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Julia Kristeva

Freudian Models of Language. A Conversation

(This conversation, conducted by Sergio Benvenuto, took place in Paris, in May 1994, at the Italian Cultural Institute, for the MultiMedia Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences, a program of RAI (Italian Radiotelevision) and the Italian Institute for Philosophical Studies. We thank RAI for having permitted us to publish this text, translated from the French by Claudia Vaughn)

RAI (Italian RadioTelevision): What were Freud's conceptions of language?

Kristeva: Freud can be read today in light of the current analytic experience, which is connected to two recent developments, what I have called, in a recent book, "the new illnesses of the soul" ranging from autism to psychosomatic affections, and to borderline cases, "false Selves", "as-if personalities", and other narcissistic disturbances. In these cases the analyst is confronted by something lying beyond language which cannot be represented; and in light of a cognitivist push in human sciences today, there is a trend to approach the psychic experience by short-circuiting the materiality of language and imposing on this materiality logical strategies, with or without a subject. Thus we can attempt another look at the Freudian conceptions of language. Because a single schematic idea was so often made out of them, there is believed to be a single conception of Freudian language, but instead there are at least three.

The first language model formulated by Freud is found in his early writings, particularly in *The Contribution to the Concept of Aphasia* (1891), *The Project for a Scientific Psychology* (1895), and some other texts from the same period all of which start from the inadequacy between the sexual and the verbal. Freud does not believe that sexual desire can be grasped by language: not only is it difficult for desire to enter language, and to be interpreted, but intelligence and language on the one hand, and sexual desire, on the other, are even asymptotic (which means there is no point of convergence, no symbiosis, no adequacy). This asymptote is probably attributable to neurosis but, going back in time, perhaps also to our initial immaturity language comes *après coup*, afterwards. Thus, there is a gap between our body and the possibility to speak which Freud develops, for example, in the *Case of Little Hans*. Starting from this inadequacy between body and language between sexual desire and intelligence Freud establishes an absent (or inadequate) translation between the unconscious representation and words, which leads him to prepare a model that I will call a "heterogeneous model of language", and which is taken up in certain psychoanalytic circles, such as the *Société Psychanalytique de Paris* to which I belong. However, this model is much less discussed by Lacanians. This first Freudian model of language is heterogeneous because of the gap between the representation of words and the representation of things.

This distinction can be found in Appendix C of the *Metapsychology* (although it had already been elaborated in *Contributions on Aphasia*), wherein Freud speaks of "representations of words" as a set of representations which essentially involve the sonorous image of speech. I pronounce a word, and the psyche records a sonorous image the word's essence although it is not the only one, because the representation of a word comprises also an image of reading, writing, and movement. Speech is a complex, but closed, whole. But the

representation of words is tied to the representation of objects or things, that other component which can be called an open whole and which comprises the visual image of the word: when I say television, for example, I see the visual image of the television, but there are also tactile (I can touch it) and acoustic (it has sound and volume) images. Thus, according to Freud, the psychic apparatus, centered on the representation of things and words, proceeds towards a heterogeneous representation in the psyche because of these two essential components, words and things.

In Project for a Scientific Psychology, Freud drafted two systems: an external one, “phi”, that sets the human being in contact with the external world, and an internal one, “psi”. He postulates a quantitative charge, a biological energy which can be hormonal, humoral or electrical (due to great strides in neurobiology today, Freud’s proposals have become substantial, and this text draws much comment), and which, passing from the one system to the other, can go from quantitative to qualitative or psychic.

Language, because it is situated between two systems, that of energy charge and perception on the one hand, and that of logical activity on the other, favors knowledge and consciousness. In Freud, language suddenly occupies a crucial place between perception and logic, without being reduced to either of them, but instead playing the intermediary between them. Thus, this first Freudian model contains a dualism which I call a “layered conception” (conception feuilletée) of language, because here language is not reduced to our actual models based on the signifier/signified opposition. Instead, it reaches towards the external world through sensation, and towards the world of intelligence by transmitting memory on up to the complicated system of logical and, even further, metaphysical, connections. The heterogeneity of this model is very interesting because it heads off in the opposite direction of a certain linguistic trend which seeks to recover the early Freud within the Saussurian model, although at that time things had not come that far. The Lacanian trend, in particular, applies the Saussurian model to Freud because this trend is more in keeping with the second Freudian model, as we shall see. Yet this first model is very interesting, even if the Lacanian trend does not mention it explicitly, because it emerges from Freud the biologist and medical doctor, and takes into account sensation, perception, and energy charge. For this reason I call it a “stripped” model of language.

Some analysts today are very mindful of this model, and, whether consciously or not, have made efforts to take it into account. Take Bion’s work: in *Intention and Interpretation* (1970), he establishes some differences between a symbolizing “alpha function” and a non-symbolized “beta-element”; one thus already sees a heterogeneity of the psychic, mental (and, in a more restricted sense, linguistic) operation.

RAI: Do you think, then, that Bion’s later thinking was directly inspired by Freud’s first neurological theorization?

Kristeva: I don’t know if Bion was directly inspired by Freud. I am simply remarking on a similarity; Bion, blazing his own path, succeeded in finding that heterogeneity of the function of language (langagier), which corresponds to the thesis of the early Freud. There is an isomorphism, or parallelism, between Freud and Bion.

In the wake of this, certain works emerge, such as my book, *The Revolution of Poetic Language* (1973), which distinguishes between the semiotic and the symbolic. By “semiotic” I mean an inherence to language, a certain disposition of the senses, but also of the drives dating back to early infancy, to echolalia, to everything pre-linguistic and which is brought up to date in poetic language, for example. This level which manifests itself yet once again through rhythms, alliterations or other intralinguistic phenomena is linked to the level of drives and perhaps, from there, more to the bodily and biological levels of the signifying function. With regard to this level, one should keep in mind another level that I call “symbolic”, that is, the *stricto sensu* field of language in the sense of sign, feeling, synthesis and logic. One recent trend is developing in France precisely in this direction, and includes the works of Piera Aulagnier, such as *Violence and Interpretation*, wherein she proposes a pre-linguistic (pré-langagier) state of feeling, which she calls pictogram, and which she finds in certain traumatic and regressive states, but also in psychosis. These

examples show that the modern clinical practice, confronted with a difficult psychopathology (particularly the cure of psychosis), needs to give some thought to an infra-linguistic, psychic operation which, in fact, was put forth by the first Freudian model.

RAI: But one might object that Freud's initial theorizations were inspired by the neurology of his time, which today has been surpassed.

Kristeva: This is true; Freud did not have a sufficient neurobiological knowledge to refine his theories on the functioning of brain cells, or on synapsis. Today our concepts on this, as well as on the nervous system as a whole, are far more advanced. Roughly put, there are two theories: an electric theory Changeux's which proposes a sort of neuron map, and a humor theory, which holds that beyond this electrical map of the brain there lies a logical one, perhaps more dynamic and fluid, based on the humors. Yet in all these current trends, which are far more modern and clear-cut than what Freud left us, one hiatus stands out from everything that can be said on the level of neurons on the one hand, and of language on the other. We do not succeed in filling the gap between the biological substratum and the linguistic (langagière) manifestation, and, thus, we find ourselves confronted with this double determination in the face of psychological manifestations, and in particular of psychiatric or psychoanalytic symptoms.

Take depression. A certain number of depressive symptoms can be eliminated thanks to neurolectics or even electroshock: this means that a certain mental functioning can be corrected and treated on the biological level; but this does not exclude an intervention on the level of language. Psychoanalytic work can have an effect even on a biological cell. For example, certain interpretations can bring on an accelerated functioning of the brain, a conductivity of synapsis, and even a change in the rate of serotonin. In other words, in present models, insofar as they can be refined, there is always something that recalls the early Freud: we are always faced with a double, stratified model. I try to rethink this Freudian dualism; not to be satisfied with it, but to stratify it, multiply it, and render it more contemporary, without losing sight of that double determination, without which the mental functioning levels out: one either reduces it to a pure and simple biology by eliminating the signifying factor, or one is satisfied solely by the signifying factor and dismisses the biological base. The actuality of psychoanalysis can take place only through the recognition of this double determination.

RAI: But did not Freud, when he wrote *The Interpretation of Dreams*, completely abandon this neurological reference? Is not Lacan's analysis of this work correct, especially when he says that the unconscious is structured like a language?

Kristeva: Your question leads me to what I call the second Freudian model of language, one which lies close to the structural model which Lacan will later develop. Freud comes to this optimistic model slowly when he abandons neurology while preparing his plan for the psychoanalytic cure which will be based on a fundamental rule: free association. Between 1892 and 1900, Freud became convinced that associative recounting is capable of translating a traumatic content. He said to his patients: "Tell me what comes into your mind; associate freely and give me a narrative." Thus, he will base his plans for his cure on narration, whence he will produce another model centered on language.

This second model is characterized by two particularities: on the one hand, language is constituted by preconscious intermediary terms (thus language is the preconscious) which allow the unconscious to be dominated by the conscious. Thus language is intermediary and intermediate. For Freud, language remains in the sphere of the preconscious. Nevertheless, language possesses the power to go beyond consciousness because it is situated between consciousness and the unconscious. How does language possess this extraordinary power to render things conscious? Let us recall the first model: given that language is a heterogeneous construction, fed by sensations and perceptions, it anchors itself even in the body, starting from sensations and perceptions, on up to biology. It thus remains an intermediate model between the unconscious, on the one hand, and consciousness, on the other; for this reason, it is the preferred and

advantageous standard on which to build the cure.

Furthermore, in order for consciousness to be dominated by the unconscious, the model of the unconscious itself will be ever more influenced by linguistic consciousness. So Freud, in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, develops a definition of language constructed, in fact, from certain notions he gleans from theories with which he is familiar, ranging from certain assimilations of the unconscious to grammar, to certain reminiscences regarding writing for example, he compares language to hieroglyphics. Other esoteric references will also come into play. In this context, Freud also read certain linguists, above all Karl Abel, whose studies he used in his essay "The Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words". There are two significant aspects to the Freudian interest in primitive words.

(1) He wanted to establish a logic which was not coincidental to the conscious one; this logic of the unconscious ignores specifically the "no", and does not know contradiction.

(2) At the same time Freud does not consider this logic to be a simple theoretical construction of the analyst, or something simply tied to the analytic experience, or to a neurotic or psychotic pathology, but rather a part of the human luggage as such. Thus Freud attempts to base himself on linguistic works sometimes erroneous ones, as were Karl Abel's which permit him to say: "what I tell you today is realized in the cure, but this is part of man's heredity, and can be rediscovered in the past". In short, Freud seeks to rationalize his discovery and to extend the reach of what might be thought, not just to pathology, but to the whole of human experience. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, he seeks to understand the logic of the unconscious by assimilating it to a primitive language.

Lacan's contribution particularly his statement that "the unconscious is structured like a language" is a careful and faithful reading of this second Freud, whose essential objective he makes explicit. Many analysts today feel that the Lacanian reading is an extremism, which pushes that second Freud too much towards a linguistics (the term Lacan used to poke fun at his own approach), and that 1960's structural linguistics had extended a bit too far its sway on Freudian thought through Lacan. At that time structural linguistics, practiced particularly by Jakobson, was developed by Lévi-Strauss into structuralist thought. Lévi-Strauss reflected on kinship systems and myths starting from phonology, which provided the base for structuralists, whether linguistic or not. Making the unconscious mathematical as pursued by the Lacanian School and, in a certain way, by cognitivism today can be joined to this second Freudian attempt to think about language as one finds it in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Because even Freud seeks a model in the linguistics of his time, as he perceived it in order to put the unconscious under the control of consciousness. Lacan and the cognitivists seek other models, but they think that it is possible to capture language, and the unconscious assimilated to it, through certain specific models taken from the sciences of their time.

I call this second model of language "optimist" because Freud thought at that time that free association could permit us to gather all symptoms, and that we would be able to make traumas, drives, and all sexual and psychic disturbances appear in language. However, this optimism leaves space for another Freudian model which continues to be stratified and heterogeneous. More precisely, he speaks of drives which are not a language and of primary and secondary processes susceptible to various logics.

The primary processes are displacements and condensations. For example, instead of dreaming about something extremely disturbing or difficult to accept because of sexual reasons such as a traumatic encounter with a woman a subject will dream about a botanical paper. I am alluding to Freud's own famous dream about the botanical monograph, a very scientific book; the final interpretation of this dream will reveal it to be a displacement from a traumatic sexual experience which bears some relationship to a flower and to femininity.

Condensation has been assimilated to metaphor; one takes a feature for example, the feature "man" and another "a bending reed". When Pascal says "the man is a thinking reed," he constructs a metaphor. But through condensations, in many dreams, one element of the dream is in fact overloaded with multiple oneiric

thoughts, and becomes a point where many dream-thoughts meet. The botanical monograph is an example of both displacement and condensation, because here the dreamer places his relations with femininity, science, publications, culture, etc. Here one element of the dream is condensation, although one is not dealing with reasoning processes. Secondary processes would instead be “reasoning processes” (the expression Freud uses); and from this moment on, by secondary processes Freud means syntax, logic, argumentation. Drives operate according to a primary process of displacement-condensation, but they are later taken on by the secondary processes.

RAI: May we nevertheless say that in the primary process there are linguistic phenomena at work?

Kristeva: Freud himself suggested this when he said that there is a rhetoric and a grammar of dreams. This allowed Lacan to speak explicitly of metaphor and metonymy, projecting a certain number of Jakobson’s categories onto Freudian notions. Thus, Lacan greatly developed this second Freudian model. And although Lacan pushes his interpretation further, he remains faithful to this specific Freud.

RAI: So does Lacan remain faithful to a more clinical Freud? In effect, the first Freud is a neurological Freud, quite distant from the concrete, real, clinical experience of neurotics. Can one then say that the second Freud is closer to his own practice?

Kristeva: I don’t think so. All the various Freuds are part of the corpus transmitted to us up to now. When we ask ourselves if psychoanalysis is still relevant, it is important to see its archaeology and articulation, whence it comes, which elements it gave birth to and abandoned along the way, while still remaining subject to them. For example, the neurological Freud is not just neurological, because in his book on aphasia he largely disassociated himself from Meynert’s and Wernicke’s neurological theories.

Freud, starting from these various neurological studies, constructed a model of language which was not a system, but what he called a language area, a sort of mutation or fluidity. In this area, the various centers supposed by neurologists of that time would not function as fixed centers, but rather as thresholds, through which energies would pass without being fixed in traceable or identifiable zones of the brain. Thus, a sort of neurological structure is constituted which will underlie the operations of the linguistic (langagière) structure itself. Furthermore, this linguistic structure will be influenced by the relationship of him who speaks with the other to whom he speaks. Thus, from this moment on, we take part in the elaboration of what I have just called “a layered representation of language.” This representation also comprises the neurological determination, considered, nevertheless, as a “language area” with an energy transition and passage through the thresholds (thus, it is a very fluid and dynamic structure). Secondly, it is a level of representation on which we find a representation of both the word and the thing. And, thirdly, there is already a subject, which (if necessary) possesses this function, but is not explicitly placed by Freud as such: the theory of subjectivity and the relationship with the other are missing in this first elaboration (this lack will be filled by the second Freud), but otherwise, the stratification of the model is already there. Only later will the notion of subjectivity, so linked to the linguistic conception in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, come together; and, similarly, only later will the theory of free association of one subject for another develop. The Freudian theory will never reflect on transference, something which is quite extraordinary, considering that Freud himself established the analytic cure, that is, the fact that one speaks to an other.

Thus, the scene is played out by two: the subject is in relation to the other. Freud clearly established this transference relationship, and although it is often forgotten even spoke about counter-transference, by which he meant that even the analyst can understand his patient only if he puts himself in the position of transferring on to the patient his own, more or less traumatic, experiences, past, and memory. Yet, this relation of transference against transference was neither rendered explicit nor thoroughly developed by Freud: on this point more recent theories, both prior to and with Lacan, have made an essential contribution.

Nevertheless, this second model should not be treated as the only Freudian model. Language as the lever of the cure, and the unconscious assimilated to language, are all elements of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, but there are also others, in particular, the vestiges of the first and even of the third Freudian model.

RAI: In 1912, Freud seems to abandon his main interest in language for phylogeny, that is, human biological and psychological heredity. How can one thus understand this phylogenetic tale, which has been bothering so many analysts after Freud?

Kristeva: Since 1912 or 1914 there has been a turn in Freudian thought, which would grow more radical with the war, which had many consequences on Freud's own psyche. *Totem and Taboo* (1912) insists on repetitive acts without psychic representation.

Freud supposes a primitive horde, a gathering of brothers, given that women are always and only objects of exchange; these brothers desire to share the women, but without success, because their father keeps them all to himself. At first, to get at the women, the brothers kill the father whence the desire to kill, and the repetition of this killing. We are thus in a compulsion to repeat (a particularly Freudian term), linked to that death drive which agitates the brothers of the primitive horde. And then, during the course of this compulsion to repeat, something new appears: the totemic meal. The father will be eaten, interiorized, and thus a symbolic pact will be orally set up; thus the paternal tyranny will cease to be a tyranny, and will become authority. The brothers recognize that there is a law.

Here we pass from the drive as something unrepresentable the death drive and its violence to the constitution of a symbolic pact which, in the history of humanity, coincides with the emergence of homo sapiens. Freud recounts this tale of the primitive horde to show how the social animal begins to identify himself no longer with the tyranny, but rather with the authority, of the father, and thus, to enter culture.

From 1912 on, Freud will continually refine the psychic representations proposed by his tale. The totemic meal brings us from the acting-out of the killing to symbolization (we represent to ourselves someone with whom we identify), whereby we become capable of thought, speech, and logic in short, culture. At this point, we are in the psyche. In some later works, Freud seeks to vary this psychic representation, this inner life which installs itself starting from that moment of the totemic act: narcissism. He thus defines narcissism as a new psychic action distinct from autoeroticism, even pre-dating Oedipus. In 1915, the term "subject" as opposed to "object" is penned by Freud in regard to drives. Today, the subject of the unconscious and of psychoanalysis is often discussed. Freud does not use this term at the time; he speaks of "I" (Ich), "It" (Es) and "Super-I" (Ueber-Ich), but in 1915 he uses the term "subject" with regard to drives: he distinguishes a subject and an object of the drive. For example, the oral drive: I am the subject of the oral drive, and my object will be this or that fruit, or that given vegetable that I will assimilate. It is solely from this point of view rather than that of drive in a sort of instinctual opening (frayage) that pushes me to assimilate an object, to satisfy a need that Freud will read this notion of subject/object; later he will not take it up again but, rather, he will develop a second topic. In the so-called first topical already sketched in *The Interpretation of Dreams* he speaks of the unconscious, preconscious and conscious. In the second topic he will speak of Ego, Id, and Super-Ego. But the notion of subject will appear in relation to the drive: there is a subject-object pole of the drive, but also a pleasure-displeasure pole, and an active-passive one. In this relation of active-passive the subject can be put in the place of dominator-dominated, whence develops the sado-masochistic relation. All this is further developed in *Metapsychology* a book essential in the history of Freudian thought.

In 1917, Freud published "Mourning and Melancholia", a text fundamental for those like me interested in depression. Here he goes deeper into the logic of the ambivalence between the subject and the object. Without speaking explicitly of a theory of the subject (which will be taken up instead by contemporary psychoanalysis), he speaks of the ambivalence of the melancholic object, that is, of the fact that the object that provokes melancholy is an ambivalent object: "I love someone yet I hate him." In doing so I do not succeed in ridding myself of this someone, I cannot manage to lose him when he wounds me, I place him within me, but, precisely because he is ambivalent, in doing so I become ambivalent. Thus, instead of simply

loving myself, I hate, I underestimate and depress myself, and can even kill myself. Thus, Freud goes deeply into this problematic of subjectivity, finding ambivalence on all sides, without elaborating an epistemology of the subject, which creates problems.

In 1920 the extraordinary postulation of the death drive, as the carrying wave of the life drive, appears. The human being is inhabited by this death drive which contrary to what is believed is not the aggression drive: in fact, aggressivity is already found in eroticism; when I attack someone, this attack is part of Eros, of desire.

RAI: So do you disagree with certain analytic trends the Kleinian one, for example which interpret almost exclusively the death drive as aggressivity?

Kristeva: It is a limitation of the concept of the death drive. The death drive is rather a loosening, a break, of the relation with the other, a return to a state of isolation, close to an inorganic state, even to nothingness. I view it as does André Green, for example, or Bion: as a loosening which recalls psychopathologies closer to psychosis, melancholia and, perhaps, autism, that is, cases in which we are not on the same carrier wave as Eros. Eros absorbs or rejects, loves or hates, but it does not sever ties. When instead we sever ties, we are in a much more serious, more radical, psychic symptomatology linked to the evacuation of the other and of all ties to language and the senses.

Even if it is true that language can allow us access to the whole panoply of psychic life through narcissism, the ambivalence of the subject and of the object, the death drive, etc. nevertheless, the third Freud insinuates a very interesting thought for analysts today. In one sense, his thought becomes skeptical: he finds resistances, analysis does not always work, the results are not very interesting, the analytic cure cannot go very far, in short, the cure has clear limits. But, from another angle (and here there is a deeper doubt), it is not just language, the vector in the prior optimistic model, which gave us access to the unconscious. As resistances develop little by little, as one goes deeper into the ambivalences of psychic life, into the exploration of melancholia, psychosis, the death drive, etc., one becomes aware that language can also bear hallucinations and errors. I might say one word, but its sound-resonance might lead me to think not about the object to which it refers, but about something completely different; whence this hallucination might lead me to lose my relation with reality, go astray, become delirious. Thus, language is not an anchor in truth, whether the latter be perceived as such or linked to an unconscious trauma. Language can hold error, and yet, we are constrained, despite everything, to pass through language.

Thus Freud discovers that with language one is walking on quicksand. Lacan later develops, in a certain way, the consequences of this although he leaves everything suspended when he speaks of semblant, appearance. Language places us in an area of appearance which is not necessarily an obstacle for analysis, yet analysis must understand this appearance. But for the time being we are still in the phylogenetic fable. Thus, when Freud encounters the difficulties posed by language, he begins to speak less of them as we see in *The Ego and the Id*. Here, instead of examining more closely these ambivalences, ambiguities, and difficulties of language, he puts them aside, and returns to the phylogenetic fable of the primitive man. In taking this up once more, Freud will, yet again, speak of the glacial situation, of how language appeared, of how, every time difficulties emerge, one should not concern oneself solely with individual resistances but to see the living being as a whole, from amoeba to humans. In his more recently published works, Freud alludes to the entirety of human history, seeking to link the various symptomologies to its different periods. For example, excerpts were recently published from *An Overall View of Transference Neuroses* (1915), wherein he seeks to link obsessional neuroses to a given period of hominization, hysteric neuroses to another, psychosis to yet another, and so on. Even in *Moses and Monotheism* we see his desire to rethink history by opening himself up to phylogeny.

RAI: Is the importance which Freud, at a certain point, attributes to phylogeny, to be understood as a recognition of Jung's collective unconscious?

Kristeva: I don't think so. Faced with Freud's openness towards phylogeny, many analysts have commented: "Here we have a Freudian fiction. Incapable, in the state in which he found himself, of assuming the ambiguous relation to language and the difficulties of transference/ countertransference, he throws himself into a fiction, telling us his personal fantasies as though wanting to show that even the analyst works with his own fantasies". In effect, at that time many put the Freudian discovery on guard against an excessive subjectivism, as if Freud were confiding his own fantasies. Through this tale of the killing of the father Freud would confess his own oedipal desires. Perhaps there is some truth in all this; and if it were just this, I would nevertheless applaud Freud for having had the audacity to reveal his own unconscious tale, and to have proposed it as a means of investigation. Because one can question what it is the analyst analyzes with, what his analytic organ is. Is it simply his theory? His rhetorical luggage? Or perhaps his culture? Some have said that the analyst mobilizes his erogenous zones in the cure. Instead, I think that the analyst analyzes his own unconscious; but his unconscious must be available to him as a story. Thus, the analyst analyzes with his given capacity, giving a narrative form to his own fantasies. And here Freud gave an example, by attempting to construct the story of man, on which he projects his own desires. This is a possible interpretation of why phylogeny replaced language theories.

But I hold to another interpretation, in which Freud confronts the external psyche. He has shown that it is not necessary to close oneself in a pan-psychism, and that we can open the cure to another dimension, for which he found the word "phylogeny", taken from the knowledge of his time, which fascinated him, just as he was fascinated by Abel's linguistics or the grammaticians. But what he aimed at could be understood in terms of Nietzsche's concept of "monumental history", or Heidegger's "Being". Freud wanted to escape from a pan-psychism, from a narrow, one-generational history; he wanted to lead the analyst to think about "the being", the external psyche. Unfortunately, this advancement was abandoned by many analysts, even if Lacan took it up, in a dazzling way and without many developments, when he called the speaking being a "parlêtre", a speak-being. Here Lacan follows Heidegger's path. But we should go further, and introduce the extra-psyche into the psychic investigation. Here we are obliged to follow some contemporary symptomatology, because our patients confront us, obviously, with language; but if we wish to rise to the modern symptomatology through language they confront us with something biological, and beyond this, with a "monumental history," the Historiale in the Heideggerian sense.

Let me give an example of how I try to keep in mind these three models: 1) the biological one; 2) the importance of language as structure, as developed by Lacan; and 3) the extra-psyche (the thought of the Being and in an ever-awkward but symptomatic way the phylogenetic fable invite us to think about this extra-psyche.)

Let me recount a clinical experience. One of my patients, a bulimic subject to vomiting attacks, is in a life-threatening state. After a number of sessions, the symptom subsides, and she begins a more classical analysis that allows her to reconstruct her history more calmly, and to work with free association. (These associations are the ground upon which Freud was able to base his conception of language as the essential lived experience of the cure what I called the second model, the "optimism of language"). Now, in that phase of analysis, which I believed to be the optimist model of language, the patient told me a dream, which is rather a covering memory. She doesn't remember well, it seems to be a seaside trip with her parents; she finds herself in their bedroom, because on this trip they all shared one room, and here she finds herself before the primal scene (her parents' intercourse): but my patient considers this scene unliveable, because it places her before her double identification, as both man and woman. She has enormous difficulties in becoming independent, in differentiating herself sexually, and in that scene she is summoned to a sexual catastrophe. She is at once both her parents, she cannot choose one or the other. And the memory of this dream or this covering memory which she retells through language during a session, places her in a state of impossibility and disappearance. Add to this the fact that, having found a more normal sexual life, and (thanks to analysis) a sexual partner, she has now become aware that her sexual partner very much resembles her mother. Even here she is faced with a conflict: to have a sexual relation with a man who is her mother something unbearable for her in her bisexuality.

Thus language has brought to light a trauma which, in the psychic scheme of this bulimic patient, has led to a decompensation. She is incapable of associating. Long sessions follow, without any possible verbalization, sessions resembling a stupor, as though an infraverbal level had been touched, a level of drives, close to the biological state of energy charges discussed in the first Freudian model; a level unable to pass over to symbolization.

I will spare you the details of this long therapy. However, I called on two remedies that are in resonance with the three models which we have previously discussed. The first remedy consisted of speaking to her of sensations, using in some way a sensory transplant in the cure. I spoke of the only psychic things she succeeded in experiencing: incapable of speaking, she ate and vomited; for her it was filling herself and emptying herself, something absolutely archaic and driven, without any glimmer of language. So, I tried to tell her how I imagined her eating, and her sensations: sugary, salty, pleasurable, displeasurable... We unfurled a whole gamut of sensations, in which she gradually took part. Thus, through this transplant of sensory nominations, I sought to touch first an infra-linguistic, sensory experience, and from there, a suffering, black, unnameable body. The second remedy draws on a second type of interpretation: those vomiting scenes which overcame her while recalling the trip with her parents made me think of something which is part of this patient's history. She had done a university research on Céline's novel, *Death on the Installment Plan*, in which the author is travelling with his mother, and there is a terrible vomiting scene, which I described in my book *The Powers of Horror*. It is a dizzying recounting of the horror that the maternal rejection can provoke: the narrator vomits on his mother, because vomiting is violence. Here we rediscover the drive which we were speaking of before: is it simply erotic and aggressive? Or does it go much further, and annul the one and the other? I said to her: "When you speak to me of these vomiting states, I think of your research on Céline". This evocation, which was not sensory, not simply language, drove her instead back to history, to the extra-psychic, to something that happened outside of the I/her picture, and outside of her own history, evoking cultural history, and even, through Céline, all historic problematics. Céline was an essential figure in popular literature, but he was also involved in French fascism and wrote some extremely violent, anti-semitic pamphlets, etc. Thus, an entire historical conflict condensed, metamorphosed around the name Céline, so that the evocation of Céline gave her a certain relief from her psychic prison. She began to write firstly extremely dense, elliptical poetry, which hampered her a bit in connecting thoughts, and prevented any easy, flexible transposition in recounting her unconscious. So, she abandoned poetry and took up stories, which were more in keeping with a somewhat bound and structured development of her psychic life. Starting from this, we touched on some dimensions of psychic life which may not go back to glacial man but do bring us to an historical experience and perhaps, beyond it, not only towards history but towards the *Historiale*. Nevertheless, it is a place of cure; because if one closes oneself solely in that space between the two subjects, one will fail to recognize the richness and great inspiration which lie at the base of the Freudian discovery.