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# On the Aim and End of Analysis in the Lacanian School

## Summary:

This paper explores the connection between identification, the end of analyses, and the question of the analysis of resistance, not only from the point of view of the well-known Lacanian concept of the resistance of the analyst, but also from the concept of the analysis of the repressive unconscious that I derive from the work of both Freud and Lacan. Within Lacanian psychoanalysis, the final aim of the analysis of identifications is the end of the identification with the analyst. When identifications are abandoned, the subject finds his or her identity (which is no-identity) in the larger symbolic structure and the wondrous emptiness of unbeing (*désêtre*). I examine whether the aim of analysis is to analyze/strengthen ego defenses and weaken/'master' the drives, or to weaken the ego and produce transformations within *jouissance*. The resistance of the analyst as the analyst's wish to be recognized as a 'master' or a 'subject supposed to know' keeps the treatment in the imaginary dimension of the ego ideal rather than carrying the analysis further in the direction of the subject and subjective destitution. The support given to ego defenses in the early phase of the treatment is only a strategy within the transference.

'The termination of analysis occurs when one has gone around a circle twice; that is to say, to rediscover that which holds one captive' Lacan (1977–1978).

## Introduction

The question regarding the end of analysis implies something beyond the final moment of a process. In fact, the way the final phases of analysis are conceived, influences the direction of psychoanalytic treatment from the very beginning.[1]

In Spanish and English the same word is used to describe an aim or objective (*fin/end*) and the end of something (*fin/end*). Thus, it is the aim or objective concerned which allows for the definition and/or the termination of an activity. For this reason, in this paper both of these themes will cross-fertilize and interact with one another i.e. the aim of analysis and the termination of analysis. Depending on how the aim is defined, the aim and the end may be similar or different.

For example, if the aim of analysis is to build the identity of the ego and the therapeutic alliance, then, given this premise, it is not surprising that psychoanalysis would end with the identification with the analyst. In the case of the object-relations school, if the aim of analysis is the development of secure attachment (Bowlby), good-enough mothering (Winnicott), or the acquisition of the alpha function (Bion), then it is not surprising

that analysis would end with the identification with the good object (the Kleinian analyst).

In contrast to these perspectives, within Lacanian psychoanalysis, the aim of the analysis of identifications is the end of the identification with the analyst.

Any conception of analysis that is articulated – innocently or not, God only knows – to defining the end of the analysis as identification with the analyst, by that very fact makes an admission of its limits. Any analysis that one teaches as having to be terminated by identification with the analyst reveals, by the same token, that its true motive force is elided. There is a beyond to this identification defined by the relation and the distance of the *objet petit a* to the idealizing capital I of identification... This crossing of the plane of identification is possible (Lacan 1964, p. 272).

Any one who has lived through the analytic experience with me to the end of the training analysis knows that what I am saying is true... (p. 273)

For the fundamental mainspring of the analytic operation is the maintenance of the distance between the I-identification—and the *a* (p. 273).

It is in as much as the analyst's desire, which remains an *x*, tends in a direction that is the exact opposite of identification, that the crossing of the plane of identification is possible, through the mediation of the separation of the subject in experience (p. 274).

The aim of the desire of the analyst is to eventually work himself/herself out of a job by becoming dispensable rather than indispensable. When the analysand no longer identifies with the analyst, the analyst becomes dispensable and the analysis has reached its logical conclusion. Lacan argues that at the end of a Lacanian analysis the analysand identifies with the *sinthome* rather than with the analyst.

Psychoanalysis goes around the circle of identification twice. Identifications have to be first recognized and deconstructed and then relinquished, or taken away. This process is part and parcel of the path by which the desire of the subject is recognized and differentiated from the desire of the Other or from the desire to be recognized by the Other. When identifications (with the analyst and other significant figures) are abandoned, the subject finds his or her identity in the larger symbolic structure and the wondrous emptiness of unbeing (*désêtre*) according to Lacan, 1966-1967). I link the concept of unbeing and what Lacan called the *sinthome* to the third form of identification defined by Freud and that Lacan called the unary trace. Lacan has called the *sinthome* a new form of ego but I do not find this to be a necessary feature of Lacanian theory. One can think of the unary trace, and the third form of identification, as a type of ego but this categorization may be misleading since a trace represents a partial form of identification in contrast to the usual conception of the ego as a total object. If anything, the unary trace may be better described as a form of non-self or non-ego (rather than ego or self) that nonetheless undergirds and re-knots the symbolic functioning of the subject. The unary trace is a form of identification based on non-identification (zero as One and One as zero). What remains of the ego after a critical analysis and deconstruction of identifications, can only be articulated in the form of the negative. Following Lacan, I also link the unary trace, to the letter, to the *objet a*, to transformations of *jouissance*, as well as to permutations of the Name of the Father.

## **Terminable, Interminable**

Given Lacan's call for a creative return that retroactively re-founds the meaning of Freud's work I will begin by examining Freud's approach to the subject. It is important to remember that Freud's discussions with Ferenczi regarding Ferenczi's 'active technique' played the role of a precipitating event in motivating Freud to write *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* (1937). In the history of psychoanalysis, the question of introducing technical modifications is often linked to attempts to abbreviate the process of the cure. The criteria used to determine the termination of analysis becomes a question of the utmost importance.

In my opinion, the meaning of Freud's title establishes the guidelines of a clinical program. Freud does not propose an option or alternative but quite the contrary he emphasizes that an analysis is both terminable and interminable. And this does not apply to some analysands and not to others but to each and every one of them. On the other hand, an analysis has to have an end because otherwise it would be interminable. And if regular sessions end how can analyses can be interminable?

Freud remarked that when he began his psychoanalytic practice he did not know what to do in order to have his analysands conform to what he termed an analytic or therapeutic pact. Conversely, once Freud had fine-tuned the analytic situation he did not know what to do in order to terminate the analysis.

In the early years of my psycho-analytic practice I used to have the greatest difficulty in **prevailing** on my patients to continue their analysis. This difficulty has long since been shifted, and I now have to take the greatest pains to induce them to give it up (1913, p. 130).

In *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* Freud proposes two criteria by which to determine whether a treatment can be ended and considered successful: if the symptoms have been resolved and whether enough unconscious material has been evoked and resolved in the treatment and the transference relationship so as not to have concerns about possible relapses in the future. The latter point is important because only if the treatment has had a therapeutic effect on the symptoms could one consider the treatment as having produced robust and long lasting effects. Otherwise, the symptoms could have temporarily resolved for reasons unrelated to the treatment. In this case, the analysand could remain prone to relapses in the future.

However, Freud stops short of claiming that a treatment could have future preventive power. Although, the treatment produced the remission of the symptoms, the analyst or psychoanalysis cannot predict accidental or environmental factors that could have an adverse or regressive effect on an analysand's condition in the future. Psychoanalysis has an effect on symbolic causality but not on causality in the real (*automaton* and *tuche*, respectively, according to Lacan [1964]).

According to Freud, the resolution of the symptoms is directly related to two factors: either the strength of ego defenses or the weakness of the drives. The reverse is true for the persistence of the illness or the failure of the treatment: they are due to the weakness of ego defenses or the strength of the drives. What is ambiguous in Freud's description is the meaning of the strength or weakness of defenses. By the weakness of defense Freud means not only the absence of necessary defenses, but the predominance of unconscious defenses. Paradoxically, unconscious defenses weaken the ego although unconscious defenses emanate from an unconscious part of the ego. Based on the same premise one could make the opposite argument: the ego is so strong that it has roots in both conscious and unconscious processes and it is this strength that is responsible for the development of symptomatology. Freud was a believer in conscious and rational forms of repression or of 'mastery' of the drives. He only rejects unconscious forms of repression as being counter to healing and the therapeutic aims of psychoanalysis.

In this Freud is a traditionalist and his work is co-extensive to the more general process of secularization of religious principles characteristic of modernity. Freud pictures the ego and the drives in equivalent terms to the distinction between good and evil. However, we also know from his theory that ego defenses can also be problematic and that not much happens in life without the drives. In addition, the repressed amounts to more than simply the drive as a kind of evil inclination that needs to be tamed by morality and reason.

Freud's theory is more nuanced and less moralistic/dualistic when he speaks of the repressed in terms of repressed conflicts, traumas, or developmental fixations. In this context he emphasizes the principle of undoing rather than redoing ego-repression and how the repressed needs to emerge and be resolved/worked through in the course of the treatment. The more the unconscious played a central role in the treatment, the more likely the resolution of the symptoms will be. However, the unconscious encompasses both the Ucs. of the repressed and the Ucs. of the repressive.

When symptoms are not resolved, then this is due to the intensity of the symptom or to the *jouissance* of the symptom (pain/pleasure linked to it). The *jouissance* of the symptom in Lacan is equivalent to the intensity of the drive, in Freud's work. Freud attributes the failure of the treatment to either the *jouissance* or the strength of the drive or to the failure of defenses. The first is what leads Lacan to develop the notion of the *sinthome* tied to the *jouissance* or the Real or drive dimension of the symptom. For Lacan since the drive cannot be extinguished, the symptom continues after analysis in the form of the *sinthome*. However, the *sinthome* also has an aspect of defense built into it. The *sinthome* allows *jouissance* but also contains it by re-knotting the three dimensions of experience (RSI).

Before proceeding on to the analysis of the question of ego defenses an important point must be made in relationship to the question of the stubbornness or the insistence and repetition of the symptom. This point is usually made to invalidate psychoanalysis as a form of effective treatment. The case of the Wolf man is often cited as an example of a fraudulent or false claim on the part of Freud. It is claimed that Freud claimed that he had cured the Wolf man of his symptoms when in fact his symptoms persisted throughout his life. However, Freud was clear on the process by which and how the Wolf man returned to treatment, with him and others, and had a way of accounting for the successes and failures of the treatment. The Wolf man spent over 70 years in analysis and this example is used to discredit psychoanalysis as a form of medical or psychological treatment.

What is often overlooked is that there are plenty examples of failed treatments in other psychiatric treatment modalities. Experienced clinicians know that medications are never as effective as reported in empirical or controlled statistical studies. Symptoms of depression and anxiety persist despite years of anti-anxiety or antidepressant medications, not to mention the case of antipsychotic medications. Medications are less expensive but not necessarily more effective than psychoanalysis. The same can be said of behavioral treatments. If one focuses attention on the patient and the symptom, by writing down the symptom as it manifests on a daily basis, for example, or seeing the patient several times a week for the purpose of suppressing the symptoms via various kinds of behaviors that strengthen defenses (exercise, entertainment, relaxation, etc.), then this intervention will indeed have an effect on the symptom, but the question is for how long or how robust the modifications will be? It is kind of unbelievable that people think that symptoms can be reliably eliminated for good without any consideration given to the patient's history, family, relationships, sexual life, or passions.

### **The Analysis of Ego-Defenses: Obstacle or Treatment?**

According to Freud when the ego is 'crippled', regular ego defenses cannot defend against anxiety, explosiveness, addiction, or depression, just to name a few examples. Freud attributes the intensity and the pathogenic nucleus of these symptoms to the quantitative factor of the drives. But the question that follows from this assumption is whether the buildup of healthy defenses reinforces unconscious defenses or allows for them to be undone and modified? Freud answers this question when he says that the better is the enemy of the good. If by building healthy defenses the analysand feels good he/she will not want to do the painful work of undoing unconscious defenses. It is ego strength not weakness that is an obstacle to the cure.

When considering the obstacles to effective treatment, Freud asks what are the obstacles to building stronger defenses rather than what are the obstacles to undoing repression or to revealing/disclosing the truths about the subject's desire. He considers that he had already done the latter with limited success in the early period of psychoanalysis. Lacan (1955), for his part, wants to go back to the early Freud but does not address the legitimate reasons that Freud gave for his later focus and theorizing on ego defenses. However, when focusing on the defensive process rather than the repressed content, Freud is more interested in strengthening ego defenses than in finding a new way of working with or undoing unconscious defenses and resistances. Lacan's answer to Freud's omission is to shift the analysis of resistance to the analyst. I shall return to this further on.

Freud writes as if generosity and kind-heartedness, for example, were qualities associated with the alleged harmony of the ego, whereas miserliness and hostility are quantities of the id. In the developed character, the strength of the ego prevails over the strength of the id. This refers to the question of identification involved in the formation of the ego ideal. According to Freud (1900 and 1923), the ideal qualities of generosity and kindness are formed by identification with what is opposite to the tendencies/quantities of miserliness and hostility that have been abandoned. A child identifies with the generosity and kindness he/she is shown by his parents. However, such generosity and kindness may have been there all along since Freud grants that at the beginning the ego and the id evolve out of a single matrix. The actions of parents strengthen certain traits and weaken others.

The duality between the ego and the id is never completely attained and if it is, it still remains in relationship to a non-dual dimension between them. The ego is never pure and undefiled and the id is not only impure and defiled. Often there is more honesty in the id and in desire than in the presumptions of the ego tainted as they are with narcissistic forms of self-love and self-righteousness. The ego lives by the fantasy of being the master of his/her own house. It is this phantasm of being or becoming someone important, of replacing or vindicating the father, which represents an attempt to close or suture the gap in the ego. It is this attempt that leads to a division rather than a unity of the subject. The ego lacks the object that would make him/her a master. The true master is not a master or is the emptiness above the crown of power.

But to get to the emptiness beyond the crown of power, the subject has to work through the quantitative factors that were associated with the imaginary projects of the ego: anxiety, loss, lack, grief, and anger. Although these quantitative factors divide the ego, they contain useful and pure qualities needed to produce a psychical state that does not spontaneously occur within the ego or at least is usually found obstructed within the imaginary dimensions of the ego. It is the combination/amalgamation between the quantitative id factors and the qualitative factors associated with the ego that taken together lead the subject towards the emptiness of both ego and object. I link the qualitative factors in the ego to what I call 'It' (*das Ding* or the no-thing) as the emptiness of the subject of the Real that reveals or gives access to symbolic understanding and new permutations/realizations of the symbolic structure. As Lacan pointed out, following Lao Tse, within the Symbolic the subject knows without knowing that it knows. This unknown knowing of the subject or of a non-ego differs from the unconscious part of the ego of the defenses.

Both ego identifications and the identifications with the partial objects of the drive equally close the gap within the ego and produce an imaginary form of unity. These two forms of identification represent two of the three identifications outlined by Freud. The third form of identification is the unary trace. The unary trace is a form of disidentification, or non-identification, and a form of undoing the 'entification' of the id (id-entification as signifying a form of reification of the id). In the 'It' of the unary trace, the subject becomes a metaphor, rather than an ego identification, and the object becomes a form of *jouissance* linked to the same metaphor, instead of to an infantile derivative of the drive or the primal objects.

Freud was optimistic that better, shorter, and less expensive treatments can be achieved by giving more help to the ego. The latter signifies to strengthen the ego. However, better therapy that will strengthen the ego is the therapy that suppresses/represses the symptom, or masters the drive, in the style of common sense and behavioral interventions. Ego psychology goes hand in hand with behaviorism or cognitive therapy. Freud intends to replace pathogenic unconscious repression with current, flexible, rational, and healthy defenses.

But can better repressions be developed without conjuring up the repressed? Does treatment fail because better defenses cannot be built due to the weakness of the ego or because repression has not been undone?

Ego defenses do not allow pain and want displeasure over in the shortest amount of time. So how is it then that a stronger ego is good for treatment? Would a stronger ego tolerate more pain or would want the pain over in the shortest amount of time? This is a significant contradiction. In fact it is the ego that needs to be let go and replaced by a different organizing principle. It is the symbolic order and the subject of the Real that can allow for the signification of desire, for its manifestation and clarification, and at the same time for

symbolization that places desire and *jouissance* squarely within the dimension of the Law. One could object that this is a square desire and argue in favor of the romantic and postmodern notion of drives and desires that are independent of any law. However, this leads to postmodern chaos, catastrophe, early deaths, and suicides, if not perversion. The borderline and narcissistic conditions are ample evidence that such notions lead to problems with impulse control, unbridled individualism, and the illusions of a sexuality not determined by the regularities of social or natural laws.

How can the ego be the part of the analysand that the analyst can ally with in order to further the cause of the treatment, if the ego is one of the biggest obstacles to the cure? Related to this is whether the ego works under the pleasure principle or the reality principle and how the pleasure principle is defined: as the organizing principle of the drives or of the ego? The notion of the therapeutic alliance, for example, relies on the link between the ego and the reality principle, not between the ego and the pleasure principle. Freud defined the reality principle as the temporary tolerance and acceptance of displeasure in order to achieve a more lasting, stable, long-term satisfaction. But this definition contradicts the definition of the ego as being intolerant of displeasure. The desire to avoid pain interferes with the possibility of more long-term solutions to mental problems. The ego has to be willing to put up with some temporary pain in order to be released from suffering. The ego is an obstacle to this objective.

The ego of the defenses is also the ego of narcissism because the pain involved in making the unconscious conscious, necessarily involves the recognition that the ego is not the master of the psyche. It is a mistake to think of the ego as the dominant mental agency. This is what Lacan (1969) called the master's discourse that interferes with the discourse of the analyst and the aims of psychoanalytic treatment.

The undoing of the defenses requires the recognition that the subject does not know a lot about himself/herself and that some of the historical fictions/memories/narratives may be incorrect or at least fantasized and that the symbolic Other is also required to restore continuity to experience.

The challenge of psychoanalytic treatment is how to achieve the twin goals of helping the analysand accept suffering as part of the analytical process and at the same time maintain a positive transference in the analytical relationship. There are some built-in gratifications in the transference that make this tolerable or possible. The analyst does not provide recognition or support for narcissistic identifications, and the empathy with ego defenses needs to be short lived. But what takes their place? The answer lies in the dynamics of transference love, another aspect of the practice of analysis that Lacan widely illuminated. I will return to this in a section up ahead.

Another requirement of this therapeutic task is not only the suspension of ego defenses, or the tolerance of a narcissistic injury, but also the deconstruction of the super-ego. By this I mean, that whatever the analyst does, it should not be intended as a form of punishment, since this is what the illness is thriving and depending on.

Freud established equivalence between the ego and a text, when in fact the better comparison may have been between the unconscious and a text. Lacan (1957a, 1957b) calls the unconscious 'the discourse of the Other'. It is this discourse that is 'riddled' with holes, allusions, avoidances, distortions, etc. Freud recognizes the workings of censorship in the corruption of a social text but in analysis terminable and interminable, he can't find a counterpart for censorship in the ego, or when he does, he only thinks of it in terms of the pleasure principle.

In the earlier theory proposed in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud (1900) had a bit more elaborate theory of censorship than the appeal to the pleasure principle. In addition, both Freud and Lacan ignore the fact that Freud early on used the pleasure principle to explain the sexual drive and the tendency towards wish fulfillment. It is this double aspect of the pleasure principle that is related to the unconscious as a discourse. The unconscious not only represents drives but also represents the unconscious tendency towards symbolization and censorship.

For Freud pathogenic defenses weaken the ego or produce what he calls an ego-modification that affects and interferes with the course of treatment. Pathogenic defenses cripple the ego or healthy ego defenses and function. This formulation would work if it were not for the fact that pathogenic defenses are also fixated at the level of the ego or, more strongly, emanate from the unconscious ego, according to the Freud of the Ego and the Id. It is a case of the ego crippling the ego. So, again, do we want to strengthen or weaken the ego to further the cause and success of psychoanalytic treatment? One possible answer that Freud gives is that we want to weaken the unconscious ego and strengthen the conscious ego. This would also work if it were not for the fact that the conscious ego is also an obstacle to the treatment. The ego says: 'I'm fine, I am not so bad after all, I am feeling better now, and I would rather not talk about that'.

Both the unconscious and conscious ego and super-ego need to be deconstructed and replaced by the subject of the unconscious and the subject of the Real, that I identify with the unary trace. The beyond the ego, is the beyond the pleasure principle, whether one thinks of the beyond as the suffering that needs to be accepted instead of repressed, or of the pleasure of the good and sublimation rather than the good of pleasure in terms of an inconvenient *jouissance* or a destructive pleasure.

Bion (1970) speaks of this in terms of the negative capability as a capacity for patience, faith, and the tolerance of frustration. This capacity is also beyond reason or at least certain types of reason or certain logical types. However, Bion does not posit a self, ego, or subject linked to this capacity. Bion and his followers speak of it in terms of a quality of the analyst as an analyst of achievement or as a psychic state or reality linked to intuition. Here intuition is a human mental capacity or psychic function that is the non-understanding side of understanding, or the side of understanding that allows human beings to perceive and access a dimension of experience or beyond experience that is beyond understanding.

The intuitive psychic state is a function or a place where human understanding intersects or meets a larger dimension of mind that is beyond conscious understanding. This larger dimension knows without knowing that it knows. In this sense we can speak of an unconscious function or at least of a function beyond consciousness, or a beyond a sense of self or ego that can also be recognized as a locus of truth-value. However, as soon as this function is recognized as a true or Big self in a relative sense, then it becomes a major fiction like the ego was for Freud. Big mind or the unconscious, and even the self, is best described as no-self. Of the three categories of self, ego, and subject, the subject is the one that best captures the sense of the human subject being something temporary, impermanent, evanescent, and insubstantial. In this I believe that Lacan was essentially correct and for this alone I can call myself a Lacanian.

## **The Analysis of the Formations of the Repressive Unconscious**

The reason that symptoms persist is due to the *jouissance* at play, that is to say, the pleasure involved in even the most horrible forms of psychological pain. A person wants to both cling to the pleasure in the symptom and avoid the pain in the same, a kind of impossible state of affairs. It is the avoidance of unpleasure that constitutes one of the main motives behind defenses. On the other hand, it is the seeking of pain that constitutes the second opposite motive for preserving the symptom. The ego wants to suffer for two reasons: to cling to pleasure or *jouissance* and satisfy the need for punishment or pain. The latter represent two aspects of *jouissance* and of the super-ego: the demand to enjoy and the equal demand to suffer, two aspects of passion or pathos.

One of the key manifestations of ego defenses is denial or defensive rather than creative negation. The ego says, 'I rather or I don't want to talk about that, and if you insist I can make life very unpleasant for you'. The patient routinely avoids talking about certain subjects (topics and people) to the point where the analyst finally gives up asking and begins to collude with the patient's defenses. This leads to stagnation and interrupted or partially successful/unsuccessful treatments. This example underscores the convergence of the aim with the end. If a treatment is going nowhere, the treatment may end without having reached its logical

end point. In this sense, termination refers to a phase in treatment that comes after a significant amount of unconscious material has been evoked and worked through. If a treatment ends without having passed the beginning or middle phases of treatment then this is not an end in either sense of end as aim or conclusion. The end simply means the stopping of the sessions.

It is always unclear in Freud's texts, as in life, whether the problem/obstacle is the strength or the weakness of ego defenses. Sometimes Freud writes as if the treatment would have been more successful if the ego defenses were stronger and the ego was able to successfully suppress a symptom, the *jouissance* and impetus of the drive, or the Oedipus complex. In this, Freud's approach to treatment is quite similar to common sense and to behavioral treatments that depend on various successful defenses against symptoms. Sometimes Freud also writes as if pathological defenses/repressions in childhood had altered the ego's ability to use healthy defenses. Unconscious repression stemming from childhood alters the ability of the ego to use conscious or rational defenses against the symptom/drive. At other times Freud refers to the need to alter the ego defenses in the treatment. Here he attributes unconscious repression to the ego rather than identifying the ego with health, rationality, and consciousness or self-awareness.

In my opinion, this is what led Lacan to reject the analysis of ego resistances altogether, and to identifying the latter with an unsuccessful attempt at repression, and social conformity, equivalent to behaviorism and adaptation to the environment. In 'Variants of the Standard Treatment,' Lacan (1955) critiques the analysis of resistances in so far as it relates to the school of ego psychology and the analysis of the ego. He believes that this variant of the treatment ignores the analysis of the formations of the unconscious that truly represents the right treatment for the symptoms.

Lacan emphasizes that the analysis of resistance is always within speech and that defenses are taking place within discourse with all its distortions. Lacan contrasts the analysis of speech and discourse from what Fenichel said when he wrote 'It is up to the ego to understand the meaning of words'. For Lacan the truth-value of words is found in unconscious desire and not at the level of the ego.

However, Freud's ambiguity with regards to the ego and to defenses may continue to be a source of exploration and of new discoveries that may advance the course and future of clinical psychoanalysis. In this regard, Lacan may have thrown out the baby with the bath water. I agree with Lacan that the problem is the strength and not the weakness of the ego, and that the imaginary ego needs to be deconstructed and let go in the process of analytic treatment. However, I believe, that precisely for this very same reason, the analysis and confrontation of defenses remains a crucial aspect of analytic treatment and of an analytic understanding of psychopathology.

Lacan often emphasized how desire is intrinsically intertwined and entangled with the function of the Law. The Law for Lacan functions unconsciously and unconsciously produces the effects of repression. The Law not only conceals but also reveals and produces desire. We want what we can't have and don't want what we have or can have. The formations of the unconscious, or mental formations, are compromise formations between unconscious desire and unconscious defenses.

When an analysis omits or refuses to speak or symbolize something, not only he/she refuses a particular wish, thought, or emotion, but also refuses to recognize a narcissistic injury resulting from the loss of an object: a loss that is central to the constitution of the subject. Lacan associates this misrecognition with denial or negation (*Verneinung*) as an unconscious function of the ego (ideal-ego/ego-ideal).

Now for Freud denial, as a defense, and as a form of negation, was not unconscious. Unconscious repression utilizes denial, and denial is a form of the negative, but in denial the repressed is intellectually accepted and unconsciously negated at the same time. The ego can recognize his/her division and the existence of repression but deny that it applies to the ego at a particular circumstance. In denial, negation is not unconscious since it requires a deliberate action/decision, a judgment or choice by the subject. The ego says: 'I am fine, I am not lacking anything, have not lost anything or anybody, I am not 'less than,' and I don't



want anything that I can't have'.

When the ego says, 'I am fine, I am in control', although these statements are conscious affirmations, that deny their opposites, the fact that they are denying their opposites, is preconscious, while the fact that the ego is protecting a narcissistic injury resulting from the castration complex, is entirely unconscious.

The alteration of defenses in treatment depends on the ability/capacity to alter pleasant and unpleasant feelings and to accept or seek what is or is not true within experience, or within the subject or the object. The analysis of resistances is not an ego analysis per se because the actual question is to analyze the repressive unconscious, or unconscious repression, and not only the repressed and the return of the repressed.

In his paper on negation, Freud (1925) describes a defensive reflex and repression under the pleasure principle as preliminary forms of judgment. The pleasure principle or what he calls the original pleasure ego attributes a good or bad quality to something, and 'wants to introject into itself everything that is good and to eject from itself everything that is bad' (p. 237). The decisions of the pleasure principle or the pleasure ego thus play the decisive role in operations determined by instinctual factors such as swallowing and spitting that are also motor operations that establish the first distinctions between inside and outside.

However, the decisions of the pleasure principle can also be understood as the laws of the unconscious. And in this regard, the laws of the unconscious and the pleasure principle are equivocal: they serve both the purposes of wishful thinking or pleasure and object seeking, and the defensive moves of pain/anxiety avoidance and of unconscious displacement and distortion. Seeking pleasure is the other side of avoiding pain as well as vice versa.

This is the archaic aspect of the unconscious that organizes the primitive relationship to the mother and the partial object (breast). However, early on, and via the paternal metaphor, the unconscious becomes embedded with the structure of desire, the name of the father, and the structure of language. 'Repression may without doubt, be correctly described as the intermediate stage between a defensive reflex and a condemning judgment' (1905c, p. 175).

The process of affirmation and negation at work in language seems to be intrinsically related to the acquisition of language via emotional and symbolic parent-child relationships. It is the parent as Other that affirms or denies certain actions of the child, which are then found duplicated in the child's own relationship to itself. The identification with the opposite, as a union of opposites, is internal to the process of identification. Objects are abandoned or negated/repressed through the process of identification at the root of the formation of the ego-ideal.

I have asserted above that dreams have no means of expressing the relation of a contradiction, a contrary or a 'no'. I shall now proceed to give a first denial of this assertion. One class of cases which can be comprised under the heading of 'contraries' are, as we have seen, simply represented by identification-cases, that is, in which the idea of an exchange or substitution can be brought into connection with the contrast. (1900, p. 318).

Separation is achieved via identification with a parent but the identification is the affirmation of a contrary wish or desire to that which is being negated/repressed via the identification. The boy represses his hostility and homoeroticism towards the father by identifying with the Name of the Father. If the mother rejects the Name of the Father, then it is the hostility towards the father and the Law that will prevail. The girl identifies with the Name of the Father by accepting the absence of the imaginary phallus and identifying with the symbolic mother and suppressing the hostility and homoeroticism towards the same. The identification resolves the opposition between parent and child but also the opposition between contrary feelings held by the child toward the parent. Instead of homosexual love, for example, there will be a love for ideals or ideas. Instead of hostility, there will be a hate of contradicting ideas. In the case of homosexuality, the same could be said for heterosexual love. The ideals substitute for the parent, but also for the censored love and hate felt

towards the parent of the same or opposite sex.

The child and the parents are figures for the dialectical movements of matter and mind at work within instinctual reflexes, within the unconscious structure of language, and within the acts and decisions associated with conscious speech and the function of judging the subject matter of thoughts. When someone using conscious negation as a defense, says no this is not my mother or father, here the yes becomes no, or something that I rather forget or repress, and the no becomes a way of saying yes to repressive identifications with the opposite.

Freud also distinguishes between repression and negation by saying that negation is the way that censored thoughts can make their way into consciousness. Negation facilitates the undoing of repression by allowing a thought into consciousness and denying it at the same time. But the act of conscious negation is a repetition of the similar unconscious act that led to repression. The affirmation and negation that take place in judgment are similar in form to the affirmation and negation that takes place in language and in the dream-work. The latter represent the interplay of the primary forces of being and non-being, life and death, from which the conscious intellectual functions of judgment originate.

Dream distortion and dream displacement, for example, are due to the agency of unconscious censorship. Dream censorship is an integral part of dream representation, the same way that negation is an integral part of linguistic representation. In a psychoanalytic conception of symbol, a symbol represents something that has been repressed/negated. In language, negation works differently: there is a substratum of negation or erasure of the relationship to the object, at the same time that the object is represented. The object is not repressed. The object elephant, for example, is represented in absentia by the signifier elephant, but is also partially represented or misrepresented as a difference in relationship to other words. But within letters there are primitive relationships to objects that the letters no longer refer to. These objects have been erased or repressed. For example, certain letters initially bore an iconic resemblance to a particular animal. The spirit of the animal passes onto the letter and comes to animate the energetic sparks contained within the letters.

In dreams this process is reversed, instead of words replacing images and objects, it is images that negate dream thoughts and words. The same happens with conscious perception of visual reality. The world is perceived as existing out there and 'as if' names were contained within the essence of things. How naming and language conditions perception remains ostensibly unconscious.

The human mind/psyche, or spirit, is constructed by dialectic of negation and affirmation, between words and images, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic. Affirmation represents the desiring aspect of the dialectic or psyche, whereas negation, repression, or censorship, represents the ethical dimension of the same. At the same time, the two are interdependent or mutually condition one another.

The unconscious or conscious aspects of the mind are two figures, metaphors, or opposites that manifest the same dialectic found in the paternal metaphor (name of the father over the desire of the mother), and the relationships between parents and children. The unconscious can represent either the repressive or repressed force, and the same is true for consciousness.

Freud gave contradictory accounts of how the unconscious represented repressed desires and consciousness represented the power of ethical repression or conscience. In the same way he said that there was no negation in the unconscious, but then was forced to explain how repression took place unconsciously. He gave accounts of how the super-ego, as the unconscious repressive force within the ego, could itself be repressed by the ego, and at the same time distinguished a form of unconscious that was not repressed. This latter form of unconscious approximates his view of the preconscious, as being unconscious in a descriptive sense.

The dialectical movements between desire/drive and the law, between conscious and unconscious experience, between the repressed and the repressive, parallel the unconscious structure of language. The act

or the decisions of speech involve the same choices and judgments, of affirmation and negation that reveal or conceal the truths about thought, words, and desire.

Language reproduces the symbolic functions of Culture, the Law, and the paternal metaphor. Although in one sense the dream-work can be identified with the primary process of energy in dreams (free flow of energy-immediate satisfaction-unlimited condensation and displacement) characteristic of the repressed unconscious; in another sense condensation and displacement, as the laws that regulate the dream-work in the unconscious, are the laws of the unconscious censor or of the repressive unconscious.

The repressive unconscious is another name for the laws of the signifier or of the word, of the Other, the symbolic father, and the locus of the Code, as Lacan called it following the linguistics of Jakobson. A code is a system of constraint and possibility, or inhibition and facilitation that exists within language, the psyche, the brain, and the family. In addition, the laws of the Code, or of the Other, are not necessarily within the subject, but rather is a Third Dimension between sender and receiver, dream thoughts and dream images, thoughts and words, self and other. Lacan considers the signifier as ruled by the pleasure principle, because he considers the pleasure principle as the principle of defense and repression and not as what stimulates the sexual drive as a craving for pleasure/pain or for *jouissance*. Instead he associates, *jouissance* with the death drive.

The Law is a transitive experience, since the subject is both the subject and the object of repression. The decision to say or not to say something is co-extensive or parallels the process of symbolization and of affirmation and negation in the unconscious.

In *The Ego and the Id* (1923) Freud wrote that 'the faculties of self-criticism and conscience-mental activities, that is, that rank as extremely high ones- are unconscious and unconsciously produce effects of the greatest importance' (p. 26). Yet in other texts Freud writes that unconscious repression is only a preliminary form or stage of judgment. The question at stake here is not only whether unconscious repression involves the faculties of self-criticism and conscience, but also Freud's conception of conscious and unconscious repression. I have pointed out that Freud regarded conscious repression as necessary and positive or rational, and unconscious repression as irrational and negative. It is unclear in his quote whether he regards an unconscious conscience as something rational or irrational akin to his concept of a malevolent super-ego.

Freud derives his belief that 'in unconscious thinking no process that resembles judgment occurs', from the fact that in dreams a term can be transformed into or be represented by its opposite. A similar word can be used to express antithetical meanings. Freud does not consider Hegel's concept of 'sublation' or '*aufheben*' whereby something is eliminated only insofar as it has come to situate itself in a unity with its opposite. Freud does not consider the operation of negation in sublation and therefore claims that there is no negation in the unconscious. The determinate being of an element in the dream image is the unity in which its opposite has been preserved/negated.

In another texts (Freud 1905a, p. 200), he seems to be acutely aware of this process when he writes:

Contrary thoughts are always closely connected with each other and are often paired off in such a way that the one thought is excessively intensely conscious while its counterpart is repressed in the unconscious. This relation between the two thoughts is an effect of the process of repression. For repression is often achieved by means of an excessive reinforcement of the thought contrary to the one that is to be repressed.

The transformation of a dream-thought into its opposite in the dream-content is precisely a way of repressing that presupposes the activity of negation. The element in the dream-content is affirmed at the same time that the censored dream thought is negated. Moreover, the function of affirming or negating applied to a pair of opposites is extrinsic to the opposition itself. The attribution of a quality or value (positive/affirmative versus negative) will depend upon the meaning given to the terms by a wider associative context or assemblage.

'Old' could be strength or weakness/lack and represent either having or not having something. The same could be said of the signifier 'young'. Whatever signifier comes to signify lack will be negated, and its opposite affirmed. With human beings the pleasure principle is modified by cultural and linguistic modifications that will reduplicate the duality found within the pleasure principle. Both desire and defenses will be unconsciously signified within language and visual perception.

Finally, although the analyses of unconscious defenses, narcissistic injuries, and formations of desire, are crucial for the treatment and elimination of symptoms, and for improving the social, sexual, and productive function of the subject, the structure and division of the subject and of the psyche will not end or disappear with the ending of the treatment. This is the interminable aspect of analysis. However, analysis also allows the subject to experience the division and duality of the psyche in the non-dual way of the One that includes the not-one as well as the Other. A metaphor of this would be the Möbius strip where the inside goes into outside, the conscious into the unconscious, the law into desire, as well as vice versa. The subject becomes capable of perceiving from more than one register or perspective at a time.

### **Narcissistic Injury and Resistance**

Lacan associates the misrecognition of the division of the ego, with denial or negation (*verneinung*) as an unconscious function of the ego. The ideal-ego and the ego-ideal in their own ways both attempt to cover over or conceal the basic division of the subject. The ideal ego covers the division by using body images whereas the ego ideal does it using ideas and words. Although division and splitting is common to all subjects it nonetheless constitutes a narcissistic injury since narcissism is always represented by an ideal of unity/fusion, completion, and even perfection. From this perspective, narcissistic injuries and defenses are not exclusively or intrinsically linked to so-called pre-oedipal phases of development. In addition, early injuries to the ideal-ego are not necessarily due to lack of maternal empathy or mirroring behavior, as is commonly believed.

The specular image, as a body image, and as the ideal ego, incorporates and resolves the intensities of the life and death drives that were linked to the absence and presence of the breast. The body image replaces the presence of the object and compensates for its absence.

At the same time the life and death drives continue to be revealed and manifest through the ideal ego as a new mental formation. The absence of the *objet a* will appear in a blank spot, defect, flaw, or something missing within the body image. If the absence does not appear, then this leads to a grandiose self-image, linked to an idealized good breast and to the mother's imaginary phallus. The absence of the absence also leads to developmental arrest because the self does not move in the direction of the Other. Absence of the object, together with a prior presence, lead to the formation of the ideal ego, as a necessary body image, but the absence of the object within the image also stabilize the body image and prevents it from becoming a grandiose image. In the papers published by the International Psychoanalytic Association, the differences between the ideal, the ego ideal, and the grandiose self are often confused and all interpreted in terms of fusion states with the mother (Lichtenberg, 1975; Hanly, 1984).

In addition, fusion with the mother, leading to a grandiose self, is also confused with neglect, deprivation of 'emotional sustenance', or the lack of maternal desire for the child. The lack of maternal desire is also confused with the mother's conditioned desire for a fantasized object. All of these factors are seen as determining either a form of depressive ego-weakness, or a defensive grandiose or false self.

The absence of a specular image as an ideal ego fixates the ego at the level of the partial object and render it subject to the *jouissance* of the Other and to persecutory psychotic anxieties as well as primitive forms of fusion with the partial object. There is no self or subject at this point. This condition can be produced either by privation of maternal desire or by the foreclosure of the name of the father in the mother's mind. Either

too much or too little amounts to the same result in this regard.

The denial of the division of the ego takes two forms: one related to the ideal ego, the other to the ego ideal. The first includes the denial of any bodily or physical limitations or flaws. The denial can also take the form of narcissistic overestimations of the body in all its glory. An example of this would be the case of an analysand who dreamt that she was a superwoman. Her associations included a sense of the great dexterity of her body and a memory of her father recognizing her as the 'birth of perfection'.

The second denial of the division of the subject is linked to the ego-ideal. Here the subject finds its unity via identification with ideas, ideals, and relationships that seem to complete the subject. An example of this is an analysand who considered her relationship as idyllic and a source of great happiness, and yet had a repeated dream where she was with different men and feared that her partner would find out and risk losing the relationship. She denied that she had any ambivalence about partner and feared exploring the possibility that she might be too dependent or fused with the partner. Any exploration of ambivalence immediately translated into a fear that the analysis could cause an end to the relationship.

In general the division of the subject appears when the other does not recognize or misrecognizes the identifications of the ego either with bodily or specular images or with the mass or aggregate of ideas that constitute the ego-ideal. It is important for the analyst not to be fooled by the strength or unity of the ideal ego or ego ideal. At the same time the analyst needs to be able to be empathic with the defenses in a purely strategic sense. The judo style flow with ego defenses, while preserving the awareness of their defensive purposes, enables the analyst and the analysand to work with and through the divisions of the subject. The apparent support of ego defenses is purely strategic for purposes of their eventual dissolution and transformation into the symbolic functioning of the subject.

## **Castration**

In *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* Freud also points out how the joint efforts of the analyst and analysand to recognize and work through resistance run aground upon the rock of castration.

Although castration is prefigured in the loss of the breast, the hole in the image of the ideal ego, and the loss of feces, strictly speaking, the fear of castration is what triggers the development of the super-ego and the ego ideal. Retroactively, castration, can also determine the meaning of the loss of the breast, and the lack in the body image. An example of the first, and of identification with the partial object of the drive/desire, would be the sense of loss and dispossession that small breasts can trigger in women, and the castration anxiety that the small breasts of a lover can trigger in some men. The example of people who go to medical doctors requesting the removal of a hand or arm would be a glaring example of castration producing a retroactive effect on the body image. The super-ego retroactively affects the image of the body in the way described in the Gospels: 'If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off ' (Mark 9:38-48).

According to Lacan, Freud discovered the existence of a true complex when he came across what has been called the problem of castration. It is well known, that by using that term, the founder of psychoanalysis attempted to account for a threat that in fact is never fulfilled. Castration as a developmental complex has nothing to do with emasculation or an effective bodily loss. But then why is castration so decisive and marking, to the point that Freud calls it the living rock which signals the unsurpassable limit of any analysis?

Castration is effective by virtue of being a symbolic condition. Symbolic here refers to a theory or to what Freud calls the sexual theories of childhood. Freud says childhood theory, not fantasy, fiction or lie. Freud presupposes that childhood sexual theories regarding the difference between the sexes are an invariable step in the constitution of the subject. Castration does not arise from the inside as a phase or an ontogenetic stage of development but rather comes from the *field of the Other*. The mother is perceived as lacking something that she wants from the father and the same is true for the father. The mother lacks the imaginary phallus,

while the father lacks the *objet a* (of love and drive) the mother is perceived as having.

For the child the *objet a* had already been lost prior to the encounter or missed encounter with castration. The child had been an *objet a*/phallus for the mother, and the breast, as well as the specular image, had been an *objet a* for the child. At the time of castration the *objet a* will be transfigured into a phallic object that causes the difference between the sexes. However, the mother does not disappear as an object of love, since she is also the father's love object. In addition, the father through the gaze and into the ego ideal also figures as an *objet a*. The father has what the mother wants but also the recognition that the child wants. In fact with castration, in the case of heterosexuality, the child represses the aggressivity and homoeroticism towards the parent of the same sex while at the same time both parents are preserved as love objects.

The Other is revealed as both complete and incomplete. The complete or imaginary aspect of the (f)Other is the one that threatens castration, or in other words, the one that generates the lack or loss that refers to the anecdote of the castration threat. The Other will take something away from or reveal a lack in the subject. On the other hand, the (m)Other is herself incomplete or inconsistent or has something missing which refers to the anecdote of femininity as the absence or lack of the phallus.

Given this, what does the Freudian limit of castration imply? According to Freud's understanding, the analysis of the male (I would say masculinity) does not go beyond a point the passing through of which would signify a giving in, a submission into passivity before the father. Said conflict would be equivalent to the castration complex provoking all the consequent duels, challenges, combats, rebellions and ingratitude which usually are expressed as stagnation and a worsening of the analysand's condition. Correspondently, the analysis of the female collides with the demand for the phallus the impossibility of which makes for varied dissatisfactions and complaints if not for plain depressions.

### **Castration is Beyond Oedipus**

According to Lacan castration is a genuine complex. Based on Freud's writings on femininity, Lacan argues that castration is the logical premise that then and only then as a defensive consequence generates what before Lacan had been called the Oedipus complex. From a Lacanian perspective Oedipus becomes a myth and no longer a complex. Moreover, in seminar VIII 'On Transference', Lacan states that Oedipus is a dream of Freud and should be interpreted as such. What is implied? Oedipus is repressive before it is repressed. The Oedipus story and the rivalries and passion concerned conceal the truth that desire is established as a function of the law and prohibition—the incest prohibition being the paradigmatic example of all prohibition. As it is written in the Letter by Paul:

The sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies...I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, do not covet (*Romans 7:7*).

In the case of Paul, the Law is rejected for causing the very problems that it is invoked to cure. On the other hand, the rejection of the Law also causes the elimination of desire, and therefore raises the severity of the Law to a level previously unprecedented within the Jewish religion (for example, the absence of a celibacy ideal for the priesthood within Judaism). Castration and the prohibition flowing from it compel one to desire. In addition, the fact of the partiality of desire imposes a limitation that the subject finds difficult to accept. The resistance to desire appears to follow from a neurotic conflict, between the law and desire but, in fact, it is a desire not to desire because the law of castration itself causes desire. In this sense the very posing of a conflict between the law and desire may be seen as defensive in and of itself. I shall return to this later on.

### **Can One Go Beyond Castration?**

The answer is yes. Lacan with legitimate ambition proposes to go beyond castration. This new aim is associated with a central tenet of Lacanian clinical practice: the question of *the resistance of the analyst*. The analysand is teaching us that the person is not resisting via the symptoms but that something is resisting through them. It is desire as a primordial definition of the subject which is resisting. And desire must resist in disguise before the rule of censorship because in general terms, desire is systematically reduced, negated, inverted, retroactively undone, attributed to somebody else (the other), and so on and so forth.

The resistance of the analyst is something else: it is resistance to listening, to intervening (the horror of the act as Lacan calls it) and especially it is resistance to set aside the wish to function as the analysand's wished for ego-ideal. The analyst instead functions not with his/her ego-ideal or his/her formal professional identity, but with what Lacan calls the 'desire of the analyst'. The desire of the analyst is neither the countertransference nor the vocational desire to work as an analyst. Rather it is the difficult attainment (which is no-attainment) of a psychical position that is characterized by the intention of directing the desire of the analysand first towards the analyst but then turning it toward others. The desire of the analyst is something like a second degree desire which differs from the common and 'human all too human' (Nietzsche, 1878) 'desire of being desired'. What is at stake here is that the analyst on the basis of his or her desire succeeds in overcoming the resistance to work in favor of becoming dispensable to the analysand and working through the mourning thereof.

### **The Beginning and Middle Phases of Analysis**

The end of analysis is played out and prepared from the beginning in accordance with the aim of the analyst. If the aim of analysis is not resisted, then analysis will be regulated by the desire that defines the analytical position and the psychical state of the analyst.

The desire of the analyst is the function or capacity that enables the analyst to work with the transference of the analysand, and to redirect transference love both towards as well as away from the analyst. Ultimately it is the desire of the analyst that carries an analysis to its end beyond the rock of castration.

Lacan (1974–1975) says that the neurotic 'believes in his symptom'. The neurotic understands that the sign/symptom is trying to say something not yet understood. The symptom is an enigma, therefore. Put differently: she knows that there is something she does not know and is certain that if that "knowing" were to be known the cure would follow. The analyst therefore is localized in Lacan's terms as the *subject supposed to knowing* (the S.s.S. position)[2] what the analysand ignores. It is the unconscious knowing of the analysand that is being attributed to the analyst. Contrary to what would be expected, the neurotic is not looking for the person of the analyst but for that 'knowing' which he/she ignores. The analyst becomes the subject attributed to knowing but it could also be a Magician, Astrologer, Alchemist, Healer, Shaman, etc. in so far as they present themselves as carriers of a 'knowing' which is lacked by the subject. And as soon as a subject is being attributed to knowing the basis for the transference has been established. Therefore, the transference is defined by 'unknown-knowing' and not by conscious knowledge or by feelings or affective states. Affects are subordinate to knowing according to the following characterization: I love, whom I presuppose to be a subject of knowing; I hate, whom I withdraw this supposition from.

To assume the analytical position the analyst must first:

- 1) ignore[3] or not be attached to what he/she knows in order to apprehend the singularity of a new analysand and
- 2) with respect to what he ignores intend to understand it.

This double game reveals one of the richest paradoxes of analysis: although the analysand supposes the analyst knows many things about him or her, in truth the analyst ignores everything about it.

The unknown-knowing is situated within the analysand. Granted that without the analyst, the unveiling of the unknown becomes impossible. Such is then the *via di levare* (by way of extracting or taking away) which Freud (1905b) talked about: namely, to be like a sculptor who chips away the stone in order to make the appearance of the sculpture possible by following the lines of the material itself rather than the designs of the artist. But the analysand (and suggestive/behavioral treatments) is searching for the *via di porre* (way of superimposition or putting on). The analysand offers/gives his/her self as a canvas upon which the analyst may draw or offer some brilliant designs. The analysis installs the analyst in both the SsS position and that of the ego ideal. Just as in love, one loves in the other that which one lacks in oneself in order to reach one's own ideal. The other of love is who allows me to deny what I lack. I am concerned here with a narcissistic type of bond or union that reveals what is deceiving about all love. In truth, ordinary dual love is to want to be loved. And if I am loved by an ego-ideal then I am an ideal-ego. This follows what Freud said regarding the childhood desire to be one's own ideal. This is an aspect of the relationship between the ideal ego and the ego ideal.

Thus, when Kohut & Wolf (1978) and Baker & Baker (1981) note that some narcissistic analysands did not experience him as a separate object or even a separate body, he is only discovering a narcissistic characteristic of love or Eros itself. The object or the other is expected to be an extension of the subject precisely because such other has been situated in the place of the ego-ideal or ideal-ego. The ideal ego or the alter ego, as they refer to object love, can be conceived as a mental image of this or that body. Thus, this other body, which is an extension of my body, is what allows me in the imaginary to complete what I think (albeit unconsciously) I lack in my own body. In the love of the object, the other as object, is what the subject desires in order to conceal his/her own incompleteness of being. To put it differently: the desire and love of the object as it relates to sexuality cannot escape what has been called a narcissistic type of bond or union. This would not be a characteristic of 'selfobject needs' only found in narcissistic character disorders. In addition we are referring here to a fundamental lack of being which in Freud's theory is intrinsically interwoven with sexuality, the castration complex and the symbolic function of the phallus. In this case the concern with failure has more to do with the inevitably lost object of metonymic desire (not need) which becomes symbolized as a loss at the level of the subject than with whatever symbolic object-love historical parents had or did not have to give or not give.

But the most decisive point has not yet been made. A neurotic is a specialist in the art of becoming the object of the demand of the Other. Of course that without being willing to pay the price for it or recognizing that this demand of the other is unconsciously emanating from the neurosis itself. Therefore the defining formula of the neurotic is that he/she situates the demand of the other uppermost. And what does he think this Other wants from him/her? That he/she be just like the Other to the point of nullification. From this follows the decisive character of the identification that the analysand comes to look for in the analysis. And if one falls into the trap of neurosis by offering counseling, guidance, self-disclosure and the like, one is – despite all good intentions – only aimlessly swimming in the depth of the neurosis without further recourse. In summary, the identification with the analyst which many believe to be a formula for the final phase of analysis implies nothing but the stagnation in one of the stages of the process. In this scenario the analysis becomes interminable.

Ego identification with the analyst has more to do with the neurosis itself than with what Greenson (1978) called a realistic object relationship characterized by the empathic alliance with an analyst achieved during the initial stages of an analysis. Greenson states that humanness consists of giving insight and understanding in an empathic and serious fashion. But as shown with Lacan this knowing and understanding is a basis for the transference. From another perspective, empathy and the alliance with the analysand runs the danger of becoming an imaginary reinforcement of the defensive ego which analysis is supposed to deconstruct. The suffering of the analysand is commonly connected to secondary or false presenting problems which often function as some of the repressive substitute ideas which keep repressed and unconscious contents away from consciousness. In this context the *demand* made upon the analyst is to be empathic and understanding of the analysand's problems as presented by the analysand and his or her ego defenses. In addition, the patient initially wants to speak about what she or he wants to talk about; an empathic analyst should respect



the patient's agenda or the defensive selection of material. Thus, it should be remembered that the alleged alliance is being established with the ego of the defenses themselves. Finally, if the demand of the analysand is actually about being loved and recognized, the task of the analyst does not end with an offering of the image of the analyst as an auxiliary ego and an explanation of where the parents of the analysand failed.

Therefore, if the demand of the analysand directs the transference towards identification with the ideal, the desire of the analyst should attempt to break-up such a situation. The analyst has to cultivate a meditative state beyond the crown of power and authority represented by the ego-ideal. In his/her own analysis, the analyst has to have reached a state beyond the ego-ideal in order not to wish to be such for the analysand. Transference love represents the analysand's resistance aimed at erecting an ego-ideal or a complete Other in the figure of the analyst. This transference resistance defends against the lack in the subject as well as in the Other. When the ideal (I[O]) is deconstructed back into a relationship between the subject and the *objet a* in the fundamental fantasy (\$?a), then the subject becomes capable of accessing his/her own symbolic knowing. Eventually, the ego ideal (I[O]) is replaced by the figure of the fantasy, and when the fantasy is traversed it transforms into signifier of the lack in the Other (S[Ø]), or the objet *a* as a letter, and ultimately into the figure of the double torus (8) representing the Real emptiness of subject and Other alike.

When the analyst renounces to be in the place of the ideal and does not respond to the demand of the analysand, then in that void the analysand's fundamental fantasies will become apparent. The analysand not only wants that the analyst tells him/her what to do or not do, a demand of a demand, but also demands that the analyst give him or her the signifier of the phallus as well as the object of love and of the drive. Finally, the analysand also wants to become and give the analyst the object that the analyst desires, lacks, and needs. The analysand wants the analyst to demand this object from him/her.

It follows from the above that the analyst's position/state is that of the silence of the Buddha, or of the stoic who does not respond (*ataraxia*)[4] and/or that of who responds in surprising or unexpected manner to the many ways in which the analysand unconsciously sets up the analytical situation so as to widen the reach of his/her demand.

It is well known that Freud (1912) prescribed the fundamental rule of free association as well as different forms of advice regarding the direction of the cure. The latter consist of a limited series of restrictions as to not to educate or legislate or impose sublimations or have sex with the analysand and so on and so forth. But having said all this he then subscribes to Ferenczi's (1928) elasticity principle where obviously one finds included the sticky question of the length of the sessions.

Freud (1913) established a distinction between advice (*Ratschlage*) and rule (*Regel*). With respect to the direction of the cure two different factors are discernable. First, a series of variables (counsel, advice) that allows a certain margin of uncertainty, indefiniteness, and creativity. Second, the formulation of what is non-negotiable and constitutes the foundation of psychoanalysis: the rule of free association. If this distinction is read retroactively one discovers that advice does not acquire the character of being fundamental. What is fundamental? The term does not only indicate that something is important but also clearly connotes a reference to the foundation of a structure. Contrary to indications or varied forms of advice which may or may not be more or less negotiable, the rule of free association constitutes the founding rock of psychoanalysis.

The analyst should not even ask the analysand to speak about himself but simply to speak. Even worse, speak and say whatever foolishness may come to your mind. Analysis creates an original situation where foolishness (*bêtises*) may be neither criticized nor made marginal. Here we find the equivocal genuine trap of the analyst: speak foolishly because through foolishness the core of your being will be revealed. What is fundamental arises not out of a conscious intention but out of whatever speech element may break the homogeneity of the conscious ego. The fundamental rule establishes an analysis as the practice of listening for the '*jouissance*' that speaks between the spaces of what the prattle is intending to communicate.

But what does the analyst offer of himself by prescribing the rule of free association? For one thing, the analyst transmits to the analysand two things: 1) I know so much that whatever you say I will interpret; and 2) I love you so much, that I do not require of you even the most minimal form of verbal performance. Put differently: according to item #1, the analyst lays the foundation for exercising the S.s.S. position. According to item #2, already being loved for his/her 'knowing' the analyst becomes a perfect *erastes* or lover relating to a beloved *eromemos* or analysand.

Lacan (1960–1961) uses the Greek categories in the seminar VIII, on the subject of the transference, in order to account for what he calls the *metaphor of love* as it occurs in the psychoanalytic cure. If we speak of metaphor, we are speaking of substitution with respect to the reciprocal substitution that takes place between analyst and analysand in relation to the places of *erastes* and *eromemos*. In other words, the lover must become lovable or beloved (analyst) and the beloved turned into a lover (analysand). The analyst/ego-ideal becomes *Erastes* or lover by the prescription of the fundamental rule as if it were a love declaration. But how does one emerge from this situation in order to work in the direction of the end of analysis?

In *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921), Freud establishes a very close link between love and hypnosis. Since the psychoanalytic cure can be viewed as a love story – as genuine and deceptive as any other; how avoidable is the conclusion that hypnosis has an important role to play in such a process? The servitude of love requires that love be demanded just as the hypnotized is begging to be ordered, healed, or satisfied. Thus, one becomes subordinate when elevating a needed Lord to a position of control and domination. Hypnosis, like the proverbial serpent, is a recurring presence that must be mastered in order to avoid being fascinated by its power. Again, the question becomes how to renounce the power granted by the cure and the fine-tuning of the analytic situation.

Herein lays the end of analysis that (beyond castration) can be rendered effective on the basis of the analyst's desire. The desire of the analyst leads to the suspension of certainty, the relativity of the senses, and towards the founding senselessness/emptiness that originates us. The frustration of demand and the ending or cutting of sessions is also part of this process. Last but not least, interpretations should not be pedagogical explanations that attempt to inflate a 'small ego book' by means of defensive psychological recipes. Interpretations are surprises that make room for what is equivocal. Interpretation is a type of true intuition not requiring of the analysand's skill, ability or schooling. However, it does depend on how the analyst turns and returns to such work in the transference.

By means of the above the analyst separates himself from the ego-ideal of identifying, like the child, with the father in order to occupy the place of what Lacan denominates the *objet a*. Here the ego ideal reverts to the ideal ego, and the ideal ego reverts to the partial *objet a* that was a residue/substitute for unborn infinite Life. With birth the fate of infinite life is to be lost and for its substitute object also to be lost (*objet a*). Such object represents loss and separation in so far as this is necessary for the constitution of the subject. In this way, the analyst will be stripped away from the place of the father, the S.s.S., the ideal and the indispensable *Eromenos*.

Thus, it is possible to understand that the conflict with which the analysand entangles the analyst by means of the transference neurosis and the Freudian limits which point to castration and its accompanying rivalries, arguments, dissatisfactions, ingratitude's, etc., do not yet constitute true limits. The conflict still continues a theme and a plot which allow for the concealment of a Void or Emptiness that Lacan (December 10, 1959 in Seminar VII) calls the *pain of existence*. In this respect the imaginary fixation to the wish to murder the father or mother serves the purpose of avoiding contact with the abyss of the Real as Emptiness. Emptiness is not to be 'a-voided' but rather accepted and realized as true being rather than as absence (relative nothingness).

The experience of the pain of existence does not lead to nihilism or skepticism. On the contrary, circular rubbing against emptiness, perfection and imperfection, finitude and infinity, wholeness and incompleteness or '*holeness*,' leads toward the One, energizing the possible word or unary trace of all who speak. It becomes

possible then to set aside the pretension that one has been allocated the worst in the distribution of the *jouissance* of life. When mutating the subjective position, one abandons the myth of guilt and interdiction by accepting the impossibility of the *jouissance* of the Other. The latter *jouissance* implies the fantasy that the Other enjoys something inaccessible to the subject. For example: the mother in the Oedipal myth.

To sum-up: what is especially or actually implied in forbidden *jouissance* (which otherwise may be possible if the prohibition is transgressed) is the confrontation with the fact that the *jouissance* of the Other as such does not exist. In addition, *jouissance* itself or the Other *jouissance* neither exists *nor* does not exist. *Jouissance* does not not exist, or immortal Life is beyond is and is not. Herein are joined the two fundamental determinants of psychoanalysis: sex and death.

### **To Terminate: the Interminable**

When how and why does an analysis end? Let us return once again to our starting point in order to take this time another converging road. The analysand transforms into what at the end of analysis? Lacan gives a strange response to this question. The analysand transforms into an analyst. But does this mean then that after all the analysand did in fact identify with the ideal? Not if the analyst was able to let go of himself/herself by going beyond identity or identification via the deconstruction of the ego ideal and the ego. The symbolic subject or the true turning word and the desire of the analyst imply a transformation of *jouissance* or sublimation in the consciousness/unconscious of the analyst. It is this transformation that facilitates a transformation in the *jouissance* of the analysand. In this sense there is a mind-to-mind transmission not based on identification that does not transform the analysand into a professional analyst. Rather, the analysand uses their own transformation of *jouissance* for whatever symbolic purposes or ideals they may have.

The analysand has attained the corresponding subjective position/state as well as the type of social linkage which the position/state of the analyst may generate. It is not that the analysand has identified with the analyst and had decided to mimic his/her every gesture. It has more to do with the fact that the practice and work of listening to the ways of the Unconscious produces a similar subjective position/state in the analysand. Such subjective destitution (Lacan, 1967) or benevolently depersonalized psychical state is attained by a series of modifications, mutations and permutations of ideational, affective, and bodily processes and activities. Nonetheless, the analysand has to discover this truth in his or her own psychical structure and not by mere identification with the analyst.

The possibility that the analysand may be able to listen in a singular way to himself/herself serves as a guarantee that the analysis may in fact be interminable. Therefore if there is self-analysis, such only begins when an analysis with the Other has ended. All in all, this realization of senselessness, as a new metaphor of analysis by means of which the analysand becomes an analyst, succeeds in producing a subjective awareness able to re-cognize desire without confounding or hiding it behind the demand of the Other. The subject then may disregard the Name-of-the-Father precisely because he/she knows how to use it.

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## Notes:

[1] This paper was previously published as a chapter of *The Emptiness of Oedipus* (Moncayo 2011).

[2] This is my translation of Lacan’s *sujet supposé savoir*. A. Sheridan translated it as *the subject who is supposed to know*. However, such translation does not underscore the fact that the subject is not the source of ‘knowing’, or that there is no subject of knowledge; rather it is the subject who is being attributed a knowing. Sheridan’s translation emphasizes the subject whereas in mine the subject is secondary to knowing. As in the case of the English word ‘understanding’, the subject is standing under this unknown-knowing. Lacan also distinguishes between what he calls the referential knowledge of science and what I am calling in this paper the contextual ‘knowing’ in the analytic situation. This latter form of knowing would not be characterized by cognitive or secondary ego-processes.

[3] This attitude is in agreement with what Medieval philosopher and theologian Nicolas de Cusa denominated *docta ignorantia* and contemporary Korean Zen teacher Soen Sa Nim termed ‘don’t know mind’.

[4] A calm or imperturbable mind. Equanimity or impassivity in the sense of inner-mastery or freedom from being controlled by disturbing emotions.

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