thinking and teaching that makes for honor in one's lifetime and is the foundation of one's lifework; if I remind my friend Henri Ey that, by endorsing the same initial theoretical positions, we entered the ring together on the same side, it is not simply in order to express surprise at the fact that we find ourselves on such opposite sides today.

In fact, ever since Ey published his fine work, "*Essai d'application des principes de Jackson à une conception dynamique de la neuropsychiatrie*" ("An Attempt to Apply Jackson's Principles to a Dynamic Conception of Neuropsychiatry"), written in collaboration with Julien Rouart, in the journal *Encéphale* in 1936, I noted—and my copy attests to this—everything that linked his views, and would link them ever more closely, to a doctrine of mental problems that I consider incomplete and false, a doctrine which, in psychiatry, is known as "organicism."

Strictly speaking, Ey's organo-dynamism can legitimately be included in this doctrine simply because it cannot relate the genesis of mental problems as such—whether functional or lesional in their nature, global or partial in their manifestations, and as dynamic as they may be in their mainspring—to anything but the play of systems constituted in the material substance [*l'étendue*] located within the body's integument. The crucial point, in my view, is that this play, no matter how energetic and integrating one conceives it to be, always rests in the final analysis on molecular interaction of the *partes-extra-partes*, material-substance type that classical physics is based on—that is, in a way which allows one to express this interaction as a relation between function and variable, this relation constituting its determinism.

Organicism is being enriched with conceptions that range from mechanistic to dynamistic and even Gestaltist ones. The conception that Ey borrows from Jackson certainly lends itself to this enriching, to which his own discussion of it has contributed—showing that Ey's conception does not exceed the limits I have just defined. This is what, from my point of view, makes the difference between his position and that of my master, Clérambault, or of Guiraud negligible—and I should note that the position adopted by the latter two authors has proven to be of the least negligible psychiatric value, and we shall see in what sense further on.

In any case, Ey cannot repudiate the frame within which I am confining him. Since this frame is based on a Cartesian reference—which he has certainly recognized and whose meaning I would ask him to reconsider—it designates nothing but recourse to the (self-)evidence of physical reality, which

is of importance to him, as it is to all of us, ever since Descartes based it on the notion of material substance [*l'étendue*]. "Energetic functions," to adopt Ey's terminology, can be integrated into this just as much as "instrumental functions" can,¹ for he writes "that it is not only possible but necessary to search for the chemical and anatomical conditions" of the "specific cerebral process that produces mental illness"; he also mentions "lesions that weaken the energetic processes which are necessary for the deployment of the psychical functions."

This is self-evident, in any case, and I am merely laying out in an introductory manner here the border that I intend to place between our views.

Having said that, I will first present a critique of Ey's organo-dynamism. I will do so, not in order to say that his conception does not stand up, for our presence here today provides ample proof of the contrary, but in order to demonstrate—in the authentic explanation of it that this conception owes as much to the intellectual rigor of its author as to the dialectical quality of your debates—that it does not possess the characteristics of a true idea.

It may perhaps surprise some of you that I am disregarding the philosophical taboo that has overhung the notion of truth in scientific epistemology ever since the so-called pragmatist speculative theses were disseminated in it. You will see that the question of truth conditions the phenomenon of madness in its very essence, and that by trying to avoid this question, one castrates this phenomenon of the signification by virtue of which I think I can show you that it is tied to man's very being.

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As for the critical use that I will make of it in a moment, I will stay close to Descartes by positing the notion of truth in the famous form Spinoza gave it: "*Idea vera debet cum suo ideato convenire*. A true idea must" (the emphasis falls on the word "must," meaning that this is its own necessity) "agree with its object."

Ey's doctrine evinces the exact opposite feature, in that, as it develops, it increasingly contradicts its original, permanent problem.

This problem—and it is to Ey's keen merit that he sensed its import and took responsibility for it—is the one found in the titles of his most recent publications: the problem of the limits of neurology and psychiatry. This problem would certainly have no more importance here than in any other medical specialty, if it did not concern the originality of the object of our experience—namely, madness. I sincerely praise Ey for obstinately maintaining this term, given all the suspicions it can arouse, due to its antiquated stench of the sacred, in those who would like to reduce it in some way to the *omnitudo realitatis*.

Plainly speaking, is there nothing that distinguishes the insane [*l'aliéné*] from other patients apart from the fact that the first are locked up in asylums, whereas

the others are hospitalized? Is the originality of our object related to practice, social practice? or to reason, scientific reason?

It was clear that Ey could not but distance himself from such reason once he went looking for it in Jackson's conceptions. No matter how remarkable they were for their time, owing to their all-encompassing requirements regarding the organism's relational functions, their principle and goal were to reduce neurological and psychiatric problems to one and the same scale of dissolutions. And, in fact, this is what happened. No matter how subtle the corrective that Ey brought to this conception, his students, Hécaen, Follin, and Bonnafé, easily proved to him that it does not allow us to essentially distinguish aphasia from dementia, functional pain from hypochondria, hallucinosis from hallucinations, or even certain forms of agnosia from certain delusions.

155 I myself would ask Ey to explain, for example, the famous patient discussed by Gelb and Goldstein, whose study has been examined from other angles by Bénary and by Hochheimer. This patient, afflicted with an occipital lesion that destroyed both calcarine sulci, presented (1) psychical blindness accompanied by selective problems with all categorial symbolism, such as abolishment of pointing behavior, in contrast with the preservation of grasping behavior; (2) extreme agnostic troubles that must be conceived of as an asymbolia of the entire perceptual field; and (3) a deficit in the apprehension of significance as such, manifested in (a) an inability to understand analogies directly at the intellectual level, whereas he was able to refind them in verbal symmetry; (b) an odd "blindness to the intuition of number" (as Hochheimer puts it), which did not stop him, however, from performing mechanical operations on numbers; and (c) an absorption in his present circumstances, which rendered him incapable of entertaining anything fictional, and thus of any abstract reasoning, *a fortiori* barring all access to speculation.

This is truly an extreme, across-the-board dissolution, which, let it be noted in passing, goes right to the very core of the patient's sexual behavior, where the immediacy of the sexual project is reflected in the brevity of the act, and even in the fact that its interruption is met by him with indifference.

Don't we see here a negative dissolution problem that is simultaneously global and apical, whereas the gap between the patient's organic condition and his clinical picture is seen clearly enough in the contrast between the localization of the lesion in the zone of visual projection and the extension of the symptom to the entire sphere of symbolism?

Would Ey tell me that what distinguishes this patient with an obviously neurological problem from a psychotic is the fact that the remaining personality fails to react to the negative problem? I would answer that this is not at all the case. For this patient, beyond the routine professional activity that he

has kept up, expresses, for instance, nostalgia for the religious and political speculations that he cannot engage in anymore. In medical tests, he manages to reach certain objectives, which he no longer understands, in a roundabout manner by mechanically though deliberately getting a “handle” on them via behaviors that have remained possible for him. Even more striking than the way he manages to limit his agnosia of somatic functions, in order to recover some pointing activity, is the way he feels around in his stock of language in order to overcome some of his agnostic deficits. Still more moving is his collaboration with his physician in the analysis of his problems, as when he comes up with certain words (for example, *Anhaltspunkte*, handles) with which to name certain of his artifices.

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Here then is what I would ask Ey: How can he distinguish this patient from a madman? If he cannot give me an answer in his system, it will be up to me to give him one in my own.

And if he answers with “noetic problems” of “functional dissolutions,” I will ask him how the latter differ from what he calls “global dissolutions.”

In fact, in Ey’s theory it is clearly the personality’s reaction that is specific to psychosis, regardless of his reservations about it. This is where his theory reveals both its contradiction and its weakness, because as he ever more systematically misunderstands all forms of psychogenesis—so much so that he admits that he can no longer even understand what psychogenesis means²—we see him increasingly weigh down his exposés with ever more complicated “structural” descriptions of psychical activity, in which the same internal contradiction appears anew in a still more paralyzing form. As I will show by quoting him.

In order to criticize psychogenesis, we see Ey reduce it to the forms of an idea that can be refuted all the more easily because one addresses only those forms provided by the idea’s adversaries. Let me enumerate these forms with him: emotional shock, conceived of in terms of its physiological effects; reactional factors, viewed from a constitutionalist perspective; unconscious traumatic effects, insofar as they are abandoned, according to him, by even those who support the idea; and, lastly, pathogenic suggestion, insofar “as the staunchest organicists and neurologists—no need to mention their names here—leave themselves this escape hatch and admit as exceptional evidence a psychogenesis that they thoroughly reject from the rest of pathology.”

I have omitted only one term from the series, the theory of regression in the unconscious, which is included among the most serious [forms of the idea of psychogenesis], no doubt because it can, at least apparently, be reduced “to an attack on the ego which, once again, is indistinguishable, in the final analysis, from the notion of functional dissolution.” I have cited this phrase, which

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is repeated in a hundred different ways in Ey's work, because it will help me point out the radical flaw in his conception of psychopathology.

The forms I have just enumerated sum up, Ey tells us, the "facts that are invoked" (his words exactly) to demonstrate the existence of psychogenesis. It is just as easy for Ey to remark that these facts "demonstrate anything but that" as it is for me to note that adopting such a facile position allows him to avoid running any risks.

Why is it that, in inquiring into the doctrinal tendencies to which, in the absence of facts, we would have to attribute "a [notion of] psychogenesis that is hardly compatible with the psychopathological facts," he immediately thinks he has to show they derive from Descartes, by attributing to the latter an absolute dualism between the organic realm and the psychical realm? I myself have always thought—and, in the talks we had in our younger days, Ey seemed to realize this too—that Descartes' dualism is, rather, that of extension [*l'étendue*] and thought. One is surprised, on the contrary, that Ey seeks no support from an author for whom thought can err only insofar as confused ideas, which are determined by the body's passions, have found admittance into it.

Perhaps, indeed, it is better for Ey not to base anything on such an ally, in whom I seem to have such confidence. But, for God's sake, after having trotted out for us Cartesian psychogeneticists of the caliber of Babinski, André-Thomas, and Lhermitte, he should at least avoid identifying "the fundamental Cartesian intuition" with a psychophysiological parallelism that is worthier of Taine than of Spinoza. Such a straying from the sources might make us think that Jackson's influence is still more pernicious than it at first seemed.

Having vilified the dualism he imputes to Descartes, Ey introduces us directly—through a "theory of psychical life that is incompatible with the idea that there can be a psychogenesis of mental problems"—to his own dualism, which finds complete expression in this final sentence, the tone of which is quite singularly passionate: "mental illnesses are insults and obstacles to freedom; they are not caused by free, that is, purely psychogenic, activity."

158 Ey's dualism seems all the more serious to me in that it points to an untenable equivocation in his thinking. Indeed, I suspect that his entire analysis of psychical activity hinges on a play on words: that between his free play and his freedom [*son libre jeu et sa liberté*]. Let us add to it the key provided by the word "deployment."

Like Goldstein, Ey posits that "integration is being." Hence he must include in this integration not only the psychical realm, but the entire movement of the mind; he in fact incorporates everything down to existential problems into it, running the gamut from syntheses to structures and from forms

to phenomena. I even thought, God forgive me, I noticed that he used the expression “dialectical hierarchism”; the conceptual coupling of these two terms would, I believe, have made even the late Pichon himself wonder—Pichon, whose reputation will not be besmirched if I say that, to him, Hegel’s very alphabet remained a dead letter.

Ey’s moves are certainly spry, but we cannot follow them for long because we realize that the reality of psychical life is crushed in the noose—which is always similar and in fact always the same—that tightens all the more surely around our friend’s thought the more he tries to free himself from it, denying him access to both the truth of the psyche and that of madness by a telling necessity.

Indeed, when Ey begins to define this oh so marvelous psychical activity as “our personal adaptation to reality,” I start to feel that I have such sure views about the world that all my undertakings must be those of a clairvoyant prince. What could I possibly be incapable of accomplishing in the lofty realms where I reign? Nothing is impossible for man, says the Vaudois peasant with his inimitable accent: if ever there is something he cannot do, he drops it. Should Ey carry me with his art of “psychical trajectory” into the “psychical field,” and invite me to pause for a moment to consider with him “the trajectory in the field,” I will persist in my happiness, because of my satisfaction at recognizing formulations that are akin to ones I myself once provided—in the exordium to my doctoral thesis on the paranoiac psychoses, when I tried to define the phenomenon of personality—momentarily overlooking the fact that we are not aiming at the same ends.

Of course, I wince a tad when I read that “for dualism” (still Cartesian, I presume) “the mind is a mind without existence,” remembering as I do that the first judgment of certainty that Descartes bases on the consciousness that thinking has of itself is a pure judgment of existence: *cogito ergo sum*. I also get concerned when I come across the assertion that “according to materialism, the mind is an epiphenomenon,” recalling as I do that form of materialism in which the mind immanent in matter is realized by the latter’s very movement.

But when, moving on to Ey’s lecture on the notion of nervous disorders,³ I come upon “this level characterized by the creation of a properly psychical causality,” and I learn that “the reality of the ego is concentrated there” and that through it,

the structural duality of psychical life is consummated, a life of relations between the world and the ego, which is animated by the whole dialectical movement of the mind that is always striving—both in the order of action and in the theoretical order—to reduce this antinomy without

ever managing to do so, or at the very least trying to reconcile and harmonize the demands made by objects, other people, the body, the Unconscious, and the conscious Subject,

then I wake up and protest: the free play of my psychical activity by no means implies that I strive with such difficulty. For there is no antinomy whatsoever between the objects I perceive and my body, whose perception is constituted by a quite natural harmony with those objects. My unconscious leads me quite blithely to annoyances that I would hardly dream of attributing to it, at least not until I begin to concern myself with it through the refined means of psychoanalysis. And none of this stops me from behaving toward other people with irrefragable egoism, in the most sublime unconsciousness of my conscious Subject. For as long as I do not try to reach the intoxicating sphere of oblativity that is so dear to French psychoanalysts, my naïve experience does not set me the task of dealing with what La Rochefoucauld, in his perverse genius, detected in the fabric of all human sentiments, even that of love: pride [*amour-propre*].

All this “psychical activity” thus truly seems like a dream to me. Can this be the dream of a physician who has heard that hybrid chain unfurl in his ears thousands of times—that chain which is made of fate and inertia, throws of the dice and astonishment, false successes and missed encounters, and which makes up the usual script of a human life?

160 No, it is rather the dream of an automaton maker, the likes of whom Ey and I used to make fun of in the past, Ey nicely quipping that hidden in every organicist conception of the psyche one always finds “the little man within the man” who is busy ensuring that the machine responds.

What, dear Ey, are drops in the level of consciousness, hypnoid states, and physiological dissolutions, if not the fact that the little man within the man has a headache—that is, an ache in the other little man that he himself, no doubt, has in his head, and so on *ad infinitum*? Polyxena’s age-old argument still holds, no matter how one takes man’s being to be given, whether in its essence as an Idea, or in its existence as an organism.

I am no longer dreaming now, but what I read next is that,

projected into a still more mental reality, the world of ideal values—that are no longer integrated, but infinitely integrating—is constituted: beliefs, ideals, vital programs, and the values of logical judgment and moral conscience.

I see quite clearly here that there are, indeed, beliefs and ideals that become linked in the same psyche to vital programs, which are just as repugnant to

logical judgment as they are to moral conscience, in order to produce a fascist, or more simply an imbecile or a rascal. I conclude that the integrated form of these ideals implies no psychical culmination for them and that their integrating action bears no relation to their value—and thus that there must be a mistake here too.

I certainly do not intend, gentlemen, to belittle the scope of your debates or the results you have reached. I would soon embarrass myself were I to underestimate the difficulty of the issues involved. By mobilizing Gestalt theory, behaviorism, and structural and phenomenological terms in order to put organo-dynamism to the test, you have relied on scientific resources that I seem to neglect in resorting to principles that are perhaps a bit too certain and to an irony that is no doubt a bit risqué. This is because it seemed to me that I could better help you untie the noose that I mentioned earlier by reducing the number of terms in the scales. But for this to be completely successful in the minds of those whom the noose holds fast, perhaps it should have been Socrates himself who came to speak to you here, or rather perhaps I should simply listen to you in silence.

For the authentic dialectic in which you situate your terms and which gives your young Academy its style suffices to guarantee the rigor of your progress. I rely on this dialectic myself and feel far more at ease in it than in the idolatrous reverence for words seen to reign elsewhere, especially in psychoanalysts' inner circles. But beware the echo your words may have outside the confines of the realm for which you intended them.

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The use of speech requires far more vigilance in human science than anywhere else, because speech engages the very being of its object there.

Every uncertain attitude toward truth inevitably ends up diverting our terms from their meaning and such abuse is never innocent.

You publish—I apologize for bringing up a personal experience—an article entitled “Beyond the Reality Principle,” in which you take on nothing less than the status of the psychological object, trying first to lay out a phenomenology of the psychoanalytic relationship as it is experienced between doctor and patient. But what you hear back from your colleagues is considerations about the “relativity of reality,” which make you rue the day you ever chose such a title.

It was, as I know, with such misgivings that Politzer, the great thinker, decided not to provide the theoretical expression with which he would have left his indelible mark, in order to devote himself to an activity that was to take him away from us definitively. When, following in his footsteps, we demand that concrete psychology be established as a science, let us not lose sight of the fact that we are still only at the stage of formal pleas. I mean that we have

not yet been able to posit even the slightest law that accounts for the efficacy of our actions.

This is so true that, when we begin to glimpse the operative meaning of the traces left by prehistoric man on the walls of his caves, the idea may occur to us that we really know less than him about what I will very intentionally call psychical matter. Since we cannot, like Deucalion, make men from stones, let us be careful not to transform words into stones.

162 It would already be very nice if by a simple mental ploy we were able to see the concept of the object taking form, on which a scientific psychology could be based. It is the definition of such a concept that I have always declared to be necessary, that I have announced as forthcoming, and that—thanks to the problem you have presented me—I will try to pursue today, exposing myself in turn to your criticism.

2. *The Essential Causality of Madness*

What could be more suited to this end than to start out from the situation in which we find ourselves, gathered together, as we are here, to discuss the causality of madness? Now, why this privilege? Is a madman more interesting to us than Gelb and Goldstein's case whom I mentioned earlier in broad strokes? The latter reveals—not only to the neurologist but also to the philosopher, and no doubt to the philosopher more so than to the neurologist—a structure that is constitutive of human knowledge, namely, the support that thought's symbolism finds in visual perception, and that I will call, following Husserl, a *Fundierung*, a foundational relationship.

What other human value could lie in madness?

When I defended my thesis on *Paranoiac Psychosis as Related to Personality*, one of my professors asked me to indicate what, in a nutshell, I had proposed to do in it: "In short, sir," I began, "we cannot forget that madness is a phenomenon of thought . . ." I am not suggesting that this sufficed to summarize my perspective, but the firm gesture with which he interrupted me was tantamount to a call for modesty: "Yeah! So what?" it meant, "Let's be serious. Are you going to thumb your nose at us? Let us not dishonor this solemn moment. *Num dignus eris intrare in nostro docto corpore cum isto voce: pensare!*" I was nevertheless granted my Ph.D. and offered the kind of encouragement that it is appropriate to give to impulsive minds.

Now, fourteen years later, I have the opportunity to summarize my perspective for you. As you can see, at this rate the definition of the object of psychology will not get very far between now and the time I part company with the enlightened intellects [*lumières*] that illuminate our world—unless

you take the torch from my hands, so please take it! At least I hope that, by now, the course of things has given these enlightened intellects themselves a hard enough time that none of them can still find in Bergson's work the expanding synthesis that satisfied the "intellectual needs" of a generation, or anything other than a rather curious collection of exercises in metaphysical ventriloquism.

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Before we try to extract anything from the facts, we would do well, indeed, to recognize the very conditions of meaning that make them into facts for us. This is why I think that it would not be superfluous to call for a return to Descartes.

While Descartes does not look deeply into the phenomenon of madness in his *Meditations*, I at least consider it telling that he encounters it in his very first steps, taken with unforgettable jubilation, on the pathway to truth.

But on what grounds could one deny that these hands and this entire body are mine? Unless perhaps I were to liken myself to the insane, whose brains are impaired by such an unrelenting vapor of black bile that they steadfastly insist that they are kings when they are utter paupers, or that they are arrayed in purple robes when they are naked, or that they have heads made of clay, or that they are gourds, or that they are made of glass. But such people are mad, and I would appear no less mad, were I to take their behavior as an example for myself.

He then moves on, whereas we will see that he could have delved more deeply into the phenomenon of madness, and it might well have been fruitful for him to do so.

Let us then reconsider together this phenomenon according to Descartes' method. Not in the fashion of the revered professor who cut short the explanatory effusions not only of his students—but who even considered those of hallucinating patients to be so scandalous that he would interrupt them by saying: "What are you telling me, my friend? None of that is true. Come now!" From such an intervention we can at least draw a spark of meaning: truth is "involved." But at what point? Regarding the meaning of the word, we assuredly cannot trust any more in the mind of the doctor than in that of the patient.

Instead, let us follow Ey who, like Descartes in his simple sentence, and at the time that probably was not accidental, highlights the essential mainspring of belief in his early works.

Ey admirably realized that belief, with its ambiguity in human beings and its excess and inadequacy for knowledge [*connaissance*]¹—since it is less than

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knowing [*savoir*], but perhaps more, for to assert is to make a commitment, but it is not the same as being sure—cannot be eliminated from the phenomenon of hallucination and of delusion.

However, phenomenological analysis demands that we not skip any steps, and precipitation is fatal to it. I will maintain that the figure only appears if we appropriately focus our thinking. Here Ey—in order to avoid the mistake, for which he reproaches mechanists, of becoming delusional along with the patient—makes the opposite mistake by all too quickly including a value judgment in the phenomenon; the abovementioned comic example, appropriately savored by him, should have warned him that this would simultaneously destroy any chance of understanding it. With some kind of dizzying mental move, he reduces the notion of belief, which he had right before his eyes, to that of error, which absorbs it like one drop of water absorbing another drop that is made to abut it. Hence, the whole operation backfires. Once the phenomenon is fixed in place, it becomes an object of judgment and, soon thereafter, an object *tout court*.

As he asks himself in his book, *Hallucinations et Délire* (“Hallucinations and Delusion”),⁴ “Where would error, and delusion too, lie if patients did not make mistakes! Everything in their assertions and their judgment reveals their errors (interpretations, illusions, etc.) to us” (170). And further on, while setting out the two “attitudes that are possible” toward hallucination, he defines his own:

Hallucination should be viewed as a mistake that must be admitted and explained as such without letting oneself be carried away by its mirage. And yet its mirage necessarily leads one, if one is not careful, to ground it in actual phenomena and thus to construct neurological hypotheses that are useless, at best, because they do not reach what lies at the heart of the symptom itself: error and delusion (176).

How then could we be anything but astonished when, despite the fact that he is well aware of the temptation to base the “mirage of hallucination conceived of as an abnormal sensation” on a neurological hypothesis, he hurriedly bases what he calls “the fundamental error” of delusion on a similar hypothesis? Or when—although he is rightly loath (page 168) to make of hallucination, qua abnormal sensation, “an object situated in the sulci of the brain”—he does not hesitate to locate the phenomenon of delusional belief, considered as a deficit phenomenon, in the brain himself?

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No matter how lofty the tradition within which his work is situated, it is nonetheless here then that he took the wrong path. He might have avoided

this by pausing before taking the leap that the very notion of truth ordained him to take. For while there can be no progress possible in knowledge unless this notion is behind it, it is part of the human condition, as we shall see, to ever risk going astray in following our best impulses.

We could say that error is a deficit, in the sense this word has on a balance sheet, but the same does not go for belief, even if it deceives us. For belief can go awry even at the height of our intellectual powers, as Ey himself proves here.

What then is (the phenomenon of) delusional belief? I say that it is misrecognition, with everything this term brings with it by way of an essential antinomy. For to misrecognize presupposes recognition, as is seen in systematic misrecognition, in which case we must certainly admit that what is denied is in some way recognized.

Regarding the relationship between the phenomenon and the subject, Ey stresses—and one can never stress enough what is self-evident—that an hallucination is an error that is “kneaded from the dough of the subject’s personality and shaped by his own activity.” Aside from the reservations I have about the use of the words “dough” and “activity,” it seems clear to me that the subject does not recognize his productions as his own when he has ideas of influence or feels that an automatism is at work. This is why we all agree that a madman is a madman. But isn’t the remarkable thing, rather, that he should know anything about them at all? And isn’t the point to figure out what he knows about himself here without recognizing himself in it?

Regarding the reality that the subject attributes to these phenomena, what is far more decisive than the sensorial quality he experiences in them, or the belief he attaches to them, is the fact that all of them—no matter which ones (whether hallucinations, interpretations, or intuitions) and no matter how foreignly and strangely he experiences them—target him personally: they split him, talk back to him, echo him, and read in him, just as he identifies them, questions them, provokes them, and deciphers them. And when all means of expressing them fail him, his perplexity still manifests to us a questioning gap in him: which is to say that madness is experienced entirely within the register of meaning.

The interest that madness thus kindles in us owing to its pathos provides a first answer to the question I raised about the human value of the phenomenon of madness. And its metaphysical import is revealed in the fact that it is inseparable from the problem of signification for being in general—that is, the problem of language for man.

Indeed, no linguist or philosopher could any longer defend a theory of lan-

guage as a system of signs that would double the system of realities, realities defined by the common assent of healthy minds in healthy bodies. I cannot think of anyone other than Charles Blondel who seems to believe this—see his book, *La conscience morbide* (“Morbid Consciousness”), which is certainly the most narrow-minded lucubration ever produced on either madness or language. He runs up against the problem of the ineffable, as if language did not posit this without the help of madness.

Man’s language, the instrument of his lies, is thoroughly ridden with the problem of truth:

- whether it betrays the truth insofar as it is an expression of (a) his organic heredity in the phonology of the *flatus vocis*; (b) the “passions of his body” in the Cartesian sense, that is, of his soul, in the changes in his emotions; (c) and the culture and history that constitute his humanity, in the semantic system that formed him as a child;
- or it manifests this truth as an intention, by eternally asking how what expresses the lie of his particularity can manage to formulate the universality of his truth.

The whole history of philosophy is inscribed in this question, from Plato’s aporias of essence to Pascal’s abysses of existence, and on to the radical ambiguity Heidegger points to in it, insofar as truth signifies revelation.

The word is not a sign, but a nodal point [*noeud*] of signification. When I say the word “curtain” [*rideau*], for example, it is not merely to designate by convention an object whose use can be varied in a thousand ways depending on the intentions of the artisan, shopkeeper, painter, or Gestalt psychologist—whether as labor, exchange value, colorful physiognomy, or spatial structure. Metaphorically, it is a curtain of rain [*rideau d’arbres*]; forging plays on words, it is when I am being curt and sweet or can curr tangentially with the best of them [*les rides et les ris de l’eau*], and my friend Curt Ans off [*Leiris dominant*] these glossological games better than I do. By decree, it is the limit of my domain or, on occasion, a screen for my meditation in a room I share with someone else. Miraculously, it is the space that opens onto infinity, the unknown at the threshold, or the solitary walker’s morning departure. Apprehensively, it is the flutter that betrays Agrippina’s presence at the Roman Empire’s Council, or Madame de Chasteller’s gaze out the window as Lucien Leuwen passes by. Mistakenly, it is Polonius that I stab, shouting, “How now! a rat?” As an interjection, during the tragedy’s intermission, it is my cry of impatience or the sign of my boredom: “Curtain!” It is, finally, an image of meaning *qua* meaning, which must be unveiled if it is to reveal itself.

In this sense, being's attitudes are justified and exposed in language, and among those attitudes "common sense" clearly manifests "the most commonly seen thing in the world," but not to the extent that it is recognized by those for whom Descartes is too easy on this point.

This is why, in an anthropology that takes the register of culture in man to include, as is fitting, the register of nature, one could concretely define psychology as the domain of nonsense [*l'insensé*], in other words, of everything that forms a knot in discourse—as is clearly indicated by the "words" of passion.

Let us follow this path in order to study the significations of madness, as we are certainly invited to by the original forms that language takes on in it: all the verbal allusions, cabalistic relationships, homonymic play, and puns that captivated the likes of Guiraud.⁵ And, I might add, by the singular accent whose resonance we must know how to hear in a word so as to detect a delusion; the transfiguration of a term in an ineffable intention; the fixation [*figement*] of an idea in a semanteme (which tends to degenerate into a sign here specifically); the lexical hybrids; the verbal cancer constituted by neologisms; the bogging down of syntax; the duplicity of enunciation; but also the coherence that amounts to a logic, the characteristic, running from the unity of a style to repetitive terms, that marks each form of delusion—the madman communicates with us through all of this, whether in speech or writing.

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It is here that the structures of the madman's knowledge must reveal themselves to us. And it is odd, though probably not coincidental, that it was mechanists like Clérambault and Guiraud who outlined them best. As false as the theory in which these authors included them may be, it made them remarkably attuned to an essential phenomenon of such structures: the kind of "anatomy" that manifests itself in them. Clérambault's constant reference in his analysis to what he calls, with a slightly Diafoirus-like term, "the ideogenic," is nothing but a search for the limits of signification. Employing a method involving nothing but comprehension, he paradoxically manages to display the magnificent range of structures that runs the gamut from the so-called "*postulates*" of the delusions of passion to the so-called *basal* phenomena of *mental automatism*.

This is why I think that he has done more than anyone else to support the hypothesis of the psychogenesis of madness; in any case, you will see what I mean by this shortly.

Clérambault was my only master in the observation of patients, after the very subtle and delectable Trénel, whom I made the mistake of abandoning too soon, in order to seek a position in the consecrated spheres of professorial ignorance.

I claim to have followed his method in the analysis of the case of paranoid psychosis discussed in my thesis; I demonstrated the psychogenic structure of the case and designated its clinical entity with the more or less valid term of “self-punishing paranoia.”

This patient had caught my interest because of the impassioned significance of her written productions, whose literary value struck many writers, from Fargue and dear Crevel, both of whom read them before anyone else, to Joë Bousquet, who immediately and admirably commented on them,⁶ to Éluard, who more recently published some of them in a collection of “involuntary” poetry.⁷ It is now well known that the name, Aimée, with which I disguised her identity, is that of the central figure in her fictional creation.

If I assemble here the results of the analysis I did of her case, it is because I believe that a phenomenology of madness, which is complete in its terms, can already be seen to emerge from it.

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The structural points that prove to be essential in this analysis can be formulated as follows:

(a) The succession of female persecutors in her history repeated almost without variation the personification of a maleficent ideal, and her need to aggressively strike out at this ideal kept growing.

However, not only did she constantly seek to curry both favor and abuse from the people to whom she had access in reality who incarnated this stereotype, but in her behavior she tended to carry out, without recognizing it, the very evil-doing she denounced in them: vanity, coldness, and abandonment of one's natural duties.

(b) She presented herself, on the contrary, as upholding the completely opposite ideal of purity and devotion, which made her a victim of the schemes of the being she detested.

(c) We also note a neutralization of the sexual category with which she identified. This neutralization—which was confessed in her writings and taken at least as far as sexual ambiguity, and perhaps as far as imagined homosexuality—is coherent with the Platonic nature of the classical erotomania she manifested toward several male personifications, and with the prevalence of female friends in her real life.

(d) The latter was characterized by an indecisive struggle to achieve an ordinary existence, all the while maintaining ideals that I will call *Bovary-like*, without intending anything disparaging by the term.

Her older sister's progressive intervention in her life then little by little enucleated her completely from her place as wife and mother.

(e) This intervention effectively released her from her familial duties.

But as this “liberated” her, her delusional phenomena were triggered and

took shape, reaching their apex when, with the help of their very impact, she found herself completely independent.

(f) These phenomena appeared in a series of spurts that I designated as *fertile moments* of the delusion, a term that some researchers have been willing to adopt.

Part of the resistance I encountered to people understanding the “*elementary*” nature of these moments in a thesis on the psychogenesis [of paranoia] would, it seems to me, be mitigated now due to the more profound work on the subject that I did subsequently—as I will show shortly, to the extent to which I can do so while providing a balanced presentation.

(g) It should be noted that, although the patient seemed to suffer from the fact that her child was taken away from her by her sister—who even struck *me* as bad news in the one meeting I had with her—she refused to consider her sister as hostile or even harmful to herself, on this account or any other.

Instead, with a murderous intent she stabbed the person with whom she had most recently identified her female persecutors. The effect of this act—once she realized the high price she would have to pay for it in prison—was the implosion of the beliefs and fantasies involved in her delusion.

I tried thus to delineate the psychosis in relation to all of her earlier life events, her intentions, whether admitted or not, and, lastly, the motives, whether perceived by her or not, that emerged from the situation contemporaneous with her delusion—in other words, in relation to her personality (as the title of my thesis indicates).

This seems to me to bring out the general structure of misrecognition, right from the outset. Still, this must be understood correctly.

Assuredly, one can say that the madman believes he is different [*autre*] than he is. Descartes said as much in his sentence about those who believe “that they are arrayed in gold and purple robes,” where he conformed to the most anecdotal of all stories about madmen; this also seemed to satisfy the authority on the matter who wrote that the phenomenon of *bovarism*, adapted to the degree of his sympathy for his patients, was the key to understanding paranoia.

However, apart from the fact that Jules de Gaultier’s theory concerns one of most normal relations of human personality—namely, its ideals—it should be noted that if a man who thinks he is a king is mad, a king who thinks he is a king is no less so.

This is proven by the example of Louis II of Bavaria and a few other royal personages, as well as by everyone’s “common sense,” in the name of which we justifiably demand that people put in such situations “play their parts well,” but are uncomfortable with the idea that they really “believe in them,” even if this involves a lofty view of their duty to incarnate a function in the world

order, through which they assume rather well the figure of chosen victims.

The turning point here lies in the mediacy or immediacy of the identification and, to be quite explicit, in the subject's infatuation.

To make myself clear, I will evoke the likable figure of the young dandy, born to a well-to-do family, who, as they say, "hasn't a clue," especially about what he owes to this good fortune. Common sense is in the habit of characterizing him as either a "happy fool" or as a "little moron," depending on the case. *Il "se croit,"* as we say in French (he "thinks he's really something"): the genius of the language puts the emphasis here where it should go, that is, not on the inapplicability of an attribute, but on a verbal mode. For, all in all, the subject thinks he is [*se croit*] what he is—a lucky little devil—but common sense secretly wishes him a hitch that will show him that he is not one as much as he thinks he is. Don't think that I am being witty, certainly not with the quality of wit that shows in the saying that Napoleon was someone who thought he was Napoleon. Because Napoleon did not think he was Napoleon at all, since he knew full well by what means Bonaparte had produced Napoleon and how Napoleon, like Malebranche's God, sustained his existence at every moment. If he ever thought he was Napoleon, it was at the moment that Jupiter had decided to bring him down; once fallen, he spent his spare time lying to Las Cases in as many pages as you could want, so that posterity would think that he had thought he was Napoleon—a necessary condition for convincing posterity that he had truly been Napoleon.

Do not think that I am getting off on a tangent here in a talk designed to go right to the heart of the dialectic of being—because the essential misrecognition involved in madness is situated at just such a point, as my patient made perfectly clear.

172 This misrecognition can be seen in the revolt through which the madman seeks to impose the law of his heart onto what seems to him to be the havoc [*désordre*] of the world. This is an "insane" enterprise—but not because it suggests a failure to adapt to life, which is the kind of thing people often say in our circles, whereas the slightest reflection on our experience proves the dishonorable inanity of such a viewpoint. It is an insane enterprise, rather, in that the subject does not recognize in this havoc the very manifestation of his actual being, or that what he experiences as the law of his heart is but the inverted and virtual image of that same being. He thus doubly misrecognizes it, precisely so as to split its actuality from its virtuality. Now, he can escape this actuality only via this virtuality. His being is thus caught in a circle, unless he breaks it through some form of violence by which, in lashing out at what he takes to be the havoc, he ends up harming himself because of the social repercussions of his actions.

This is the general formulation of madness as we find it in Hegel's work⁸—just because I felt it necessary to illustrate it for you does not mean that I am innovating here. It is the general formulation of madness in the sense that it can be seen to apply in particular to any one of the phases in which the dialectical development of human beings more or less occurs in each person's destiny; and in the sense that it always appears in this development as a moment of stasis, for being succumbs to stasis in an ideal identification that characterizes this moment in a particular person's destiny.

This identification, the unmediated and "infatuated" nature of which I tried to convey a moment ago, turns out to be the relation of being to the very best in it, since this ideal represents that being's freedom.

To put this more gallantly, I could demonstrate it to you with the example Hegel recalled to mind in presenting this analysis in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*⁹—that is, if I recall correctly, in 1806, while he was awaiting (let this be noted in passing to be added to a file I just opened) the approach of the *Weltseele*, the World Soul, which he saw in Napoleon—with the precise aim of revealing to Napoleon what Napoleon had the honor of thus incarnating, even though he seemed profoundly unaware of it. The example I am talking about is the character Karl Moor, the hero in Schiller's *Robbers*, who is well known to every German.

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More familiar to us and, also, more amusing in my book, is Molière's Alceste [from *The Misanthrope*]. But before using it as an example, I must mention that the very fact that he has never ceased to be a problem for our highbrow literati nourished in the "classics," since his first appearance, proves that the things I talk about are not nearly as useless as these highbrow literati would have us believe when they call them pedantic—less, no doubt, to spare themselves the effort of understanding them than to spare themselves the painful conclusions they would have to draw from them for themselves about their society, once they understood them.

It all stems from the fact that Alceste's "beautiful soul" exerts a fascination on the highbrow literati that the latter, "steeped in the classics," cannot resist. Does Molière thus approve of Philinte's high society indulgence? "That's just not possible!" some cry, while others must acknowledge, in the disabused strains of wisdom, that it surely must be the case at the rate things are going.

I believe that the question does not concern Philinte's wisdom, and the solution would perhaps shock these gentlemen, for the fact is that Alceste is mad and that Molière demonstrates that he is—precisely insofar as Alceste, in his beautiful soul, does not recognize that he himself contributes to the havoc he revolts against.

I specify that he is mad, not because he loves a woman who is flirtatious

and betrays him—which is something the learned analysts I mentioned earlier would no doubt attribute to his failure to adapt to life—but because he is caught, under Love's banner, by the very feeling that directs this art of mirages at which the beautiful Célimène excels: namely, the narcissism of the idle rich that defines the psychological structure of "high society" ["monde"] in all eras, which is doubled here by the other narcissism that is especially manifest in certain eras in the collective idealization of the feeling of being in love.

Célimène, at the mirror's focal point, and her admirers, forming a radiating circumference around her, indulge in the play of these passions [*feux*]. Alceste does too, no less than the others, for if he does not tolerate its lies, it is simply because his narcissism is more demanding. Of course, he expresses it to himself in the form of the law of the heart:

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*I'd have them be sincere, and never part
With any word that isn't from the heart.*

Yes, but when his heart speaks, it makes some strange exclamations. For example, when Philinte asks him, "You think then that she loves you?" Alceste replies, "Heavens, yes! I wouldn't love her did I not think so."

I suspect that Clérambault would have recognized this reply as having more to do with a delusion of passion than with love.

And no matter how widespread the fantasy may be in such passions of the test of the loved object's fall from grace, I find that it has an odd accent in Alceste's case:

*I love you more than can be said or thought;
Indeed, I wish you were in such distress
That I might show to all my devotedness.
Yes, I could wish that you were wretchedly poor,
Unloved, uncherished, utterly obscure;
That fate had set you down upon the earth
Without possessions, rank, or gentle birth . . .*

With this lovely wish and the taste he has for the song "J'aime mieux ma mie," why doesn't he court a salesgirl at his local flower shop? He would not be able to "show to all" his love for such a girl, and this is the true key to the feeling he expresses here: it is the passion to demonstrate his unicity to everyone, even if only in the form of the isolation of a victim, an isolation in which he finds bitter, jubilatory satisfaction in the final act of the play.

As for the mainspring of his twists and turns, it lies in a mechanism that I

would relate not to the *self-punishment* but rather to the *suicidal aggression of narcissism*.

For what infuriates Alceste upon hearing Oronte's sonnet is that he recognizes his own situation in it, depicted all too precisely in its ridiculousness, and the imbecile who is his rival appears to him as his own mirror image. The words of mad fury to which he then gives vent blatantly betray the fact that he seeks to lash out at himself. And whenever one of the repercussions of his words shows him that he has managed to do so, he delights in suffering its effect.

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Here we can note an odd defect in Ey's conception: it diverts him from the signification of the delusional act, leaving him to take it as the contingent effect of a lack of control, whereas the problem of this act's signification is constantly brought to our attention by the medical and legal exigencies that are essential to the phenomenology of our experience.

Someone like Guiraud, who is a mechanist, again goes much farther in his article, "Meurtres immotivés" ("Unexplained Murders"),¹⁰ when he attempts to show that it is precisely the *lakon* of his own being that the madman tries to get at in the object he strikes.

Let us take one last look at Alceste who has victimized no one but himself and let us hope he finds what he is looking for, namely:

. . . *some spot unpeopled and apart*
Where I'll be free to have an honest heart.

I want to examine the word "free" here. For it is not simply by way of derision that the impeccable rigor of classical comedy makes it appear here.

The import of the drama that classical comedy expresses cannot, in effect, be measured by the narrowness of the action in which it takes shape, and—like Descartes' lofty march in the "Secret Note" in which he declares himself to be on the verge of becoming a player on the world scene—it "advances behind a mask."

Instead of Alceste, I could have looked for the play of the law of the heart in the fate that put the old revolutionary of 1917 in the dock at the Moscow trials. But what is demonstrated in the poet's imaginary space is metaphysically comparable to the world's bloodiest events, since it is what causes blood to be spilled in the world.

I am not thus avoiding the social tragedy that dominates our era, but my marionette's acting will show each of us more clearly the risk he is tempted to run whenever freedom is at stake.

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For the risk of madness is gauged by the very appeal of the identifications on which man stakes both his truth and his being.

Thus rather than resulting from a contingent fact—the frailties of his organism—madness is the permanent virtuality of a gap opened up in his essence.

And far from being an “insult”¹¹ to freedom, madness is freedom’s most faithful companion, following its every move like a shadow.

Not only can man’s being not be understood without madness, but it would not be man’s being if it did not bear madness within itself as the limit of his freedom.

It is certainly true—to interrupt this serious talk with something humorous from my youth, which I wrote in a pithy form on the wall in the hospital staff room—that “Not just anyone can go mad” [*Ne devient pas fou qui veut*].

But it is also true that not just anyone who wants to can run the risks that enshroud madness.

A weak organism, a deranged imagination, and conflicts beyond one’s capacities do not suffice to cause madness. It may well be that a rock-solid body, powerful identifications, and the indulgence of fate, as written in the stars, lead one more surely to find madness seductive.

This conception at least has the immediate benefit of dispelling the problematic emphasis placed in the nineteenth century on the madness of superior individuals—and of putting a stop to the low blows Homais and Bournisien exchanged regarding the madness of saints and freedom fighters.

For while Pinel’s work has—thank God!—made us act more humanely toward ordinary madmen, it must be acknowledged that it has not increased our respect for the madness involved in taking supreme risks.

In any case, Homais and Bournisien represent one and the same manifestation of being. Isn’t it striking that we laugh only at the first? I defy you to explain this fact otherwise than with the significant distinction I pointed out earlier. Because Homais “believes in it” [*y croit*] whereas Bournisien, who is equally stupid but not mad, justifies his belief and, being backed by his hierarchy, maintains a distance between himself and his truth in which he can come to an agreement with Homais, assuming the latter “becomes reasonable” by recognizing the reality of “spiritual needs.”

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Having thus disarmed both him and his adversary thanks to my understanding of madness, I recover the right to evoke the hallucinatory voices heard by Joan of Arc and what took place on the road to Damascus, without anyone being able to summon me to change the tone of my real voice, or to go into an altered state of consciousness [*état second*] to exercise my judgment.

Having arrived at this point in my talk on the causality of madness, mustn’t I be careful so that heaven may keep me from going awry? Mustn’t I realize that, after having argued that Henry Ey misrecognizes the causality of mad-

ness, and that he is not Napoleon, I am falling into the trap of proposing as ultimate proof thereof that I am the one who understands this causality, in other words, that I am Napoleon?

I don't think, however, that this is my point, because it seems to me that, by being careful to maintain the right human distances that constitute our experience of madness, I have obeyed the law which literally brings the apparent facts of madness into existence. Without this, the physician—like the one I mentioned who replied to the madman that what he said was not true—would rave no less than the madman himself.

And when, for this occasion, I reread the case write-up on which I have relied here, it seemed to me that it bore witness to the fact that, no matter how one judges its results, I maintained for my object the respect she deserved as a human being, as a patient, and as a case.

Lastly, I believe that in relegating the causality of madness to the unsoundable decision of being in which human beings understand or fail to recognize their liberation, in the snare of fate that deceives them about a freedom they have not in the least conquered, I am merely formulating the law of our becoming as it is expressed in Antiquity's formulation: Γένοι, οἷος ἔσσι.

In order to define psychological causality in this law, I will now try to grasp the mode of form and action that establishes the determinations of this drama, since I think it can be identified scientifically with the concept of "imagos."

3. *The Psychological Effects of the Imaginary Mode*

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A subject's history develops in a more or less typical series of *ideal identifications* that represent the purest of psychological phenomena in that they essentially reveal the function of imagos. I do not conceptualize the ego otherwise than as a central system of these formations, a system that one must understand, like these formations, in its imaginary structure and libidinal value.

Thus, without dwelling on those who, even in the sciences, blithely confuse the ego with the subject's being, you can see where I diverge from the most common conception that identifies the ego with the synthesis of the organism's relational functions, a conception which must certainly be called hybrid in that a subjective synthesis is defined in it in objective terms.

One recognizes Ey's position here, as it is expressed in the passage I mentioned earlier where he posits "an attack on the ego which, once again, is indistinguishable, in the final analysis, from the notion of functional dissolution."

Can one reproach him for this conception when the bias of parallelism is so strong that Freud himself remained its prisoner, even though it ran counter

to the entire tendency of his research? To have attacked this bias in Freud's time might, moreover, have amounted to preventing oneself from communicating one's ideas to the scientific community.

It is well known that Freud identified the ego with the "perception-consciousness system," which comprises all of the systems by which an organism is adapted to the "reality principle."¹²

If we think about the role played by the notion of error in Ey's conception, we can see the bond that ties the organicist illusion to a realist metapsychology. This does not, however, bring us any closer to a concrete psychology.

179 Moreover, although the best minds in psychoanalysis avidly demand, if we are to believe them, a theory of the ego, there is little chance that its place will be marked by anything other than a gaping hole as long as they do not resolve to consider obsolete what is clearly obsolete in the work of a peerless master.

For Merleau-Ponty's work¹³ decisively demonstrates that any healthy phenomenology, that of perception, for instance, requires us to consider lived experience prior to any objectification and even prior to any reflexive analysis that interweaves objectification and experience. Let me explain what I mean: the slightest visual illusion proves to force itself upon us experientially before detailed, piecemeal observation of the figure corrects it; it is the latter that allows us to objectify the so-called real form. Reflection makes us recognize in this form the a priori category of extension [*l'étendue*], the property of which is precisely to present itself "*partes extra partes*," but it is still the illusion in itself that gives us the gestalt action that is psychology's true object here.

This is why no considerations about ego synthesis can excuse us from considering the phenomenon of synthesis in the subject—namely, everything the subject includes under this term, which is not exactly synthetic, nor even exempt from contradiction, as we learned from Montaigne, and learned even better when Freud designated it as the very locus of *Verneinung*. The latter is the phenomenon by which the subject reveals one of his impulses in his very denial [*dénégation*] of it and at the very moment at which he denies it. Let me emphasize that it is not a disavowal of membership that is at stake here, but a formal negation—in other words, a typical phenomenon of misrecognition, and in the inverted form I have stressed. The most common expression of this form, "Don't think that . . .," already points to the profound relationship with the other as such that I will bring out in the ego.

Doesn't experience thus show us, upon the slightest inspection, that nothing separates the ego from its ideal forms (*Ich Ideal*, a term with which Freud recovers his rights) and that everything limits it on the side of the being it rep-

resents, since almost the entire life of the organism escapes it, not merely insofar as that life is most often ignored, but insofar as the ego need know nothing about it for the most part.

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As for the genetic psychology of the ego, the results that it has obtained seem all the more valid to me since they are stripped of any postulate of functional integration.

I myself have given proof of this in my study of the phenomena typical of what I call the *fertile moments* of delusion. Carried out according to the phenomenological method that I am promoting here, this study led me to analyses from which my conception of the ego has progressively emerged; this progressive emergence was visible to my audiences at the lectures and classes I gave over the years at conferences organized by the *Évolution Psychiatrique* group, at the Medical School Clinic, and at the Institute of Psychoanalysis. Although for my own reasons those lectures and classes have remained unpublished, they nevertheless publicized my term "paranoiac knowledge," which was designed to hit home.

By including under this heading one of the fundamental structures of these phenomena, I intended to indicate that, if it is not equivalent, it is at least akin to a form of relation to the world that has a very specific import: the reaction recognized by psychiatrists that has been psychologically generalized with the term "transitivism." Now, this reaction—which is never completely eliminated from man's world, in its most idealized forms (for example, in relations of rivalry)—first manifests itself as the matrix of the ego's *Urbild*.

This reaction significantly dominates the primordial phase in which the child becomes aware of his individuality; his language translates this, as you know, into the third person prior to translating it into the first person. Charlotte Bühler,¹⁴ to mention only her, in observing the behavior of a child with its playmate, has recognized this transitivism in the striking form of a child being truly captured by another child's image.

A child can thus, in a complete trance-like state, share in his friend's tumble or attribute to him, without lying, the punch he himself has given his friend. I will skip the series of these phenomena, which run the gamut from spectacular identification to mimetic suggestion and on to the seduction of bearing. All of them are understood by Bühler in the dialectic that goes from jealousy (the jealousy whose instructive value Saint Augustine already glimpsed in a flash) to the first forms of sympathy. They are inscribed in a primordial ambivalence that seems to me, as I am already indicating, to be *mirrored*, in the sense that the subject identifies, in his feeling of Self, with the other's image and that the other's image captivates this feeling in him.

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Now this reaction occurs only under one condition: the difference in age between the two children must remain below a certain limit, a limit that cannot exceed one year at the beginning of the phase studied.

We already see here an essential feature of an imago: the observable effects of a form, in the broadest sense of the term, that can only be defined in terms of generic resemblance, thus implying that a certain recognition occurred prior to that.

We know that these effects manifest themselves in relation to the human face right from the tenth day after birth, that is, right from the appearance of the first visual reactions and prior to any other experience than that of blind sucking.

Thus, and this is an essential point, the first effect of the imago that appears in human beings is that of the subject's *alienation*. It is in the other that the subject first identifies himself and even experiences himself. This phenomenon will seem less surprising if we recall the fundamental social conditions of the human *Umwelt* and if we evoke the intuition that dominates all of Hegel's speculations.

Man's very desire is constituted, he tells us, under the sign of mediation: it is the desire to have one's desire recognized. Its object is a desire, that of other people, in the sense that man has no object that is constituted for his desire without some mediation. This is clear from his earliest needs, in that, for example, his very food must be prepared; and we find this anew in the whole development of his satisfaction, beginning with the conflict between master and slave, through the entire dialectic of labor.

182 This dialectic, which is that of man's very being, must bring about, through a series of crises, the synthesis of his particularity and his universality, going so far as to universalize this very particularity.

This means that, in the movement that leads man to an ever more adequate consciousness of himself, his freedom becomes bound up with the development of his servitude.

Does the imago then serve to instate a fundamental relationship in being between his reality and his organism? Does man's psychological life show us a similar phenomenon in any other forms?

No experience has contributed more than psychoanalysis to revealing this phenomenon. And the necessity of repetition that psychoanalysis points to as the effect of the [Oedipus] complex—even though analytic doctrine expresses this with the inert and unthinkable notion of the unconscious—is sufficiently eloquent here.

Habit and forgetting are signs of the integration of a psychological relation into the organism; an entire situation, having become both unknown to the sub-

ject and as essential as his body to him, is normally manifested in effects that are consistent with the sense he has of his body.

The Oedipus complex turns out, in analytic experience, to be capable not only of provoking, by its atypical impact, all the somatic effects of hysteria, but also of normally constituting the sense of reality.

The father represents a function of both power and temperament simultaneously; an imperative that is no longer blind but "categorical"; and a person who dominates and arbitrates the avid wrenching and jealous ambivalence that were at the core of the child's first relations with its mother and its sibling rival. And he seems all the more to represent this the more he is "on the sidelines" of the first affective apprehensions. The effects of his appearance are expressed in various manners in analytic doctrine, but they obviously appear skewed there by their traumatizing impact, for it was the latter that first allowed these effects to be perceived by analysis. It seems to me that they can be most generally expressed as follows: The new image makes a world of persons "flocculate" in the subject; insofar as they represent centers of autonomy, they completely change the structure of reality for him.

I would not hesitate to say that one could demonstrate that the Oedipal crisis has physiological echoes, and that, however purely psychological its mainspring may be, a certain "dose of Oedipus" can be considered to have the same humoral efficacy as the absorption of a desensitizing medication.

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Furthermore, the decisive role of an affective experience of this kind for the constitution of the world of reality as regards the categories of time and space is so obvious that even someone like Bertrand Russell, in his essay *The Analysis of Mind*,¹⁵ with its radically mechanistic inspiration, cannot avoid admitting, in his genetic theory of perception, the function of "feelings of distance" which, with the sense of the concrete that is characteristic of Anglo-Saxons, he relates to the "feeling of respect."

I stressed this significant feature in my doctoral thesis, when I attempted to account for the structure of the "elementary phenomena" of paranoiac psychosis.

Suffice it to say that my examination of these phenomena led me to complete the catalogue of the structures—symbolism, condensation, and others—that Freud had explained as those of the *imaginary mode*, to use my own terminology. I sincerely hope that people will soon stop using the word "unconscious" to designate what manifests itself in consciousness.

I realized (and why don't I ask you to look at my chapter,¹⁶ since it bears witness to the authentic groping involved in my research), in considering the case history of my patient, that it is impossible to situate, through the anamnesis, the exact time and place at which certain intuitions, memory illusions,

convictive resentments, and imaginary objectifications occurred that could only be attributed to the *fertile moment* of the delusion taken as a whole. I will illustrate this by mentioning the column and photograph that my patient remembered, during one of these periods, having been struck by some months before in a certain newspaper, but which she was unable to find when she went through the complete collection of months of its daily papers. I supposed that these phenomena were originally experienced as reminiscences, iterations, series, and mirror games—it being impossible for the subject to situate their very occurrence in objective time and space with any more precision than she could situate her dreams in them.

We are thus nearing a structural analysis of an imaginary space and time as well as the connections between them.

Returning to my notion of paranoiac knowledge, I tried to conceptualize the network structure, the relations of participation, the aligned perspectives, and the palace of mirages that reign in the limbo regions of the world that the Oedipus complex causes to fade into forgetting.

I have often taken a stand against the hazardous manner in which Freud sociologically interpreted the Oedipus complex—that very important discovery about the human mind that we owe to him. I think that the Oedipus complex did not appear with the origin of man (assuming it is not altogether senseless to try to write the history of this complex), but at the threshold of history, of “historical” history, at the limit of “ethnographic” cultures. It can obviously appear only in the patriarchal form of the family as an institution, but it nevertheless has an indisputably liminary value. I am convinced that its function had to be served by initiatory experiences in cultures that excluded it, as ethnology allows us to see even today. And its value in bringing a psychical cycle to a close stems from the fact that it represents the family situation, insofar as the latter, by its institution, marks the intersection of the biological and the social in the cultural.

However, the structure that is characteristic of the human world—insofar as it involves the existence of objects that are independent of the actual field of the tendencies and that can be used both symbolically and instrumentally—appears in man from the very first phases of development. How can we conceive of its psychological genesis?

My construction known as “the mirror stage”—or, as it would be better to say, “the mirror phase”—addresses such a problem.

I duly presented it at the Marienbad Congress in 1936, at least up to the point, coinciding exactly with the fourth stroke of the ten-minute mark, at which I was interrupted by Ernest Jones who was presiding over the congress. He was doing so as president of the London Psycho-Analytical Society, a posi-

tion for which he was no doubt qualified by the fact that I have never encountered a single English colleague of his who didn't have something unpleasant to say about his character. Nevertheless, the members of the Viennese group who were gathered there, like birds right before their impending migration, gave my exposé a rather warm reception. I did not submit my paper for inclusion in the proceedings of the congress; you can find the gist of it in a few lines in my article about the family published in 1938 in the *Encyclopédie Française*, in the volume on "The Life of the Mind."¹⁷

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My aim there was to indicate the connection between a number of fundamental imaginary relations in an exemplary behavior characteristic of a certain phase of development.

This behavior is none other than that of the human infant before its image in the mirror starting at the age of six months, which is so strikingly different from the behavior of a chimpanzee, whose development in the instrumental application of intelligence the infant is far from having reached.

What I have called the triumphant assumption [*assomption*] of the image with the jubilatory mimicry that accompanies it and the playful indulgence in controlling the specular identification, after the briefest experimental verification of the nonexistence of the image behind the mirror, in contrast with the opposite phenomena in the monkey—these seemed to me to manifest one of the facts of identificatory capture by the imago that I was seeking to isolate.

It was very directly related to the image of the human being that I had already encountered in the earliest organization of human knowledge.

This idea has gained ground and has been corroborated by other researchers, among whom I will cite Lhermitte, whose 1939 book published the findings of the work he had devoted for many years to the singularity and autonomy in the psyche of the *image of one's own body*.

An enormous series of subjective phenomena revolve around this image, running the gamut from the amputee's illusion to the hallucination of one's double, including the latter's appearance in dreams and the delusional objectifications that go with it. But what is most important is still its autonomy as the imaginary locus of reference for proprioceptive sensations, that can be found in all kinds of phenomena, of which Aristotle's illusion is only one example.

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Gestalt theory and phenomenology also contribute to the file of data related to this image. And all sorts of imaginary mirages of concrete psychology, which are familiar to psychoanalysts, ranging from sexual games to moral ambiguities, remind one of my mirror stage by virtue of the image and the magical power of language. "Hey," one says to oneself, "that reminds me of Lacan's thing, the mirror stage. What exactly did he say about it?"

I have, in fact, taken my conception of the existential meaning of the phenomenon a bit further by understanding it in relation to what I have called man's *prematurity at birth*, in other words, the incompleteness and "delay" in the development of the central nervous system during the first six months of life. These phenomena are well known to anatomists and have, moreover, been obvious, since man's first appearance, in the nursling's lack of motor coordination and balance; the latter is probably not unrelated to the process of "fetalization," which Bolk considered to be the mainspring of the higher development of the encephalic vesicles in man.

It is owing to this delay in development that the early maturation of visual perception takes on the role of functional anticipation. This results, on the one hand, in the marked prevalence of visual structure in recognition of the human form, which begins so early, as I mentioned before. On the other hand, the odds of identifying with this form, if I may say so, receive decisive support from this, which comes to constitute the absolutely essential imaginary knot in man that psychoanalysis—obscurely and despite inextricable doctrinal contradictions—has admirably designated as "narcissism."

Indeed, the relation of the image to the suicidal tendency essentially expressed in the myth of Narcissus lies in this knot. This suicidal tendency—which represents in my opinion what Freud sought to situate in his metapsychology with the terms "death instinct" and "primary masochism"—depends, in my view, on the fact that man's death, long before it is reflected (in a way that is, moreover, always so ambiguous) in his thinking, is experienced by him in the earliest phase of misery that he goes through from *the trauma of birth* until the end of the first six months of *physiological prematurity*, and that echoes later in the *trauma of weaning*.

It is one of the most brilliant features of Freud's intuition regarding the order of the psychical world that he grasped the revelatory value of concealment games that are children's first games.¹⁸ Everyone can see them and yet no one before him had grasped in their iterative character the liberating repetition of all separation and weaning as such that the child assumes [*assume*] in these games.

Thanks to Freud we can think of them as expressing the first vibration of the stationary wave of renunciations that scand the history of psychical development.

At the beginning of this development we see the primordial ego, as essentially alienated, linked to the first sacrifice as essentially suicidal.

In other words, we see here the fundamental structure of madness.

Thus, the earliest dissonance between the ego and being would seem to be the fundamental note that resounds in a whole harmonic scale across the

phases of psychological history, the function of which is to resolve it by developing it.

Any resolution of this dissonance through an illusory coincidence of reality with the ideal would resonate all the way to the depths of the imaginary knot of narcissistic, suicidal aggression.

Yet this mirage of appearances, in which the organic conditions of intoxication, for instance, can play their role, requires the ungraspable consent of freedom, as can be seen in the fact that madness is found only in man and only after he reaches “the age of reason”—Pascal’s intuition that “a child is not a man” is thus borne out here.

Indeed, the child’s first identificatory choices, which are “innocent” choices, determine nothing, apart from the affective [*pathétiques*] “fixations” of neurosis, but the madness by which man thinks he is a man.

This paradoxical formulation nevertheless takes on its full value when we consider that man is far more than his body, even though he can know [*savoir*] nothing more about his being.

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Here we see the fundamental illusion to which man is a slave, much more so than to all the “passions of the body” in the Cartesian sense: the passion of being a man. It is, I would say, the passion of the soul *par excellence*, *narcissism*, that imposes its structure on all his desires, even the loftiest ones.

In the encounter between body and mind, the soul appears as what it traditionally is, that is, as the limit of the monad.

When man, seeking to empty himself of all thoughts, advances in the shadowless gleam of imaginary space, abstaining from even awaiting what will emerge from it, a dull mirror shows him a surface in which nothing is reflected.

I think, therefore, that I can designate the imago as the true object of psychology, to the exact same extent that Galileo’s notion of the inert mass point served as the foundation of physics.

However, we cannot yet fully grasp the notion, and my entire exposé has had no other goal than to guide you toward its obscure self-evidence.

It seems to me to be correlated with a kind of unextended space—that is, indivisible space, our intuition of which should be clarified by progress in the notion of gestalts—and with a kind of time that is caught between expectation and release, a time of phases and repetition.

A form of causality grounds this notion, which is psychological causality itself: *identification*. The latter is an irreducible phenomenon, and the imago is the form, which is definable in the imaginary spatiotemporal complex, whose function is to bring about the identification that resolves a psychological phase—in other

words, a metamorphosis in the individual's relationships with his semblables.

Those who do not wish to understand me might object that I am begging the question and that I am gratuitously positing that the phenomenon is irreducible merely in order to foster a thoroughly metaphysical conception of man.

189 I will thus address the deaf by offering them facts which will, I think, pique their sense of the visible, since these facts should not appear to be contaminated, in their eyes at least, by either the mind or being: for I will seek them out in the animal kingdom.

It is clear that psychical phenomena must manifest themselves in that kingdom if they have an independent existence, and that what I call the imago must be found there—at least in those animals whose *Umwelt* involves, if not society, at least an aggregation of their fellow creatures, that is, those animals who present, among their specific characteristics, the trait known as “gregariousness.” In any case, ten years ago, when I referred to the imago as a “psychical object” and stated that the appearance of Freud's Oedipus complex marked a conceptual watershed, insofar as it contained the promise of a true psychology, I simultaneously indicated in several of my writings that, with the imago, psychology had given us a concept which could be at least as fruitful in biology as many other concepts that are far more uncertain but that have nevertheless gained currency there.

This indication was borne out starting in 1939, and as proof I will simply present two “facts” among others that have by now become quite numerous.

The first is found in a paper by L. Harrison Matthews published in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society* in 1939.¹⁹

It had long been known that a female pigeon does not ovulate when isolated from other members of its species.

Matthews' experiments demonstrated that ovulation is triggered by a female pigeon's sight of the specific form of a member of its own species, to the exclusion of any other sensory form of perception, and without that member having to be male.

190 Placed in the same room with individuals of both sexes, but in cages that are fabricated in such a way that the pigeons cannot see each other, although they can easily perceive each other's calls and smells, the females do not ovulate. Conversely, if we allow two pigeons to view each other—even if it is through a glass barrier that suffices to thwart the onset of the mating game, and even when both pigeons are female—ovulation is triggered within a period of time that varies from twelve days (when the separated pigeons include a male and a female) to two months (when the separated pigeons are both female).

But what is more remarkable still is that the mere sight by the animal of its own image in a mirror suffices to trigger ovulation within two and a half months.

Another researcher has noted that the secretion of milk in the male pigeon's crops, which normally occurs when the eggs hatch, does not occur when he cannot see the female brooding the eggs.

A second group of facts is found in a paper by Chauvin, which was published in 1941 in the *Annales de la Société entomologique de France*.²⁰

Chauvin's work concerns an insect species with two very different varieties of individuals: a so-called "solitary" type and a so-called "gregarious" one. Chauvin studied the migratory locust, that is, one of the species commonly referred to as grasshoppers, in which the phenomenon of swarming is linked to the appearance of the gregarious type. In this locust, also called *Schistocerca*, the two varieties show profound differences (as in *Locusta* and other similar species) in both their instincts—sexual cycle, voracity, and motor agitation—and their morphology, as can be seen from biometric measures and from the pigmentation that produces their differing characteristic outward appearances.

Limiting ourselves to this last feature, I will indicate that in *Schistocerca*, the solitary type is solid green throughout its development, which includes five larval stages, whereas the gregarious type changes colors depending on its stage and has certain black striations on different parts of its body, one of the most permanent striations being on its hind femur. But I am not exaggerating when I say that, in addition to these highly visible features, the insects differ biologically in every respect.

We find that the appearance of the gregarious type is triggered, in this insect, by perception of the characteristic form of the species during the first larval periods. Two solitary individuals placed together will thus evolve toward the gregarious type. Through a series of experiments—raising them in darkness and isolated sectioning of the palpus, the antennae, and so on—it was possible to locate this perception very precisely in the senses of sight and touch, to the exclusion of smell, hearing, and shared movement. It is not necessary for the two individuals that are put together to be in the same larval stage, and they react in the same way to the presence of an adult. The presence of an adult from a similar species, such as *Locusta*, also determines gregariousness, but not the presence of an adult *Gryllus*, which is from a more distant species.

After an in-depth discussion, Chauvin is led to bring in the notion of a specific form and a specific movement, characterized by a certain "style," a formulation that is all the less questionable in his case in that he does not seem to even dream of tying it to the notion of gestalts. I will let him conclude in his own words, which will show how little he is inclined to wax metaphysical: "There clearly must be some sort of recognition here, however rudimentary one

assumes it to be. Yet how can we speak of recognition without presupposing a *psychophysiological* mechanism?"²¹ Such is the discretion of the physiologist.

But that is not the whole story: gregarious individuals are born from the coupling of two solitary individuals in a proportion that depends on the amount of time they are allowed to spend together. Furthermore, these excitations are such that the proportion of gregarious births rises as the number of couplings after certain intervals rises.

Inversely, suppression of the image's morphogenic action leads to progressive reduction of the number of gregarious individuals among the offspring.

Although the sexual characteristics of gregarious adults depend on conditions that still better manifest the originality of the role of the specific imago in the phenomenon that I have just described, I would do better not to elaborate any further on this topic in a presentation on psychical causality in cases of madness.

I would simply like to highlight here the equally significant fact that, contrary to what Ey allows himself to be led to propose somewhere, there is no parallelism between the anatomical differentiation of the nervous system and the wealth of psychical manifestations, even of intelligence. This is demonstrated by a huge amount of data regarding the behavior of lower animals; consider the crab, for example, whose skill in using mechanical impact to deal with a mussel I have repeatedly praised in my lectures.

In concluding, I hope that this brief discourse on the imago will strike you, not as an ironic challenge, but as a genuine threat to man. For, while our ability to realize that the imago's unquantifiable distance and freedom's minute blade are decisive in madness does not yet allow us to cure it, the time is perhaps not far off when such knowledge will allow us to induce it. While nothing can guarantee that we will not get lost in a free movement toward truth, a little nudge will suffice to ensure that we change truth into madness. Then we will have moved from the domain of metaphysical causality, which one can deride, to that of scientific technique, which is no laughing matter.

Here and there we have seen the beginnings of such an enterprise. The art of the image will soon be able to play off the values of the imago, and some day we will see serial orders of "ideals" that withstand criticism: that is when the label "true guarantee" will take on its full meaning.

Neither the intention nor the enterprise will be new, but their systematic form will be.

In the meantime, I propose to equate the various delusional structures with the therapeutic methods applied to the psychoses, as a function of the principles I have developed here:

- running from the ridiculous attachment to the object demanded, to the cruel tension of hypochondriacal fixation, and on to the suicidal backdrop of the delusion of negation; and
- running from the sedative value of medical explanations, to the disruptive act of inducing epilepsy, and on to analysis' narcissistic *catharsis*.

It sufficed to reflect upon a few "optical illusions" to lay the groundwork for a Gestalt theory that produces results that might seem to be minor miracles. For instance, predicting the following phenomenon: when an arrangement composed of blue-colored sectors is made to spin in front of a screen that is half black and half yellow, the colors remain isolated or combine and you either see the two colors of the screen through a blue swirling or else you see a blue-black and a grey blend together, according to whether you see the arrangement or not, thus depending solely on a thought adjustment.

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Judge for yourself, then, what our combinatory faculties could wrest from a theory that refers to the very relationship between being and the world, if this theory became somewhat precise. It should be clear to you that the visual perception of a man raised in a cultural context completely different from our own is a perception that is completely different from our own.

The aspects of the imago—which are more invisible to our eyes (made, as they are, for the signs of the money changer) than what the desert hunter knows how to see the imperceptible trace of, namely, the gazelle's footprint on the rock—will someday be revealed to us.

You have heard me lovingly refer to Descartes and Hegel in order to situate the place of the imago in our research. It is rather fashionable these days to "go beyond" the classical philosophers. I could just as easily have started with the admirable dialogue in the *Parmenides*. For neither Socrates nor Descartes, nor Marx, nor Freud, can be "gone beyond," insofar as they carried out their research with the passion to unveil that has an object: truth.

As one such prince of words wrote—I mean Max Jacob, poet, saint, and novelist, through whose fingers the threads of the ego's* mask seem to slip of their own accord—in *Cornet à dés* ("The Dice Cup"), if I am not mistaken: the truth is always new.

Notes

1. One can read the most recent exposition available of Henri Ey's viewpoints in the brochure that contains the presentation made by J. de Ajuriaguerra and H. Hécaen at the conference held in Bonneval in 1943 (that is, the

conference just before this one). Ey added an introduction and a long response of his own to their presentation, which included a critique of his doctrine. See *Rapports de la Neurologie et de la Psychiatrie*, H. Ey, J. de Ajuriaguerra, and

- H. Hécaen (Paris: Hermann, 1947), issue number 1018 of the well-known collection "Actualités scientifiques et industrielles" ("Current Scientific and Industrial Developments"). Some of the quotations that follow are borrowed from them; others are found only in typewritten texts thanks to which a highly productive discussion took place that paved the way for the Bonneval conference in 1946.
2. Henri Ey, *Rapports de la Neurologie*, 14.
 3. Henri Ey, *Rapports de la Neurologie*, 122. (Cf. Ey's article published in *Évolution Psychiatrique* XII, 1 (1947): 71–104.
 4. Henri Ey, *Hallucinations et Délire* (Paris: Alcan, 1934).
 5. P. Guiraud, "Les formes verbales de l'interprétation délirante," *Annales médico-psychologiques* LXXIX, 5 (1921): 395–412.
 6. In the first issue of the journal entitled *14, rue du Dragon* (Paris: Cahiers d'Art).
 7. Paul Éluard, *Poésie involontaire et poésie intentionnelle* (Villeneuve-les-Avignon: Seghers, 1942).
 8. See *La Philosophie de l'esprit*, trans. Véra (Paris: Germer Baillière, 1867), and the excellent French translation in two volumes by Jean Hyppolite, *La Phénoménologie de l'esprit* (Paris: Aubier, 1939), which I will return to further on.
 9. French readers can no longer ignore this work now that Jean Hyppolite has made it accessible to them, in a way that will satisfy even the most exacting of readers, in his thesis which has just been published (Paris: Aubier, 1946), and once the *Nouvelle Revue Française* publishes the notes from the course that Alexandre Kojève devoted to Hegel's text for five years at the École des Hautes Études.
 10. In *Évolution psychiatrique*, 2 (March 1931): 25–34. See also P. Guiraud and B. Cailleux, "Le meurtre immotivé, réaction libératrice de la maladie chez les hébéphrènes," *Annales Médico-psychiatriques* 2 (November 1928): 352–60.
 11. See *Écrits* 1966, 157.
 12. See Freud's *Das Ich und das Es* [*The Ego and the Id*, SE XIX, especially chapter 2].
 13. *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945). [*The Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (New York: Humanities Press, 1962).]
 14. Charlotte Bühler, *Soziologische und psychologische Studien über das erste Lebensjahr* (Jena: Fischer, 1927). See also Elsa Köhler, *Die Persönlichkeit des dreijährigen Kindes* (Leipzig: 1926).
 15. Bertrand Russell, *The Analysis of Mind* (New York: Macmillan, 1921).
 16. *De la psychose paranoïaque dans ses rapports avec la personnalité* (Paris: Le François, 1932), Part II, Chap. II, 202–15 and also Chap. IV, Section III, b, 300–306.
 17. *Encyclopédie Française*, founded by A. de Monzie, vol. VIII, edited by Henri Wallon; see Part 2, Section A, "La famille," especially pages 8' 40–6 to 8' 40–11.
 18. In *Jenseits des Lustprinzips* [*Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, SE XVIII, 14–17].
 19. See [L. Harrison Matthews, "Visual Stimulation and Ovulation in Pigeons" in] *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, Series B (Biological Sciences), 126 (February 3, 1939): 557–60.
 20. R. Chauvin, *Annales de la Société entomologique de France* (1941, third quarter): 133–272.
 21. R. Chauvin, *Annales de la Société entomologique de France*, 251 (my italics).

NOTES TO "PRESENTATION ON PSYCHICAL CAUSALITY"

(151,5) The reference here is to Bernard le Boyer de Fontenelle (1657-1757), a poet, playwright, moralist, and philosopher (cf. *Écrits* 1966, 782), who reputedly said, "If my hand were full of truths, I certainly wouldn't open it for men to see them."

(152,1) Reading *Je vous laisse juger de* (I'll let you be the judge of) instead of *Je vous laisse de juger*.

(152,4) For a later account of some of the same material in English, see "Hughlings Jackson's Principles and the Organo-dynamic Concept of Psychiatry," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 118 (1962): 673-82.

(152,5) *L'étendue* (material substance) is the term for Descartes' *res extensa* (extended or material substance, a material thing), as opposed to *res cogitans* (thinking substance, a thinking thing). It is sometimes rendered simply as "extension."

(153,fn1) Reading "1946" for "1945."

(154,2) Benedict de Spinoza, *A Spinoza Reader*, trans. Edwin Curley (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 86.

(154,4) *Omniudo realitatis* (literally, "the sum total of reality") is Kant's definition of God in *The Critique of Pure Reason*.

(154,6) In psychiatry, "agnosia" is the partial or total inability to recognize objects by use of the senses. The adjectival form is "agnostic."

(155,1) Gelb and Goldstein discuss this patient, Schneider, in numerous works, including "Zur Psychologie des optischen Wahrnehmungs- und Erkennungsvorganges (Psychologische Analyse hirnpathologischer Fälle auf Grund von Untersuchungen Hirnverletzter, 1.)" in *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Neurologie und Physiologie* 41 (1918): 1-143, part of which can be found in English in *A Source Book of Gestalt Psychology* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1938), 315-25. References to other discussions of Schneider by Gelb and Goldstein and by Bénéary and Hochheimer can be found in Maurice Merleau-Ponty's detailed discussion of this case in *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin

Smith (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, [1945] 1962), 103-147.

(157,4) The reference here is to Hippolyte Taine (1828-1893), the French philosopher, historian, and literary critic.

(158,2) *Était resté lettre morte* (remained a dead letter) could also be rendered "went unheeded."

(159,2) *Amour-propre* (pride) can also be rendered as "self-love," "self-regard," "self-esteem," or "vanity."

(160,2) Polyxena was the daughter of Priam and Hecuba.

(160,4) Reading *C'est qu'il* (This is because it), as in the original version of the text, for *C'est qu'l* (obvious typographical error).

(161,2) Reading *que partout ailleurs* (than anywhere else), as in the original version of the text, for *partout ailleurs* (leading to a non-grammatical phrase).

(161,5) Politzer, who advocated the foundation of a "concrete psychology," failed to write the majority of the works he announced (his *Critique des fondements de la psychologie* was to be the first of three parts of a larger work entitled *Matériaux pour la critique des fondements de la psychologie*, which itself was announced as preliminary to a projected *Essai critique sur les fondements de la psychologie*). In 1929 he became a member of the Communist Party and abandoned psychology.

(161,6) Deucalion was the son of Prometheus who survived a deluge with Pyrrha, his wife. Setting sail from Thessalia, Hermes told him to throw the bones of their mothers overboard to repopulate the earth, which he did knowing that they were but stones. From the stones men and women were born.

(161,7) *Menée* (ploy) usually means plotting, intrigue, or maneuver in the plural; in the singular, however, it also means the path taken by a deer in fleeing from a hunter (an escape route) and the small movement of a gear in a clock's mechanism as one tooth takes the place of the next.

(162,5) Lacan is parodying Molière's line in *The Imaginary Invalid*, "Dignus, dignus est

intrare in nostro docto corpore" (third interlude).

(163,1) *Lumières* (enlightened intellects) literally means lights, and *leur en aura assez fait voir* (has given [them] a hard enough time) literally means "has given [them] enough to see."

(163,4) See Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis & Cambridge: Hackett, 1998), "First Meditation," 60.

(163,6) *Dans le coup* (involved) more colloquially means "in on the action (or deal or secret)," "hip," or "in the know."

(166,3) "Healthy minds in healthy bodies" (*mens sana in corpore sano*) is from Juvenal's *Satires* X, 356. Charles Blondel, *La conscience morbide* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1914).

(166,5) The Latin *status vocis* means a mere name, word, or sound without a corresponding objective reality, and was used by nominalists to qualify universals. On the soul and its passions, see "The Passions of the Soul," in *The Philosophical Works of Descartes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 331–427.

(166,7) I have not been able to find *abîmes de l'existence* (abysses of existence) in Pascal's work, but one finds *abîme de l'existence* in Chateaubriand's work.

(166,8) *Noeud* also means knot, and I translated it earlier in this text as "noose."

(167,1) A reference to Stendhal's novel, *Lucien Leuwen*. On Polonius, see *Hamlet*, Act III, Scene 4.

(167,3) *L'insensé* (nonsense) also means that which is insane (as an adjective) and the insane (as a noun).

(167,4) *Figement* (fixation) also refers in linguistics to the process by which the elements of a syntagm lose their autonomy.

(168,2) *Diafoirus* comes from *Monsieur Diafoirus*, the name given to a charlatan physician by Molière in *Le malade imaginaire*, best known in English as *The Imaginary Invalid*. According to the *Pléiade* edition of Molière's *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. II (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), this word, with a pedantic Latin ending, is made up of *dia*, from the Greek "to cross," and *foire*, meaning market, but also meaning "the course (or flow) of the stomach" in the medicine of the time.

(169,10) *Moments féconds* (fertile moments) may be related to Freud's term, "productive stage" of hysteria (see *SE* II, 17). Cf. Seminar III, 26, and *Écrits* 1966, 180.

(170,6) Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, 60, translation modified. See Jules de Gaultier, *Le Bovarysme* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1902).

(170,8) Louis II of Bavaria is also known as Mad King Ludwig (1845–1886).

(171,3) See Las Cases, *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène* (1823).

(171,5) On "the law of the heart," see Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 391 ff.

(172,4) The paragraph begins with a paraphrase of Molière's well known "Ah! Qu'en termes galants ces choses-là sont mises!" from *Le Misanthrope*, Act I, Scene 2.

(172,fn2) Hyppolite's thesis was published as *Genèse et structure de la Phénoménologie de l'esprit*, and translated into English as *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. S. Cherniak and J. Heckman (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974). Alexandre Kojève's notes were edited by Raymond Queneau and published as *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel: Leçons sur la Phénoménologie de l'Esprit professées de 1933 à 1939 à l'École des Hautes Études* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947). They were abridged and translated into English by James H. Nichols, Jr., and published as *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit* (New York: Basic Books, 1969).

(173,1) Shlomo Avineri, in his *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), cites a passage from a letter by Hegel to Niethammer: "This morning I saw the Emperor [Napoleon]—this world-soul (*diese Weltseele*)—ride through town [. . .]. It is a marvelous feeling to see such a personality, concentrated in one point, dominating the entire world from horseback [. . .]. It is impossible not to admire him" (October 13, 1806). Kojève discussed Hegel's admiration for Napoleon in his *Lectures*.

(173,6) *Foyer* (focal point) also means fire, *rayonnant* (radiating) also means radiant, and *feux* (passions) also means lights and fires.

(174,2) This and all the other lines from Molière's *Le Misanthrope* are from Richard Wilbur's translation in *The Misanthrope and Tartuffe* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1965), which I have slightly modified. The first two quotes are from Act I, Scene 1; the third is from Act IV, Scene 3.

(174,8) "J'aime mieux ma mie, au gué" is apparently a line from an old song; it means roughly "I love my beloved better." See Act I, Scene 2.

(175,3) *Kakon* means "bad (object)" in Greek.

(175,7) Regarding "Secret Note," Lacan seems to be referring to Descartes' notebooks, which were published in Latin as *Cogitationes Privatae* by Adam and Tannery in volume X of their complete works of Descartes entitled *Oeuvres*. Regarding "advances behind a mask," cf. Descartes' "larvatus pro deo," literally "I advance masked before God." Cf. Lacan's "Radiophonie" in *Autres écrits* (Paris: Seuil, 2001), 437.

(176,9) A reference to Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*.

(177,6) The Greek here is Pindar's phrase "Become such as you are"; see, for example, *Pindar: Olympian Odes, Pythian Odes*, trans. William H. Race (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 239.

(180,3) The term "paranoiac knowledge" had already appeared in print by the time Lacan published this article, although it had not yet at the time he gave this talk. See "The Mirror Stage," *Écrits* 1966, 94, and "Aggressiveness in Psychoanalysis," *Écrits* 1966, 111.

(181,1) *Écrits* 1966 reads *spectaculaire* (spectacular) here instead of *spéculaire* (specular) as most of Lacan's later texts do; *spectaculaire*

should probably be understood here in the sense of "relating to or constituting a spectacle." On Augustine, see *Écrits* 1966, 114.

(182,4) *Du complexe* (of the [Oedipus] complex) could, instead, be rendered as "of complexes."

(182,7) *Où l'expérience les a faits d'abord apercevoir* (for it was the latter that first allowed these effects to be perceived by analysis) could, alternatively, be rendered as "for it was the latter that analysis first exposed."

(185,1) This article was most recently reprinted, under the title "Les complexes familiaux dans la formation de l'individu," in *Autres écrits* (Paris: Seuil, 2001), 23–84. See especially pages 36–45.

(185,6) See Jean Lhermites, *L'image de notre corps* (Paris: Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1939).

(186,1) Aristotle's illusion is that with one's fingers crossed, one touch stimulus feels like two.

(187,8) The age of reason is usually considered to be seven by the French. However, in the text Lacan cites here (*un enfant n'est pas un homme*), "Discours sur les passions de l'amour" (attributed to Pascal), the author suggests that the age of reason rarely begins before the age of twenty.

(188,2) See Descartes, "The Passions of the Soul," in *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, 331–427.

(188,4) Here is an alternate rendition: "When man, seeking the emptiness of thought, advances in the faint gleam of imaginary space that casts no shadow, expecting nought from what might emerge from it, a mirror without lustre shows him a surface in which nothing is reflected."

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