

which inspired him was physiology; the role of structural concepts was to favor causal explanations, and if they are among our most valuable tools, it is because they are situated within a genetic context."

6. [Added in 1966:] "The notion of primal differentiation is preferable to that of non-differentiation. [It] is demonstrated by the existence of systems that assure the subject a minimum of autonomy: perceptual, motor, and memory systems, and discharge thresholds for needs and affects. [W]ithout existing as a cognitive structure, the subject functions and actualizes himself successively in the needs that awaken and motivate him. [...] These functional object relations are not structured, in the sense that the subject and the object are not differentiated." Lagache, "La psychanalyse et la structure de la personnalité," 15-16.

7. The Thing (*das Ding*) here is antedated, having been introduced only in my seminar this past year, 1959-1960. But this is why the mustard jar offered all the guarantees of

incomprehension I needed in order to have it out with it.

8. It is with this question that I initiated my examination of the ethics of psychoanalysis this year, 1959-1960.

9. See *Écrits* 1966, 708.

10. See *Écrits* 1966, 793-827.

11. In a talk in memory of the centennial of Freud's birth, published as "The Freudian Thing"; see *Écrits* 1966, 401-36 [especially 417].

12. The illustration is found in *GW* XIII, 252 [SE XIX, 24]. Examined carefully, it confirms my view of Freud's aims in attending to the ego in the second topography.

13. "[T]he anonymity between the ideal ego and the superego/ego-ideal, between narcissistic identification with omnipotence and submission to omnipotence," in Lagache, "La psychanalyse et la structure de la personnalité," 46.

14. [Added in 1966:] See "Position of the Unconscious" in *Écrits* 1966, 830-50.

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The Signification of the Phallus *Die Bedeutung des Phallus*

The following is the unaltered text of a lecture I gave in German on May 9, 1958, at the Max Planck Society in Munich, having been invited to speak there by Professor Paul Matussek.

If one has any notion of the mentality then prevalent in not otherwise uninformed circles, one can imagine how my use of terms that I was the first to extract from Freud's work, such as "the other scene" (to cite one mentioned here), must have resounded.

If deferred action (*Nachtrag*), to take back another of these terms from the domain of the highbrow literati where they now circulate, makes this effort impracticable, it should be realized that they were unheard of at that time.

We know that the unconscious castration complex functions as a knot:

- (1) in the dynamic structuring of symptoms, in the analytic sense of the term, in other words, in the dynamic structuring of what is analyzable in the neuroses, perversions, and psychoses;
- (2) in regulating the development that gives its *ratio* to this first role: namely, the instating in the subject of an unconscious position without which he could not identify with the ideal type of his sex or even answer the needs of his partner in sexual relations without grave risk, much less appropriately meet the needs of the child who may be produced thereby.

There is an anonymity here that is internal to the assumption [assomption] by man (*Mensch*) of his sex: why must he assume the attributes of that sex only through a threat or even in the guise of a deprivation? In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud, as we know, went so far as to suggest not a contingent but an essential disturbance of human sexuality, and one of his last articles concerns the irreducibility—in any finite (*endliche*) analysis—of the aftermath of the castration complex in the masculine unconscious and of *Penisneid* [penis envy] in woman's unconscious.

This is not the only aporia, but it is the first that Freudian experience and the metapsychology that resulted from it introduced into our experience of man. It cannot be solved by reducing things to biological data; the very needs

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sity of the myth underlying the structuring brought on by the Oedipus complex demonstrates this sufficiently.

It would be mere artifice to invoke in this case some inherited forgotten experience, not only because such an experience is in itself debatable, but because it leaves the problem unsolved: what is the link between killing the father and the pact of the primordial law, if we include here the fact that castration is the punishment for incest?

It is only on the basis of clinical facts that the discussion can be fruitful. These facts reveal a relation between the subject and the phallus that forms without regard to the anatomical distinction between the sexes and that is thus especially difficult to interpret in the case of women and with respect to women, particularly as concerns the following four points:

- (1) why a little girl considers herself, even for a moment, to be castrated, in the sense of deprived of a phallus, by someone whom she at first identifies as her mother—an important point—and then as her father, but in such a way that one must recognize therein a transference in the analytic sense of the term;
- (2) why, more primordial, both sexes consider the mother to be endowed with a phallus, that is, to be a phallic mother;
- (3) why, correlatively, the signification of castration in fact takes on its (clinically manifest) full weight in the formation of symptoms only on the basis of its discovery as the mother's castration;
- (4) these three problems lead, finally, to the why and wherefore of the "phallic phase" in development. Freud, as we know, uses this term to refer to the first genital maturation insofar as, on the one hand, it would seem to be characterized by the imaginary dominance of the phallic attribute and by masturbatory jouissance and, on the other, he localizes this jouissance in the case of women in the clitoris, which is thus raised to the function of the phallus. He thus seems to exclude in both sexes any instinctual mapping of the vagina as the site of genital penetration until the end of this phase, that is, until the dissolution of the Oedipus complex.

This ignorance smacks of misrecognition in the technical sense of the term—all the more so in that it is sometimes fabricated. Could it correspond to anything other than the fable in which Longus depicts Daphnis and Chloe's initiation as dependent upon the explanations of an old woman?

This is what has led certain authors to regard the phallic phase as the effect of a repression, and the function assumed in it by the phallic object as a symptom. The problem begins when one asks: *which symptom? Phobia, says one.*

perversion, says another, and sometimes the same person says both. In the latter case, the quandary is evident: not that interesting transmutations of the object of a phobia into a fetish do not occur, but if they are interesting it is precisely owing to their different places in the structure. It would be pointless to ask these authors to formulate this difference from the perspectives currently in favor that go by the name of "object relations." For on this subject they have no other reference than the approximate notion of part-object, which has never been subjected to criticism since Karl Abraham introduced it. This is unfortunate given the comfort it offers analysts today.

The fact remains that the now abandoned discussion of the phallic phase, if one rereads the surviving texts from 1928-32, is refreshing for the example it sets of doctrinal passion—making one nostalgic, given psychoanalysis' decline following its American transplantation.

Were one to merely summarize the debate, one could but distort the authentic diversity of positions taken up by Helene Deutsch, Karen Horney, and Ernest Jones, to mention only the most eminent.

The series of three articles Jones devoted to the subject is especially suggestive—if only for the first sighting on which he built, which is signaled by the term he introduced: "aphanisis." For in raising, quite rightly, the problem of the relation between castration and desire, he demonstrates his inability to recognize what he nevertheless closes in on so nearly that the term, which will soon provide us with the key, seems to emerge in his work due to its very absence. Particularly amusing is the way he manages to extract from the very letter of Freud's text a position that is strictly contrary to it: a true model in a difficult genre.

Yet the question refuses to let itself be dodged, seeming to scoff at Jones' plea to reestablish the equality of natural rights (doesn't it push him to the point where he closes with the Biblical "Male and female created He them"?). What does he, in fact, gain by normalizing the function of the phallus as a part-object if he has to invoke its presence in the mother's body as an "internal object," a term based on fantasies revealed by Melanie Klein, and if he becomes still more unable to separate himself from her views, relating these fantasies to the recurrence, as far back as earliest infancy, of the Oedipal formation?

We will not be led astray if we reexamine the question by asking what could have led Freud to his obviously paradoxical position. For one has to admit that he was better guided than anyone in his recognition of the order of unconscious phenomena, of which he was the inventor, and that, in the absence of an adequate articulation of the nature of these phenomena, his followers were destined to lose their way to a greater or lesser degree.

tary on Freud's work I have been pursuing for seven years—that I have been led to certain results: first and foremost, to promote the notion of the signifier as necessary to any articulation of the analytic phenomenon, insofar as it is opposed to that of the signified in modern linguistic analysis. Freud could not have taken into account modern linguistics, which postdates him, but I would maintain that Freud's discovery stands out precisely because in setting out from a domain in which one could not have expected to encounter linguistics' reign, it had to anticipate its formulations. Conversely, it is Freud's discovery that gives the signifier/signified opposition its full scope: for the signifier plays an active role in determining the effects by which the signifiable appears to succumb to its mark, becoming, through that passion, the signified.

This passion of the signifier thus becomes a new dimension of the human condition in that it is not only man who speaks, but in man and through man that it [gz] speaks; in that his nature becomes woven by effects in which the structure of the language of which he becomes the material can be refound; and in that the relation of speech thus resonates in him, beyond anything that could have been conceived of by the psychology of ideas.

In this sense one can say that the consequences of the discovery of the unconscious have not yet been so much as glimpsed in analytic theory, although its impact has been felt in analytic praxis more than we realize, even if only in the form of people bearing a retreat from it.

Let me make it clear that my emphasis on man's relation to the signifier as such has nothing to do with a "culturalist" position, in the ordinary sense of the term—the position Karen Horney, for example, anticipated in the debate over the phallus, a position Freud described as feminist. It is not man's relationship to language as a social phenomenon that is at issue, nor even anything resembling the ideological psychogenesis we are familiar with which is not superseded by peremptory recourse to the thoroughly metaphysical notion—with its question-begging appeal to the concrete—that derivatively goes by the name of affect.

What is at issue is to refind—in the laws that govern this other scene (*in anderer Scharplatz*), which Freud, on the subject of dreams, designates as the scene of the unconscious—the effects that are discovered at the level of the chain of materially unstable elements that constitutes language: effects that are determined by the double play of combination and substitution in the signifier, according to the two axes for generating the signified, metonymy and metaphor; effects that are determinant in instituting the subject. In the process, a topology, in the mathematical sense of the term, appears, without which one soon realizes that it is impossible to even note the structure of a

It speaks in the Other, I say, designating by "Other" the very locus evoked by recourse to speech in any relation in which such recourse plays a part. If I speaks in the Other, whether or not the subject hears it with his ear, it is because it is there that the subject finds his signifying place in a way that is logically prior to any awakening of the signified. The discovery of what it articulates in that place, that is, in the unconscious, enables us to grasp at the price of what splitting (*Spaltung*) he has thus been constituted.

The phallus can be better understood on the basis of its function here. In Freudian doctrine, the phallus is not a fantasy, if we are to view fantasy as an imaginary effect. Nor is it as such an object (part-, internal, good, bad, etc., inasmuch as "object" tends to gauge the reality involved in a relationship. Still less is it the organ—penis or clitoris—that it symbolizes. And it is no accident that Freud adopted as a reference the simulacrum it represented to the Ancients.

For the phallus is a signifier, a signifier whose function, in the intrasubjective economy of analysis, may lift the veil from the function it served in the mysteries. For it is the signifier that is destined to designate meaning effectively as a whole, insofar as the signifier conditions them by its presence as signifier. Let us thus examine the effects of this presence. They include, first, a derivation of man's needs due to the fact that he speaks: to the extent that his needs are subjected to demand, they come back to him in an alienated form. This is not the effect of his real dependence (one should not expect to find here that parasitic conception represented by the notion of dependency in the theory of neurosis), but rather of their being put into signifying form as such and of the fact that it is from the Other's locus that his message is emitted.

What is thus alienated in needs constitutes an *Urvorstellung* [primal repression], as it cannot, hypothetically, be articulated in demand; it nevertheless appears in an offshoot that presents itself in man as desire (*Begehren*). The phenomenology that emerges from analytic experience is certainly of a kind to demonstrate the paradoxical, deviant, erratic, eccentric, and even scandalous nature of desire that distinguishes it from need. This fact is all too clear not to have been obvious to moralists worthy of the name since time immemorial, and the Freudianism of earlier days seemed obliged to give it its full status. Paradoxically, however, psychoanalysis now finds itself at the head of an age-old obscurantism that is even more boring as it denies this fact due to its ideal of theoretically and practically reducing desire to need.

That is why I must articulate this status here, beginning with demand, these specific characteristics of which are eluded in the notion of frustration (a notion Freud never used).

Demand in itself bears on something other than the satisfactions it calls for. It is demand for a presence or an absence. This is what the ritualist calls

relationship with the mother manifests, replete as it is with that Other who must be situated *by* the needs that Other can fulfill. Demand already constitutes the Other as having the "privilege" of satisfying needs, that is, the power to deprive them of what alone can satisfy them. The Other's privilege here thus outlines the radical form of the gift of what the Other does not have—namely, what is known as its love.

In this way, demand annuls (*aufhebt*) the particularity of everything that can be granted, by transmitting it into a proof of love, and the very satisfactions demand obtains for need are debased (*sich erniedrigt*) to the point of being no more than the crushing brought on by the demand for love (all of which is perfectly apparent in the psychology of early child-care, which our analysts/nannies have latched on to).

It is necessary, then, that the particularity thus abolished reappear *beyond* demand. And in fact it does reappear there, but it preserves the structure concealed in the unconditionality of the demand for love. By a reversal that is not simply a negation of the negation, the power of pure loss emerges from the residue of an obliteration. For the unconditionality of demand, desire substitutes the "absolute" condition: this condition in fact dissolves the element in the proof of love that rebels against the satisfaction of need. This is why desire is neither the appetite for satisfaction nor the demand for love, but the difference that results from the subtraction of the first from the second, the very phenomenon of their splitting (*Spaltung*).

One can see how a sexual relationship occupies this closed field of desire and plays out its fate there. This is because it is the field designed for the production of the enigma that this relationship gives rise to in the subject by doubling "signifying" it to him: the return of the demand it gives rise to, in the form of a demand concerning the subject of need; and the ambiguity presented concerning the Other in question in the proof of love that is demanded. The gap constituted by this enigma avers what determines it, namely, to put it as simply and clearly as possible, that for each of the partners in the relationship, both the subject and the Other, it is not enough to be subjects of need or objects of love—they must hold the place of the cause of desire.

This truth lies at the heart of all the defects found in the psychoanalytic field regarding sexual life. It also constitutes the condition of the subject's happiness there; and to disguise its gap by assuming that the virtue of the "genital" will resolve it through the maturation of tenderness (that is to say, solely by recourse to the Other as reality), however pious the intent may be, is nonetheless fraudulent. It should be pointed out here that French analysis, with their hypocritical notion of general oblativity, set a moralizing tone which, to

In any case, man cannot aim at being whole (at the "total personality," another premise with which modern psychotherapy veers off course), once the play of displacement and condensation to which he is destined in the exercise of his functions marks his relation, as a subject, to the signifier.

The phallus is the privileged signifier of this mark in which the role [part] of Logos is wedded to the advent of desire.

One could say that this signifier is chosen as the most salient of what can be grasped in sexual intercourse [*copulation*] as real, as well as the most symbolic, in the literal (typographical) sense of the term, since it is equivalent in intercourse to the (logical) copula. One could also say that, by virtue of its turgidity, it is the image of the vital flow as it is transmitted in generation.

All of these remarks still merely veil the fact that it can play its role only when veiled, that is, as itself a sign of the latency with which any signifiable is struck, once it is raised (*aufgehoben*) to the function of signifier.

The phallus is the signifier of this very *Aufhebung*, which it inaugurates (initiates) by its disappearance. That is why the demon of Aïdōs (*Sciam*)¹ springs forth at the very moment the phallus is unveiled in the ancient mysteries (see the famous painting in the Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii).

It then becomes the bar with which the demon's hand strikes the signified, marking it as the bastard offspring of its signifying concatenation.

A condition of complementarity is thus produced in the instating of the subject by the signifier, which explains his *Spaltung* and the interventionist movement in which it is completed.

Namely:

- (1) that the subject designates his being only by barring everything it signifies, as is seen in the fact that he wants to be loved for himself, a mirage that is not dispelled by simply pointing out that it is grammatical (since it abolishes discourse);
- (2) that the part of this being that is alive in the *unverdrängt* [primally repressed] finds its signifier by receiving the mark of the phallus's *Verdrängung* [repression] (owing to which the unconscious is language).

The phallus as a signifier provides the ratio [*razón*] of desire (in the sense in which the term is used in "mean and extreme ratio" of harmonic division). I shall thus be using the phallus as an algorithm and I cannot, without endlessly inflating my talk, do otherwise than rely on the echoes of the experience that unites us to get you to grasp this usage.

The fact that the phallus is a signifier requires that it be in the place of the Other that the subject *hava* access to it. But since this is not the case, then what

veiled and as ratio [raison] of the Other's desire, it is the Other's desire as such that the subject is required to recognize—in other words, the other insofar as he himself is a subject divided by the signifying *Spaltung*.

The developments that appear in psychological genesis confirm the phallus' signifying function.

This allows us, first of all, to more correctly formulate Klein's finding that the child apprehends from the outset that the mother "contains" the phallus.

But development is ordained by the dialectic of the demand for love and the test constituted by desire.

The demand for love can only suffer from a desire whose signifier is foreign to it. If the mother's desire is for the phallus, the child wants to be the phallus in order to satisfy her desire.

Thus the division immanent in desire already makes itself felt by virtue of being experienced in the Other's desire, in that this division already stands in the way of the subject being satisfied with presenting to the Other the real [organ] he may have that corresponds to the phallus; for what he has is no better than what he does not have, from the point of view of his demand for love, which would like him to be the phallus.

Clinical work shows us that the test constituted by the Other's desire is decisive, not in the sense that the subject learns by it whether or not he has a real phallus, but in the sense that he learns that his mother does not have one. This is the moment in experience without which no symptomatic consequence (phobia) or structural consequence (*Penisneid*) related to the castration complex can take effect.

This seals the conjunction of desire, insofar as the phallic signifier is its mark, with the threat of or nostalgia based on not-having [*manque à avoir*].

Of course, its future depends on the law introduced by the father in this sequence.

But one can indicate the structures that govern the relations between the sexes by referring simply to the phallus' function.

These relations revolve around a being and a having which, since they refer to a signifier, the phallus, have contradictory effects: they give the subject reality in this signifier, on the one hand, but render unreal the relations to be signified, on the other.

This is brought about by the intervention of a seeming [*paraître*] that replaces the having in order to protect it, in one case, and to mask the lack thereof, in the other, and whose effect is to completely project the ideal or typical manifestations of each of the sexes' behavior, including the act of copulation itself, into the realm of comedy.

These ideals are strengthened by the demand they are capable of satisfying.

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ing, which is always a demand for love, with the reduction of desire to demand as its complement.

Paradoxical as this formulation may seem, I am saying that it is in order to be the phallus—that is, the signifier of the Other's desire—that a woman rejects an essential part of femininity, namely, all its attributes, in the masquerade. It is for what she is not that she expects to be desired as well as loved.

But she finds the signifier of her own desire in the body of the person to whom her demand for love is addressed. It should not be forgotten, of course, that the organ that is endowed with this signifying function takes on the value of a fetish thereby. But the result for a woman remains that two things converge on the same object: an experience of love that, as such (see above), ideally deprives her of what the object gives, and a desire that finds its signifier in this object.

This is why one may find that a lack of satisfaction of sexual needs, in other words, frigidity, is relatively well tolerated by women, whereas the *Verdrängung* inherent in desire is less in them than in men.

In the case of men, on the other hand, the dialectic of demand and desire engenders effects regarding which one must once again admire Freud's sureness in situating them, in the precise articulations on which they depend, under the heading of a specific debasement (*Entwürdigung*) in the sphere of love.

If, indeed, man is able to satisfy his demand for love in his relationship with a woman, inasmuch as the phallic signifier clearly constitutes her as giving in love what she does not have, conversely, his own desire for the phallus will make its signifier emerge in its residual divergence toward "another woman" who may signify this phallus in various ways, either as a virgin or as a prostitute.

There results from this a centrifugal tendency of the genital drive in the sphere of love, which makes impotence much harder for him to bear, while the *Verdrängung* inherent in his desire is greater.

Still it should not be thought that the sort of infidelity that might appear to be constitutive of the masculine function is characteristic of him alone. For if one looks closely, the same split can be found in women, with the proviso that the Loving Other [*l'Autre de l'Amour*] as such—that is, the Other insofar as he is deprived of what he gives—is difficult to see in the backcourt where he replaces the being of the very man whose attributes she cherishes.

One might add here that male homosexuality, in accordance with the phallic mark that constitutes desire, is constituted along the axis of desire, while female homosexuality, on the contrary, as observation shows, is oriented by a dispointment that strengthens the axis of the demand for love. These remarks should be refined through a reexamination of the function of the mask, insofar as it dominates the identifications in which refusals of demand are resolved.

These relations revolve around a being and a having which, since they refer to a signifier, the phallus, have contradictory effects: they give the subject reality in this signifier, on the one hand, but render unreal the relations to be signified, on the other.

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The Signification of the Phallus

The fact that femininity finds refuge in this mask, by virtue of the *Verdrängung* inherent in desire's phallic mark, has the curious consequence of making virile display in human beings seem feminine.

Correlatively, one can glimpse the reason for a characteristic that has never been elucidated and that shows once again the depth of Freud's intuition: namely, why Freud claims there is only one libido, his text showing that he conceives of it as masculine in nature. The function of the phallic signifier touches here on its most profound relation: that by which the Ancients embodied therein the *Nous* and the *Logos*.

Note

1. The demon of Shame.

In Memory of Ernest Jones: On His Theory of Symbolism

And bring him out that is but woman's son
Can trace me in the tedious ways of art,
And hold me pace in deep experiments.

—Shakespeare, *Henry IV*, Part I, Act 3, Scene 1, 45–47

Far from the funeral pomp with which our departed colleague was honored in accordance with his rank, here I will devote to him a memorial of our solidarity in psychoanalytic work.

While it is homage that suits the position of our group, I will not leave out the emotion that wells up in me from the memory of more personal relations.

I will punctuate three moments of the latter. Their contingency reflects a man who was very diverse in his vivacity: his unmitigated imperiousness toward the newcomer I was in Marienbad, that is, at the last of our council assemblies before a vacuum struck the Viennese sphere, a superficial interaction whose sting can still be seen after the war in one of my writings; the familiarity between us during a visit to the Plat in Elstred, where, among the letters by Freud spread out on an immense table for the first volume of the biography he was writing, I saw him anxious to share with me the seductions of his labor, until the hour of an appointment with a female patient, kept even in his retreat, put an end to it, the haste of which, in its compulsive tone, led me to see the mark of an indelible yoke; and lastly, the grandeur of his July 1957 letter to me in which his apology for not coming to see me at my house in the country invoked the pretext of stoically suffering only to accept it as the signal of a lofty competition, death hot at the heels of the work to be completed.

The organ that is the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, and which owes everything to Ernest Jones, from its duration to its quality, allowed to show