
The accidental in Freud's repetition : 10th March 2022 : Sarah Birgani

Towards the XXth NLS Psychoanalysis Congress – Fixation & repetition – July 2022 – Zurich, Switzerland.

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Towards the XXth NLS Psychoanalysis Congress – Fixation & repetition – July 2022 – Zurich, Switzerland

Our German-speaking colleagues from the Berlin Initiative (LOB) and the Vienna Initiative (NLF) formed cartels and delved into Freud's 'Gesammelten Werken' in search of the concepts of 'fixation' and 'repetition'.

You will find them in the 'Orientation' (<https://nlscongress2022.amp-nls.org/orientation>) section.

The reference to the G.W. should make it possible to find the place and context of the quotation in the translations of Freud's work in French and English .

The accidental in Freud's repetition Sarah Birgani

"We may make use of a rule, discovered empirically, which recommends us to get the dreamer to tell us his dream once more. In doing so, he usually alters his modes of expression in some parts of it while repeating the rest accurately. The points at which his reproduction is defective owing to changes, and often owing to omissions as well, are the points which we fasten upon, because the inaccuracy guarantees a connection with the complex and promises the best approach to the secret meaning of the dream". 1

In German *Wiederholung* literally means to fetch (*holen*) something again (*wieder*). What

shimmers through in this formulation is the idea, that there is something there to reach again – again in the same way. Thus, the new, the accidental, that part of repetition, which Lacan calls in *Seminar XI Tyche*, the encounter with the real, is not inscribed in the German word *Wiederholung*.

And yet, already in Freud there are traces, where he connects the repetition to something accidental.

One trace concerns the technique of dream interpretation. Freud sometimes urged his patients to repeat the dream narrative. And lo and behold, what does Freud tell us at this point? He says that it is precisely those elements which are newly added, which are omitted – in short, that which eludes the ever-same repetition in the sense of faithful reproduction, which the analyst should be interested in. Repetition is not reproduction, Freud's choice of words in relation to repetition marks this: he writes 'similar,' 'repetition and remaking,' 'not simply repeating but continuing,' 'repeating in part,' 'repeating in a kind of revitalization.'

The repeating of an accidental.

The accidental in repeating.

So, from the beginning, Freud shows us, and with Lacan we can further elaborate this thread, that what is at stake in *Wiederholung* is exactly that which is not *wieder-geholt* (*re-fetched*).

References

1 Freud, S. (1906). Psychoanalysis and the Establishment of the Facts in Legal Proceedings, in J. Strachey (ed.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, London, Hogarth Press, pp. 109–110.

2 Lacan, J. (1964). *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis. The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XI*. (Ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. A. Sheridan), London/New York, Norton & Co., 1998.

Further texts by Sarah Birgani at www.LacanianWorksExchange.net /authors a-z (Birgani)

Availability of References

1. SE IX p99-114

[Psycho-Analysis and the Establishment of the Facts in Legal Proceedings](#) : June 1906 : [Sigmund Freud](#)

The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, v9:p97-114

Editor's Note

Tatbestandsdiagnostik Und Psychoanalyse

James Strachey

(a) German Editions:

1906 *Arch. Krim. Anthropol.*, 26 (1), 1-10.

1909 *S.K.S.N.*, 2, 111-21. (1912, 2nd ed.; 1921, 3rd ed.)

1924 *G.S.*, 10, 197-209.

1941 *G.W.*, 7, 3-15.

(b) English Translations:

'The Testimony of Witnesses and Psychoanalysis' 1920 *S.P.H.*, 216-25. (In 3rd ed. only.) (Tr. A. A. Brill.)

'Psycho-Analysis and the Ascertaining of Truth in Courts of Law' 1924 *C.P.*, 2, 13-24. (Tr. E. B. M. Herford.)

The present translation, (James Strachey), with a changed title, is based on the one published in 1924.

This was originally delivered in June 1906 as a lecture, at the request of Professor Löffler (Professor of Jurisprudence in Vienna), before his seminar at the University. There is some confusion as to the date of publication. The number of the periodical in which it appeared is stated on its front page to have been issued on 'December 21, 1907'. This, however, is certainly a misprint for '1906', since the following numbers are dated 'March 6, 1907' and 'April 29, 1907'.

The lecture is of some historical interest, since it contains Freud's first published mention of the name of Jung (p. 104).

2. See Session of Seminar XI The Split between the Eye and the Gaze : 19th February 1964 : Jacques Lacan, this site /4 Jacques Lacan (19640219 or Index of Jacques Lacan's texts) &

Session of Seminar XI Anamorphosis : 26th February 1964 : Jacques Lacan, this site /4 Jacques Lacan (19640226 or Index of Jacques Lacan's texts)

General Information, notes & references Seminar XI: The Four Fundamental Concepts: 1963-1964 : beginning 15th January 1964 : Jacques Lacan, see this site /4 Jacques Lacan (19640115 or Index of Jacques Lacan's texts).

Tyche – Seminar XI : 19th February 1964, p69-70 of Alan Sheridan's translation :

For, after all, why is the primal scene so traumatic? Why is it always too early or too late? Why does the subject take either too much pleasure in it—at least, this is how at first we conceived the traumatizing causality of the obsessional neurotic —or too little, as in the case of the hysteric? Why doesn't it arouse the subject immediately, if it is true that he is so profoundly libidinal? Why is the fact here *dustuchia*? Why is the supposed maturation of the pseudo-instincts shot through, transfixed with the *tychic*, I would say—from the word *tuché*?

Tyche – Seminar XI : 26th February 1964, p79-80 of Alan Sheridan's translation :

We cannot deny that it is within the explanation of repetition that this digression on the scopie function is situated—no doubt by Maurice Merleau-Ponty's recently published work, *Le Visible et l'invisible*. Moreover, it seemed to me that, if an encounter were to be found there, it was a happy one, one destined to stress, as I shall try to do today, how, in the perspective of the unconscious, we can situate consciousness.

You know that some shadow, or, to use another term, some 'resist'—in the sense one speaks of 'resist' in the dying of material—marks the fact of consciousness in Freud's very discourse. But, before taking things up again at the point we left them last time, I must first clear up a misunderstanding that appears to have arisen in the minds of certain members of the audience concerning a term I used last time. Some of you seem to have been perplexed by a word that is simple enough, and which I commented on, namely, the *tychic*. Apparently, it sounded to some of you like a sneeze. Yet I made it quite clear that it was the adjective formed from *tuché* just as *psychique* (psychical) is the adjective corresponding to *psyché* (psyche). I used this analogy at the heart of the experience of repetition quite intentionally, because for any conception of the psychical development as elucidated by psycho-analysis, the fact of the *tychic* is central. It is in relation to the eye, in relation to the *eutuchia* or the *dustuchia*, the happy encounter and the unhappy encounter, that my lecture today will be ordered.
