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Longing for the Father

1

Vatersehnsucht: This is how Freud designates [1] the first relationship – primal, archaic in the most literal sense – indispensable for the constitution of identity (of an individual or an ego). In response to this unrepresentable longing, we have only substitutes: the ego ideal, God, the leader, as well as “father” in all the senses of the word.

Of course, Freud knows, as we all do, that longing – nostalgia – tends toward the unattainable, not to say the impossible. The Greek root (composed of “home” and “ache”) alludes to the pain of an impossible return. The German word refers to an obsessive tension for which there is no release. Freud’s expression says it all: the Father has not come about. It is not his place to exist, even though his role or his figure is necessary. Although Freud never says this explicitly, he often comes very close to suggesting it. If the Father does not exist, the constitution of any hierarchically structured group – in the strongest sense of the term: archaic sacrality – is based on a false substitution. On principle, society organizes itself around a substitution [2] of its own principle. In other words, society is essentially an-archic. [3]

If society is anarchic and is, inevitably, always threatened or haunted by dispersion or dissociation, we must ask how the smallest association is possible. Freud dealt with this question in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, *Totem and Taboo*, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, *Moses and Monotheism*, as well as in other texts from time to time. It was one of his major preoccupations after 1921 (the year that his first book was published).

In the title *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, we should note the use of the co-ordinating conjunction, which indicates not simply a connecting, but indeed, a mutual influence. The question of groups must be connected to the ego, which in turn cannot be dissociated from that of groups. Moreover, a chiasmus can be seen here: psychology more obviously applies to the ego, while applying it to groups can seem a hazardous proposition. As for the analysis of the ego – that is, its psychoanalysis – it must take the group into account. How one element is transformed by the other is what the book aims to work out. Its intention is nothing less than to examine how the group and the ego, seemingly opposed, and even mutually exclusive, are, in fact, part of each other.

The longing for the Father – its inanity as well as its persistence – will be shown to be what drives this double and interminable movement, in regard to which the Mother, on the contrary, will reveal herself to be the space in which it unfolds.

2

The group [4] (or the crowd) as Freud uses the term introduced by Le Bon, is distinct from “race” or from “a people”. The latter is based on heredity and on what is inherited; it produces a civilization or a culture, and therefore customs, traditions, etc. The group or the horde, on the other hand, is a gathering not based on common origins but created by a situation, or it is a distinct organization within a nation, although it is a part of it (like the army or the Church). The horde is not constituted based on a specific origin; it arises spontaneously or arbitrarily, but it is not “indigenous” in the literal sense.

This distinction is at the heart of the problem: how does a group take shape without a particular origin or identity? That is, how did the first human group come into existence? This questioning led Freud to study totemic societies, where he found signs of the constitution of a people on the basis of what he had defined as a primary relationship with a hidden origin. A totem is always an ancestor: it designates or represents the ancestor. A group does not know its ancestor, nor can it designate or represent him.

In more precise terms, a group is an entity whose creation or origin is simultaneous with the representation of an ancestral origin. In *Group Psychology*, Freud’s reasoning makes its way toward this co-originary. In the process, he must deal with the question of the individuals composing the group. To be more exact, we need to understand how individuals can compose something together. Freud struggles to elucidate how this problematic composition is possible. From the point of view of the individual or the ego, this composition is impeded by ego autonomy. From the collective perspective, the composition lacks clear definition, since entities with no distinctive traits coalesce into a group. Indeed, the group reveals all kinds of erasures of individual autonomy.

In short, Freud reexamines the question of what Kant called “*the unsociable sociability*”. Schopenhauer illustrated it using the fable of the porcupines quoted in *Group Psychology (VI)*. [5] It is indeed the question at the heart of the entire socio-political reflection of modernity: how is it possible to build a society?

3

In Freudian terms, and taking into account the book published two years later – *The Ego and the Id* – we can say that the question comes to concern how an ego separates itself from the id, and how, once it has separated itself, the ego can meet another ego. This formulation complicates the question, which now involves not only the presumption of an autonomous individual, but also questions the origin of this individual, and thus his autonomy.

In all the previously mentioned texts, Freud strives to put this autonomy in perspective, or to show its limits. The ego is never completely separate from the id (like the conscious from the unconscious). After all, it is only a “surface” of it. There are several egos that all communicate with an id which seems to belong to each of them, and is, at the same time, the shared by all of them. The central question in *Group Psychology* concerns what Freud calls identifications, that is, the possibilities of communication (of contagion, of hypnotic relation) not associated with an object, but with a relation (or a contact, a suggestion) between egos which appear similar to each other. There is a sameness of egos (a sameness of selves) which makes identification possible.

Here, we can venture to add a comment to Freud’s argumentation, about the double meaning of the word “identification”. Aside from “putting oneself in the place of another”, identification can mean the constitution and definition of one’s own identity. Is it conceivable that an ego can only separate and become distinct if it identifies with another? This is the question that must be answered.

4

As it happens, the id has certain characteristics that could help us arrive at an answer.

The id, borrowed from Groddeck, originates in its turn from Nietzsche's *Selbst* [6] This is not an "oneself" (*sich*), but a "self" brought back to itself, which is different because "oneself" does not contain the idea of the same. On the contrary, the *Selbst*, Freud wrote in a posthumous note, is endowed with a *Selbstwahrnehmung*, a perception of itself which, although indistinct, clearly incorporates sameness.

In other words, we can say that the id considers itself a locus of possible identities, that is, of distinctions between same and same – since it has within itself the aspect of the *Selbst*. In other words, the pre-individual is not simply or uniformly the same in every case: it contains, as its very structure, the potential of giving birth to egos which cannot individualize without incorporating in their individuality something of the sameness that generated them. And this something is the possibility of a relation with the same. To put it differently: to become *myself*, I am subjected to the perception of the same-self. I use the word "perceptions" here as Freud used it in the expression "internal perceptions" [7]. They designate "the most diverse and certainly also the deepest strata of the mental apparatus". The best example is the dyad pleasure-unpleasure. The notion of diversity refers to the various modalities or qualities that might be involved (how can pleasure or unpleasure come about, its acceptance or refusal, its assimilation or destruction). The notion of depth refers to the id or the unconscious.

In *Group Psychology*, part VIII, when Freud makes a graphic representation of "egos that have put one and the same object [the "guide"] in the place of their ego ideal and have consequently identified themselves with one another in their ego", the result, he says, is a "primary group".

The initial constitution of the group requires prior communication between those who form it. This communication cannot be limited to object relations, that is, to the libido. It must take place between subjects – not as a pact between constituted subjects, but while they are being constituted. This was probably what Rousseau was intimating when he said that the social contract was at the same time a way of acquiring humanity. Indeed, the well-known paradox that asks how non-humans can enter into a contract – as symbolic an act as can be imagined – is illustrated by Freud through the difficulty of establishing simultaneity and anteriority, between individuals and the group. This is the problem raised by identification, a problem Freud admits he does not know how to solve satisfactorily.

5

It is out of the question to claim to solve a dilemma that doubtless cannot be solved – although the question concerns nothing less than the *raison d'être* of humanity as a species of "political animals". Aristotle's expression means not only "a species that can live in a city-state", but, above all, a species endowed with speech, whose nature it is to debate and to choose the modalities of coming together in a community. Aristotle speaks of a "species endowed with *logos*". Indeed, language plays a major role in Freud's reasoning about the genesis of the group. In the Postscript of *Group Psychology*, the murder of the father of the primitive horde is presented as a fictional tale told by one of the children to the others. This child is presumably the youngest and, as such, the mother's favorite, the one she protected from the father. This does not prevent the privileged son from feeling deprived of the father; he separates himself from the group (the group exists, but lacks structure) [8]. What the son feels is nostalgia for the primal father.

We can rephrase this by saying: the inventor of the first story of the origin wants to invent himself as the murderer of the father, that is, as the one who has replaced him. He is impelled to do this by nostalgia, a *Sehnsucht* which, being a *Sucht*, has the character of an addiction or a passion – the passionate desire Freud distinguishes in a group [9]. Thus, he is driven by a double affect: this passionate nostalgia and his mother's unique tenderness. This leads him to create a "fictitious re-interpretation of the time of the origins". He invents a myth and becomes its mythical hero. By narrating his fictional poem of the invention of the origin,

he allows the others to identify with him, because they all feel the nostalgia for the father. “The myth, then, is the step by which the individual emerges from group psychology”.

He emerges from it to confirm its truth, we might say. For the myth introduces the very possibility of identification. The group identifies with the hero, and thereby identifies itself as an aggregate of similar identities, which are therefore interchangeable or replaceable. Here, Freud’s note refers the reader to a book by Hanns Sachs [10]. Reading Sachs, it becomes clear that Freud has relied on his analysis of heroization. However, Freud overlooked one assertion of the text. Hanns Sachs ends his description of the poet as hero of the tale by noting that identifying him (in the sense of naming) could prevent his listeners from identifying with the hero. “To avoid this obstacle, the poet must create an impersonal hero or, to be more precise, a superpersonal hero with whom he can identify, as can all his listeners, since he is at once all of them and none of them.”

Freud neglected this assertion because he remained focused on the figure of the dominant hero, who becomes God or the leader. In his view, identification is primarily, and even essentially, hierarchical [11]. He subordinates to it the horizontal identification needed by the former – not necessarily anterior, but at least simultaneous. The longing for the father preoccupies him, while he explores the question of how egos that are forming – separating from the id and among themselves – also recognize each other as kindred.

6

It would not be amiss for us to review more attentively the conditions Freud himself defined for setting in motion the process of identification. These two conditions are language and affect. Let us look at each one before examining the relation between them.

Obviously, language constitutes not only the means, but the actual location of identification, whether it be that of the son with the father, or that of brothers with the hero created by one of them. Creation is what actually takes place here, since the father is invented out of nothing, in other words, nominated. This nomination is at the same time that of his own name – be it simply “Father” as the name of one who has neither name nor existence – and that of the genesis or generation which produced the group. The latter identifies with an unidentifiable identity. The group or the collectivity is the entity which searches for an identity, or projects one. It awaits or seeks an identity; it is in a state of *Selbst* for itself, because the “itself” is what is barely glimpsed as inherent to existence in any form – of all physical or physiological bodies, of all entangled or heaped together presences.

Language brings no answer to this expectation: it exposes it as the aim of a search; it exposes the general quest for sameness in the indistinct and indefinite multitude. But it remains language, given that it offers the possibility of identifying what we call meaning; or, we might also say, given that meaning is an element of identity and of distinction, its corollary.

Freud presents a similar hypothesis when he formulates a myth of the birth of the myth, which is precisely the birth of language and/or meaning. Lacan understood correctly that this is what lies at the heart of the matter. He designated identification as “identification of the signifier” [12] and made it clear at once that it is not “imaginary identification”, meaning that it is not identification with a given form or figure, but rather mutual identification between two (or more) entities discovering their “sameness” in their very capacity to form a form not given, in other words, their capacity to signify.

Indeed, it is here that it becomes most clear that Lacan’s “signifier” should be understood in the active form, as the subject in the act of signifying – or of producing meaning (a subject being, in fact, precisely this capacity or this signifying promptness). This capacity is the same in all subjects, and because it functions one instance at a time, on each occasion when meaning arises, it also explains why, as Lacan says: “the speaking subject always ends up taking you for another”. This relation to another, existing between all

“same” entities, is what Lacan has named the “big other”; but we could also say that it is the relation of meaning, which is, each time, relation *to* meanings that which, at the same time, distinguishes and ties together selves (egos, in fact, but egos in the process of identifying each other, and never “identified” egos, as when using the past participle).

The Lacanian interpretation resolves Freud’s dilemma perfectly: it sheds light on the communication of strictly distinct egos which, having originated in the same id, still belong to it after separating into “same” entities that signify to each other their shared discretion – in the mathematical sense of the word, but also in the sense of “reserve”, of restraint shown by each one, which remains the other, as well as an altogether other, to borrow Derrida’s expression. [13]

7

This logic of separate entities corresponds to [14] Lacan’s “unary trait”: each one counts for one, and none count for all. But how then are we to understand the distinction – not very distinct this time – made for the favorite son, creator and hero of the myth.

As this hero, he is a poet, and Freud underscores the poetic nature of this first word. This may explain, to some degree, why he did not take into account Hanns Sachs’ last assertion: even if the hero counts the same as all and as none, it was necessary to invent this “impersonal or rather superpersonal” figure. Freud was perhaps anticipating the superego that the inventor of the myth could bring into being or himself become. In this context, we should expand on the notion of “veneration of power” alluded to earlier. The anarchy I spoke of probably cannot be smoothly separated from hierarchy. (As we know, this entanglement presents a problem for democracy). But this is not what concerns us here. It is first of all the poet himself who stands out [15]. And as we know, Freud considers the poet to have a distinctive capacity. Here, it is illustrated by the “fictional tale”, which relies on a talent or an art all the more special considering that what is “reinterpreted” [16] has never been interpreted before (unless we attribute the invention of the myth to the father). The first poet invents a meaning by hiding the previous meaning – which supposes that there was one.

To do this, the poet is endowed with special qualities. For instance, he has “a sensitivity that enables them to perceive the hidden impulses in the minds of other people, and the courage to let his own unconscious speak.” [17] The creator of the myth perceived the longing for the father in all the people, and by letting his unconscious speak he gave voice to the unconscious of all – a voice at once singular and plural, so that everyone communicates with everyone, in a sharing of communality. This communication is not *logos*, at least not Aristotle’s *logos* functioning as a “political” faculty of communication about the common good. Alternatively, to this *logos* would have to be added an indissociable conjunction, the *mythos*, whose primary contribution is not to discourse, but to expression, to utterance. While the *logos* discusses, the *mythos* proclaims. It is an uttering invested in its own *utterance*, or, put differently, it is an *utterance* which, before all else, *is uttered*. We could even go so far as to designate it as a *supposed utterance*.

8

By supposedly saying, it communicates to others this supposedness. The myth is speech belonging to all and to each one, while the *logos* is a discourse for all, which belongs to no one. They stand back to back, a *Janus geminus* of language rooted in the id and articulated by egos.

Thus, the poet is the other face of the logician (learned man, philosopher, orator). He is the other who speaks of the same thing, specifically, of the being-together, the *Mitsein* that sustains language, which in turn sustains the *Mitsein*. But if there should be an internal division of language itself, what would it consist

of? Obviously, the *logos* relates to the separated ego, while *mythos* relates to the id which is allowing an ego to emerge from it. Therefore, the proximity between poetry and psychoanalysis approaches intimacy. Still, intimacy is not identity, just as identification is not unification.

Lacan knew it very well, and did not stop at recognizing the same proximity as Freud did, but went as far as identifying himself – or rather his speech, or himself as a speaking being – as a poem [18]. By saying “I am not a poet but a poem”, he identifies himself as speech at the origin, that is, speech as fertile ground, while rejecting what Bataille called the sticky temptation of poetry which, perhaps since Rimbaud, is constantly denounced: poetry as precious, grandiloquent estheticism [19, 20] Taking this step seems to lead to identifying psychoanalysis with poetry. But Lacan only took this step playfully. He knew that the decision cannot be personal, because it would first have to be submitted by the mother and the group.

As we have seen, raising such a question requires certain conditions. These are not necessarily absent today, and there are poets – in any case, there are poems – among us, although the conditions are not those of a Homer or a Shakespeare, to name two dubious egos which carry an indisputable power of identification whose effects live on.

We can therefore say: “poetry and psychoanalysis bring into question *Knowledge*, in order to arrive at the truth in their practice.” [21] And we must add that it is precisely this act, which philosophy has confronted or tried to carry out since Hegel up until today, that Lacan was able to reexamine, and that Freud introduced by asserting that impulses are “our myths”. Nevertheless, we must ask ourselves why there are three contenders for a role which clearly requires unicity.

9

Unicity – even isolation – of the youngest son is, in fact, necessary for enabling the myth to address itself to each one and to everyone at the same time. A single voice must be heard by all who are alike. (Fascism, be it national-racial or techno-global, is nothing more than the forced artificial production of a single voice.)

Indeed, what isolates the youngest son, what pre-individualizes him, we might say, is first that he is the last born, who closes the series, and second that he is the mother’s favorite. She no doubt prefers him precisely because he closes the series. It is as if the father’s fertility, or the mother’s, has come to an end, or as if the mother in any case wanted it to end (and therefore as if, in a sense, the father’s role has started to decrease). The youngest is thus the object or the subject of two powerful affects: the love of the mother and the hate of the father.

This double affect is affection itself, with the ambivalence it implies. Affection does not only come from outside the subject: it shapes him and is that through which he shapes the world (colors it, makes it vibrate). The mother’s love is precisely this: coming into the world. For this reason, the mother is never completely distinct from the world (or from the id) and for the same reason she can be rejected as well as loved, since being in the world also means no longer being the world itself, with its indistinct identity.

By contrast, the father is detachment itself: he is the possibility of an outside-the-world, of autonomy. Therefore, he is hated in two ways: as an expulsion into the world [22], very different from a bringing into the world, and at the same time, as the self-sufficient position that can only serve as an “ego ideal” to an ego which separates or aspires to separation.

This double affective duplicity, this redoubling between mother and father of the ambivalence which, essentially, is affect itself – the push propelling toward detachment, toward individuality – forces us to step back from Freud or to expand on him in order to recognize that it is the same impulse: that of the id. The id’s obscure perception of the ego can only see at the same time a form of sameness with oneself and the drive or impulse of this form toward itself, that is, toward its separating off as an “ego”.

The id and the ego are so closely interrelated that not only is the ego driven to separate, but this impulse is also that of the id. This being so, the ego can only continue to be rooted in the id, and the id can only persist in the ego. In that case, the longing for the father must be understood as an objective and subjective genitive: longing for the father *and* paternal longing for the ego, in which it wants to see itself reflected. Applying this to narcissism: since absolute narcissism cannot exist (these terms are contradictory), we must turn to relative narcissism – that which is at work in the relation, or narcissism which is itself relational.

If we were to pursue this reasoning, we would see how the mother and the father are intertwined, or how thrownness and being-in-the-world are correlated, as well as how this correlation involves the collective or plurality of egos, since on the father's side there can only be exclusion of unicity, and on the mother's side there is the world, which supposes alterity and the circulation of distinct elements of meaning. And on both sides, there is affective ambivalence: love and hate of what threw me forth and of what opened the world to me.

10

Affectivity, as we have said, does not happen to the subject: it stirs him and therefore moves him. As Simondon wrote: "Affectivity-emotivity is a movement between the naturally indeterminate and the *hic et nunc* of present existence." [23] Existence which is therefore seen as "incorporated in the collective", since "the individual as experiencer is a connected being".

At this point, we must agree with Lacan's assertion: "The collective is nothing other than the *subject* of the individual." [24] This must, of course, be understood based on the nature of the Lacanian subject, whose "existence is that of an 'in-between', he belongs to a *mesology* [25] ". The collective is at the same time what we might call the natural milieu of the individual, and the relational space in which individuals form relations with each other. They experience each other as long as they are moved: no matter how small the emotion, it is what sets in motion the egos *between them*.

What happens to language in this movement? Freud does not say – although he is careful to point out the "cap of hearing" of the ego. [26] In Lacan's view, language changes affect into "another thing". "It transforms it, through speech, into a means of communication." [27]. Yet, since affect already exists in the relation with the other, it is not enough to speak of this transformation – which Lacan sees as a metaphor or displacement (the Greek meaning of the word) from the literal to the figurative, or from inexpressible fantasy to communicable speech. [28]

If we stopped there, we would not give any reason for this supposed metaphorization. We must go farther in our examination of the relation between language and affect. Rousseau has opened the way. We know that he said: "needs dictated the first gestures, passions dragged out the first utterances" [29]. Affect produces speech, or more exactly, it first makes the voice ring out [30]. This is not articulated language from the start, but rather the acoustic aspect of what Bernard Baas calls "the sonorous body": the voice is what we hear as part of the body, coming from it and shaped by it.

That which is formed this way takes the body outside itself. It lets it be heard. This hearing is a sensation: Rousseau says the voice modulates "the accents of passion" and "these accents make us quiver [...] make us feel what we hear". Through the voice, the body communicates with the body of the other. This communication knows nothing of the transposition of the inexpressible into expression: it creates a link, it is at the same time discovery of the other – of oneself as other, of the other as oneself, *the same* – and appeal to the other [31]. Precedence of the collective over the individual holds as long as the appeal to "you" is simultaneous with the separation of "I".

This appeal communicates an emotion only because the emotion itself is an appeal from the outside, and outwardly directed – an actual setting in motion of the *same*. At the same time, there is no clearer instance of

the nature of identification, revealing it as neither fusion, nor unification. Emotion does not lead back to the id, but is much more the *self-perception of the id addressing itself*.

It addresses itself and as soon as it does, it changes and it identifies itself.

11

This is what makes it poetic. Firstly, the poem is not a bringing into play of language at the extreme edges of signification. It is, rather, the opening onto the possibility of meaning. Jean-Christophe Bailly wrote: “it is here [...] that is hidden – and from here that springs the sonic nature of the poem and its inborn relation to prosody and to song: the poem invents nothing, but by intersecting with language in this manner it gathers its *full resonance, and makes of this resonance the intensity of a meaning. The poem is the tonality of meaning*”. [32]

Suffice it to add that meaning is above all tonality – tension, vibration, inflexion, not simply of the voice as an acoustic phenomenon, but of the voice as affected body. Meaning consists of an appeal and a response. It is not signification, which on its own endlessly refers to other significations. It is, rather, this reference itself as an appeal to the other.

Meaning is not beyond signification: it is the meaning-making in all meaning, which is always yet to come. And in the body, to include the homophony Baas points to. Meaning comes from the other and as other, it comes as the self-alteration of the id. A self-alteration indeed – adjusted to self-perception – since the voice is *heard*. About Valéry’s “Narcissus Speaks”, Derrida commented that the voice “seems to do without the detour through the exteriority of the mirror or the water, the world, in order immediately to reflect itself in the intimate instantaneousness of resonance.” [33]

This is how the poem, while letting its voice resonate for its own sake, without any intention to communicate, also gives voice not only to emotions, but to the motion or pulsation of the world. “Religion is the oldest of all poems”, Kant wrote. [34] Here, religion is not faith, it is the calling out and hearing of a voice belonging to all through the collective body – a totemic body, a mythical body, and yet still remaining a singular voice. It is the narration of the myth of the tribe. [35]

It can happen that a group does not find its myth, or loses it. In that case, it starts to decompose, its poets are poets in name only, for appearances, and the world becomes mere connection. But when there is real poetry (not Lacan’s Pouasie), it gives voice not only to all, [37] but to the cosmos – which is also contained in the id. The longing for the father, as the double genitive suggests, is the longing of the subject for a world, and the longing of the world for those who inhabit it. Poetry is the voice brought into the world, and the world given voice.

The same notion is expressed in Michel Deguy’s verses, where “identification” refers to assimilation, and is contrasted with the similarity of sames:

La comparaison entretient l’incomparable

La distinction des choses entre elles

Poésie interdit l’identification

Pour la douceur du comme rigoureuse

Commun ?

Comme-un

C'est tout comme si

C'était comme-un. [37]

Comparison sustains the incomparable

The distinction between things

Poetry forbids identification

Preferring the softness of the rigorous “like”

In common?

Alike

It is as if

It was alike.

Jean-Luc Nancy, March 2021

Translated from the French by Agnès Jacob

Notes:

[1] *The Ego and the Id*, III. – I will simply indicate the sections in Freud’s texts, as the English is sometimes paraphrased; this will also be useful to those who want to consult the original German.

[2] Or around a “supplement”, to use Derrida’s term.

[3] I developed this concept with Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe in *La Panique politique* in 1979 (re-edited by Christian Bourgois in 2013).

[4] In 1921, this word did not have the connotations it does today – either pejorative or revolutionary. It designates the number, the multitude, the collectivity or the common people, considered for approximately the past fifty years to constitute a group, gathering or crowd – that is, something problematic when speaking

from the individual perspective, as Freud and many others do, except Marxists, for whom the notion of class changes the entire perspective. – The use of the plural for this word in Freud’s title corresponds to the plural of Le Bon’s “crows” in the title of his book, on which Freud comments. Because this word is much more widely applied today than in 1900 (“the metro is crowded”), I prefer using the word “group”.

[5] During his visit to the United States in 1909, Freud expressed the desire to see a wild porcupine.

[6] I analyzed this question in *Cruor*.

[7] *The Ego and the Id*, II.

[8] As Freud explains in complex and somewhat awkward terms, because he seems to be both discussing the origin and retracing the first historical developments that led from an initial totemic society which gave up the inheritance from the father, to a “new family” with multiple fathers who do not have the omnipotence of the original father and are therefore inadequate (which resembles the contemporary society described in the very first known myths, and in the poetry Freud endeavored to discuss). As a result, the scene is both primary and secondary – which explains the impossibility of identifying a concrete origin.

[9] *Group Psychology II*.

[10] *The Creative Unconscious* (Literary Licensing, 2013).

[11] Or “archeophilic”, as we said in *La Panique politique*.

[12] Seminar 1961-1962 on identification, session November 22, 1962.

[13] “Every other other is an altogether other.”

[14] In the same seminar.

[15] Of course, we should raise the question of the extent of the poet’s power, but that will be the subject of another discussion.

[16] *Umdeutung* (reframing) can be understood as the result of reconsideration, inversion, or even perversion.

[17] *A Special Type of Choice of Object Made by Men, I* (in *Contributions to the Psychology of Love*), 1910. As we know, Freud often commented on the special abilities of poets and artists in general to understand the psyche. In *The Future of an illusion*, he wrote: “The creation of art heightens feelings of identification, of which every cultural unit stands in so much need.”

[18] *Œuvres graphiques et manuscrites*, p. 48.

[19] Esther Tellermand, *Freud-Lacan* “Consultation-document” (Freud-lacan.com)

[20] This modern refusal of “poetry-‘pouasie’” constitutes a major symptom of the disappearance of the myth and of the accompanying nostalgia that had their roots in German romanticism. Nostalgia replaced the father with the myth, and this reinforced nostalgia suffers from its inability to bring about a new seminal discourse.

[21] Esther Tellermand, *S’apparenter à un poète*.pdf (gnipl.fr). The term “*apparenter*” (to be akin) is taken from Lacan and contrasts with “*plate-parenté*” (plain kinship): this is the concept on which Tellermand comments.

[22] This refers, of course, to Heidegger’s *Geworfenheit* – thrown existence.

[23] *Individuation in Light of Notions of Form and Information* (University of Minnesota Press, 2020). It would be worthwhile to keep abreast of these analyses made by Simondon, especially in their loose relations with psychoanalysis.

[24] This sentence is quoted after a reference to *Group Psychology*. Article: “Logical Time and the Assertion of Anticipated Certainty”, in Newsletter of the Freudian Field: 4-22, fall 1988, Vol. 2, No. 2.

[25] Study of environments, therefore of connections, relationships and exchanges.

[26] *The Ego and the Id*, II. The “cap of hearing” appears in the famous drawing in Freud’s second topography. Paul Celan took up and transformed the *Hörkappe* to *Hörklappe* (acoustic valve) in his poem *Schief*. See commentary by Jean Bollack: “Celan lit Freud” (Celan reads Freud), in *Savoirs et clinique*,

2005/1 n°6. Celan's poem deserves further interpretation: in short, I would say that it indicates that the poet hears differently, or better, than the analyst.

[27] Seminar on identification, May 1962.

[28] Lacan's thought cannot be reduced to this Lacanian vulgate. For instance, we might read "L'erre de la métaphore" by Eric Porge, *Essaim* n°21, 2008, or his *Voix de l'écho*, (Erès, 2012). What displaces the opposition between literal and figurative, from which the idea of metaphor originates, is a subject that would require reading Derrida's "White Mythologie" and the discussion with Ricoeur which follows this text. In parallel with this philosophical work, Lacan's writing tended toward a topology. As for me, I would like to return to poetry, that is, to show that saying anything about the poem must exceed the realm of knowledge. Not to say more or better, but to trust in the saying.

[29] *Essay on the Origin of Languages*.

[30] On the subject of the voice between psychoanalysis and philosophy, I refer the reader to Bernard Baas, *La voix déliée, L'écho de l'immémorial* and – forthcoming – *Jouissances de la voix* (which discusses the "embodied voice").

[31] This brings to mind Alain Didier-Weil's "appeal to intuition", which was taken up by Lacan.

[32] *Naissance de la phrase*, Nous, 2020, p. 61.

[33] Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy* (University of Chicago Press, 1984). It must be made clear that this "immediacy" is only apparent ("makes appearance", Derrida writes). The voice articulates and therefore is transmitted. There is no rigid division between voice and discourse, between meaning and signification. Instead, each refers to the other, echoes in the other (this is what defines a "subject"). The question of resonance is also discussed in my book *A l'écoute* (Galilée, 2002).

[34] *Religion within the Limits of Reason*, I.

[35] The passage from the totemic voice to belief, and the fact that in his assertion Kant speaks of the "religion of priests" are subjects for a separate discussion.

[36] Even to those who don't hear the poetry. As long as the myth is articulated, it touches all the members of the group, it brings about identification. When it no longer does this, and "the myth" becomes propaganda, be it that of a dictator or that of a publicity industry (which is the same thing), the entire group hears, but what it hears is not its own voice. Or it ceases to be a group and constitutes itself into a crowd, as the word is used today. Bernard Baas examines this question in the chapter "Des clameurs du peuple" in *Jouissances de la voix*.

[37] "Aide-mémoire"(1985), in *Comme ci Comme ça* (Gallimard, 2012), p. 105.