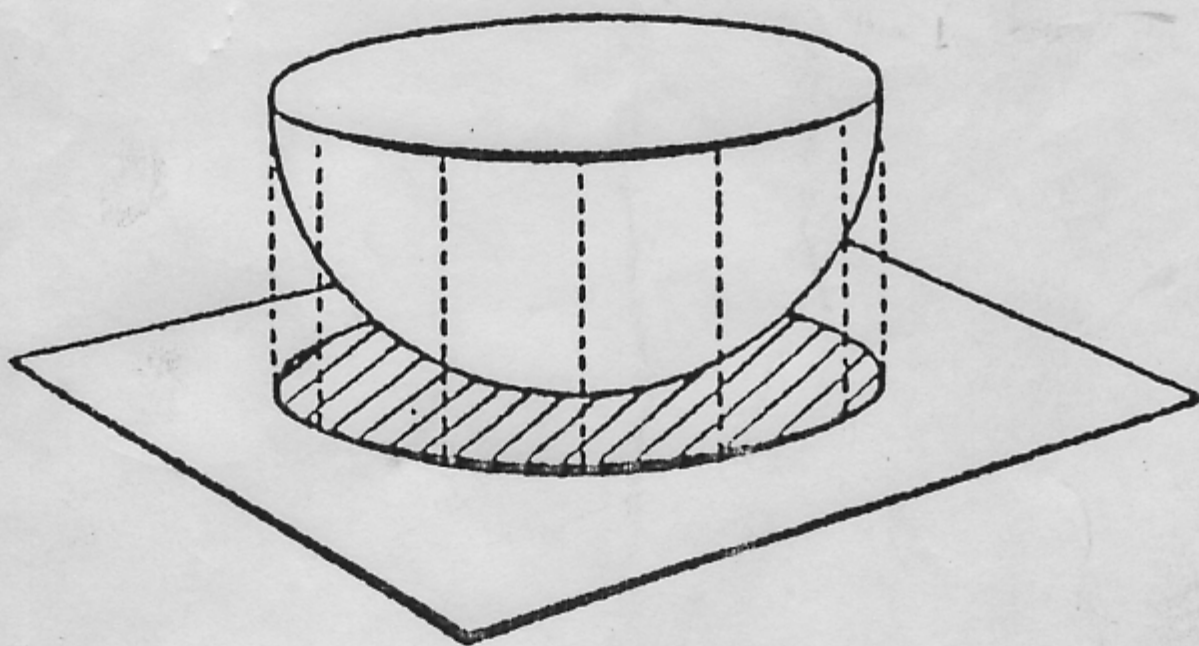


Centre
for
Freudian Analysis and Research

NEWSLETTER



July/August 1988 No.12

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ANXIETY; FROM FREUD TO LACAN

by Bill Phillips

Anxiety - Freud

The question of anxiety had a central place throughout Freud's work and was discussed extensively in his 1926 text 'Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety', which as Demoulin points out should be considered as the outline of a third topology in which anxiety forms the centre of Freud's development.

Freud considered inhibition as the expression of a restriction of an ego-function. The sexual function is liable to a number of disturbances, most of which exhibit the characteristics of simple inhibitions. The relationship between inhibitions and anxiety is fairly straightforward as some inhibitions obviously represent the renunciation of a function because its exercise would induce anxiety.

Inhibitions differ from symptoms as symptoms cannot be described as processes that take place within, or act upon the ego. The symptom results from repression. The mental process which results in a symptom maintains its existence independently outside the organisation of the ego. The symptom being the substitute for and the derivative of the repressed impulse, continually renews its demands for satisfaction, thus obliging the ego to give the signal of displeasure and to put itself in a defensive position.

Freud reviewed two cases involving phobia; those of "Little Hans" and the "Wolf Man", and concluded that in both cases the motive force of the repression was the fear of castration. The ideas that were contained in their anxiety; being bitten by a horse and being devoured by a wolf, were, according to Freud, distorted substitutes for the idea of being castrated by their father. This was the idea which had undergone repression. The affect of anxiety came from the repressing agency itself. The anxiety belonging to the animal phobias was an untransformed fear of castration. It was therefore a realistic fear (Realangst), that is, a fear of a danger which was actually impending or was thought to be real. It was anxiety that produced repression and not as Freud formerly believed, repression which produced anxiety.

The study of hysteria, obsessional neurosis and phobias led Freud to conclude that all three neuroses have as their outcome the destruction of the Oedipus complex, and that in all three neuroses the motive force of the ego's opposition is the fear of castration. This led Freud to a new theory in which the whole question of neurosis is centred around castration anxiety.

However, as Freud points out a major problem arises here. The fact that women suffer from neurosis and experience anxiety throws doubt on the idea that fear of castration is the only motive force of repression. Freud pointed out that although the presence of a castration complex can certainly be established in women, it is inappropriate to talk about castration anxiety where castration has already taken place. In spite of this objection, Freud retained his notion of a castration anxiety.

Freud then considered the essence of anxiety. Anxiety is an affect based on an increase of excitation which produces unpleasant feelings and finds relief through motor discharge. Freud considered an anxiety state as the reproduction of an experience which contained the necessary conditions of an increase in excitation and discharge along certain paths. He thought that it is the process of birth in which the combination of unpleasant feelings, impulses of discharge and bodily sensations, become the prototype of the effects of a danger. Anxiety has been repeated by us ever since in situations of danger, no longer as the reaction to an increase in excitation, but as the signal of danger.

At this point Freud then introduces the notion of anxiety as the signal of the loss of love. This allows him to explain not only the anxiety commonly found in children if they are with a stranger, in the dark or left alone, but also the direct sexual anxiety in women and castration anxiety in men. Castration anxiety is anxiety for the loss of love in as much as castration represents a new separation from the mother. This explanation allows Freud to reduce the sexual anxiety of both men and women to a single model of anxiety for the loss of love. However, while anxiety for the loss of love can explain the repression of a desire, it cannot explain the reactivation of an earlier desire which is characteristic of neurotic regression. Nevertheless, anxiety is a fundamental phenomenon of the neuroses and manifests itself in men essentially as castration anxiety. The symptom is formed by repression and a return of the repressed to remove the ego from the danger.

Freud added three addenda to the text. Firstly he remarks that anxiety is not a direct transformation of the libido as he formerly believed. Once again he differentiates between anxiety as the excess of excitation, the direct effect of the danger, and anxiety as the signal of danger. Anxiety as the signal of danger is linked to expectation - it is anxiety of something and is characterised by the indetermination and separation from the object. It is the anticipation of a distressing psychical situation that produces the signal of anxiety. Expectation refers to the situation of danger whereas the indetermination and separation from the object refer to the trauma that the danger anticipates. Thus anxiety is not without an object, only this object cannot be identified. If anxiety was initially a reaction of distress

to the trauma, as in birth, it is reproduced as a signal of distress.

Finally, Freud distinguishes anxiety from pain and mourning as a reaction to the loss of the object. Pain is the reaction to the loss of the object whereas anxiety is the reaction to the danger that the loss entails and by displacement to the loss itself. Pain comes from the nostalgic investment of the lost object and the passage from physical pain to psychical pain corresponds to the passage of narcissistic investment to the investment of the object, where the representation of the object plays the role of apart of the body. Mourning consists of removing the investment from the object, to separate oneself from the lost object.

Anxiety - Lacan

For Lacan, anxiety is linked to desire and to the phantasy which is the support of desire. When Freud spoke of the relationship between anxiety and the danger of the loss of the object, the loss of object that Freud is referring to here is that of the breast and the faeces.

Lacan argues that if anxiety is related to the loss of the object, it is not nostalgia for the breast that causes anxiety, but its imminence, it is not the absence of the mother but the excess of her presence, and it is not the prohibition of masturbation but the proximity of the desire of the mother. Thus according to Lacan, what causes anxiety is not the imminence of the loss of the object, but the imminence of the object when the loss is lacking.

Object (a)

Object (a) is the cause of desire for Lacan, the object that loses itself in the movement of entry into language. This can be illustrated by the cotton reel game described by Freud. The reel that the infant throws should be considered as part of its body, an object (a), and it is in this movement that he begins his invocation "oo-da", "fort-da". It is through the loss of the object (a) that the infant starts to talk, whereas the object (a) as the lost object becomes the object of the drive. The being of the subject is the object (a), the lost part of the body. Therefore in the cotton reel game, the reel can be considered as the (a) and as the being of the subject.

Lacan has distinguished 5 object (a)s corresponding to 5 levels of the division of the subject in language, which for Lacan replaces the classical theory of psychosexual development.

1. The oral stage, where the object is the breast corresponds to the symbolic relation of the demand of the Other (the mother).
2. The anal stage where the object is the faeces corresponds to the demand of the Other.
3. The phallic stage where the object is lacking corresponds to the jouissance of the Other.
4. The scopic stage where the object is the look; the look corresponds to the desire of the Other.
5. The invoking stage where the object is the voice; the voice corresponds to the desire of the Other.

At each of these stages there is a type of anxiety and desire.

The Desire of the Other

When Freud spoke of direct sexual anxiety, Lacan remarks that this anxiety is the effect of the desire of the Other, in that the subject does not know what object he is for this Other. Lacan illustrates this with the paradigm of a giant praying mantis which can be compared to Freud's phallic mother: "I am in front of this giant praying mantis not knowing what object I am for it, but it seems that I am about to serve as the object of its overwhelming jouissance". Thus Lacan's paradigm of the praying mantis is opposed to the Anglo-Saxon notion of the "ideal coping mother" or the "good enough mother".

Castration anxiety is a variety of sexual anxiety when faced with the enigma of the desire of the Other, the subject imagines that the Other is demanding his castration. Sexual anxiety in both sexes is a phallic sexual interpretation of the desire and jouissance of the Other, and the phallic interpretation of anxiety is what distinguishes the neurotic from the psychotic.

Lacan points out that the question of the desire of the Other is what Freud never took into account in his quest for truth and perhaps refers to the part of Freud's desire that was not analysed. Thus what escaped Freud in the Oedipus myth was that Jocasta's desire played a part in Oedipus's destiny and likewise the desire of "Little Hans's" mother who allowed "Little Hans" into her bed each morning despite her husband's protests.

If castration anxiety is anxiety faced with a real danger as Freud believed, the real danger is not the punitive retaliation where the father really castrates the child. A five year old child can distinguish the real from the imaginary and doesn't believe in threats of castration

sometimes given by the mother or educator. Castration by the father is a scenario, a phantasy which has the function of introducing the father and the phallus when the subject is without recourse faced with the desire of the Other (the mother here). It is the path by which the paternal metaphor is introduced.

In the confrontation with the desire of the Other there is an object at stake, the phallus. Anxiety has a close relationship with the phallic function and castration anxiety appears in children particularly in the form of nightmares, as soon as their preoccupations centre on the phallic function in relationship to infantile masturbation. Anxiety is linked to the phallic function in terms of a phallic interpretation of the desire and the jouissance of the Other.

When confronted with the call from the maternal jouissance, the infant finds itself helpless, often with feelings of shame and inferiority. It is because the infant finds itself helpless at the phallic level that it experiences the call from the jouissance of the Other by way of the bite in "Little Hans's" case and by being devoured in the "Wolf Man's" case. Thus the adhesion to the taboo on incest conveyed by culture that the father represents, offers an escape for the infant faced with an untenable situation. If anxiety persists beyond the incestuous relationship, its because as the organ of jouissance, the phallus is structurally lacking. It is as lacking - φ that it has to be symbolised by both sexes and this is what Lacan calls castration.

The Phantasy

At first the subject is constituted as divided in language at the cost of the loss of the object (a) - this is alienation. There is a second instance where it is no longer a question of sacrifice (ie. primal repression) but the first interpretation of the desire of the Other. This is separation, the response to the enigma of the desire of the Other by the phantasy, the scenario where the subject recovers himself in assuming the lost object which was his own being. This is what Lacan writes as $\$ \langle \rangle a$. $\$$ refers to the barred subject, divided by the signifier, the product of desire. The object instead of being separate in the drive function, is merging into the subject's attempted retention of his narcissistic aims. The lozenge can be read as the screen of the phantasy which blocks progress along associative pathways and so replaces what would be a dialectic of psycho-sexual development (a dialectic between the child's knowledge and jouissance) by an imaginary phantasy scenario. This mechanism is very much favoured by neurotics and the way that the phantasy is inherited is as follows; the child effectively inherits his parents phantasies in the same way as he inherits the superego.

When the desire of the Other takes on phallic signification at the level of jouissance in the Other, the object is lacking - φ . It lacks in two ways; it is not a transferable object and it is not an adequate response - the tool of jouissance. Here the subject can only enter into the path of the phantasy already there, and it is in relation to this phallic gap that the phantasy takes on all its importance - in the "deferred reaction" before the enigma of the desire of the Other, which confronts the subject with a possible jouissance of the Other while he is lacking the phallic support, the subject responds to anxiety by the phantasy where he imagines himself as the object (a) for the Other.

If Freud was able to talk about a primordial masochism, it is because the primordial position in the phantasy is to be the object (a) of the Other and that the phantasy intensifies the "natural" condition of the subject where the child is the object (a) of his mother. It is not just the object (a) that produces a masochistic effect but primarily the intrusion of the signifying structure. However, at the same time the phantasy is the avoidance of castration in the sense of a shelter taken by the subject in relation to the symbolisation of the phallic lack ($-\varphi$).

As object (a) in the phantasy, the subject takes refuge faced with the difficulty of symbolising the ($-\varphi$) and is at the same time the most real of his being; what the subject is for the Other as object.

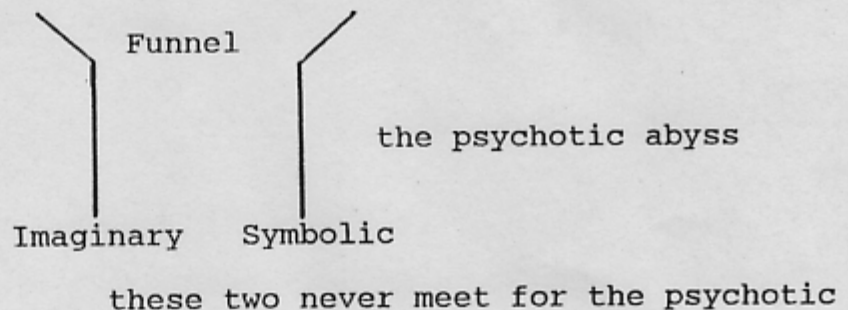
Freud made the objection that anxiety for the loss of love could explain the repression of sexual desire but not the regression of the obsessional to the desire of anal retention. Anal anxiety is the equivalent of castration anxiety and the anal object acts as a substitute for the lacking phallic object ($-\varphi$). At the level of the phantasy the obsessional makes himself the anal object and bypasses the gap of castration by instituting his desire as impossible in the specular scopic field, where he is faced with the phallic illusion (the woman as phallic image).

As far as the hysteric is concerned, in the phantasy she takes the place of the nothing. It is around an indefinable nothing that the drives turn and this is also the nothing which causes the passion of anorexia.

If the hysteric's desire is the desire of the Other, her desire is by definition unsatisfied because the object of her desire is another's desire, a lack taken as an object. Thus the characteristic of the phantasy of the hysteric is the insatiability or the unsatisfaction of desire whereas the characteristic of the phantasy of the obsessional is the impossibility of desire. This demonstrates that phantasies can be structurally differentiated in the same way that Freud wanted to structurally differentiate symptoms.

As Demoulin points out the Lacanian conception of anxiety enables us to understand the birth trauma in another way. Birth is not separation from the mother as Freud thought. The foetus is separated from the placenta and the envelopes as a part of itself, the first object a.

Thus the experience of anxiety is decisive for the neuroses and the psychoses, because the phantasy, by which the neurotic responds even if he is unable to overcome the anxiety, is already a beginning of symbolization, whereas the psychotic becomes object (a) of the Other in the real without the medium of the phantasy. There is no imaginary in the psychotic experience, ie. fairytales are real.



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OBJECTS AND ANXIETY

by Beatrice Khiara

When the eye of a praying mantis turns upon its mate, it is far from reassuring. Gone, says Lacan, is the reference of narcissistic identification which ensnares the subject ("impedicare" being the root of "empêcher", a word used by Lacan to qualify the symptom) in a definite specular form, $i(a)$. In his seminar on anxiety, Lacan explains the dual nature of the eye/mirror, which loses its usual function as soon as the subject is alienated in the signifier. Moreover, since no point in any spatial body or image, if it is to remain consistent, can be alienated from the position it occupies, the activity of the signifier, which depends on a dialectic with absence, must be held in check. At the point where the eye is eluded, it cannot be seen to be missing and so it comes to represent $(-\varphi)$ by which the image is maintained.

A blur in the image may however take on the role of the eye in its "objectalité", says Lacan. Where the non specular residue interferes with the image, the eye will be seen to be looking: the lack invades the image and the question of desire troubles the mirage of narcissistic identification. The illusion wavers. Lacan places the phenomenon of anxiety at this point in the dialectic of identification and desire. In his analogy, the eyes of the marble Bouddha are only just closed. The screen is maintained but the play of light on the stony surface evokes the desire of the god. Since the image, then, is not homogeneous, the subject is indeterminate, in other words there is a discrepancy between being and the mask offered by the stone icon. The "Bhoddisattva" however is not altogether a Bouddha; it is an artist's rendering of the god. The desire of the god is checked and the illusion is "seen" to deceive. The artist coaxes the beholder into abandoning his gaze. He encourages an activity of the signifier, whereby the gaze already occupies and preserves $(-\varphi)$.

Perhaps the eye of the Bhoddisattva really is at "degree zero", in so far as there has been a substitution of a mythical primary subject, but not so the eye of the praying mantis. The subject's "Che Vuoi?" goes unanswered. The eye becomes an evil eye, tempered by a reference to castration. In so far as desire depends on castration the phenomenon of the evil eye exists structurally prior to a separation with the gaze. At this point the subject does not know what object of desire he represents for the Other: $i(a)$ does not offer a reassuring (mis)conception of (a) . The artist however, says Lacan in Seminar XI, creates something to see which transfixes the subject, but also assures that he will be swept up into the dialectic of identificatory haste.

Lacan says that anxiety appears before any articulation of the Other's demand. Originally it is linked with the future subject's entry into the world. The cry of the new born baby is the result of this traumatic confrontation with the unknown, but first of all the child is choked by the presence of the Other. Only then does the child begin to breathe and perform the separation himself. Similarly, the child carries out a separation with the mother's breast. This shows a desire for separation which is nonetheless sanctioned by the subject. For Lacan, the separation is less between child and mother than between the child and a part of himself, the breast. But the breast does establish a link with the Other, in so far as the mother is the vital source of milk. Anxiety can be aroused by the child's fear that the breast will dry up.

In the next stage when the Other's demand is established, (a) can be properly articulated within the signifying chain. Thus, the object exists prior to the subject's anxiety in the confrontation with the desire of the Other, but is invoked at this moment and linked to castration. The object takes on a particular value for the subject: while in a sense the hysteric assumes her division, the obsessional does his best to avoid it although he does not identify completely with the reject. The obsessional postpones the access to an ultimate object which would entail his eradication, notably with the activity of thinking. His desire exemplifies the structure of desire as impossible. His symptomatic doubts reinforce the inhibitory defence, whilst he simultaneously strives to reproduce the original trace of the subject through an activity of the signifier. Hence his anxiety: the obsessional "does not know", does not know how to respond to the blur in the picture.

The gift is clearly fundamental in this relation to the Other. It serves as an analogy for the absent phallus. The subject is able to maintain a calm mirage of omnipresent power: the gift like the image and it provides a pedestal for the Other. Anal desire is linked to scopophilic desire by this agalmic function.

When desire is separated from jouissance, $(-\varphi)$ is the residue. (a) is negatively symbolised by $(-\varphi)$. Whereas the obsessional brings a substitutive desire into play, this central lack can be affirmed in the orgasm which is structurally analogous to anxiety in that it confirms a place of being without a predicate. Whilst on all other levels the imaginary phallus mediates between the subject and the cause of desire, there is no copula in copulation itself. The Other now represents a potential agent of castration. The phallus mediates the desire of the Other but in this relation the phallus is lacking and anxiety is not masked. Consequently the subject is undetermined, nowhere and everywhere, an omnipresent cause of desire.

In the phantasy the subject identifies with the cause of desire. This is exemplified in the Wolf Man's dream: the image in the window frame represents the state of paralysis, in which the subject is the phallus, omnipresent and alienated in his ideal of power.

The voice can become the support of the Other's desire in so far as the "clamour" of guilt occupies the place of (- φ), proclaiming the "fault" of desire. The tenets of the Law which founds desire are a barrier to the father's original incest but the opacity of the voice nonetheless maintains the father's prerogative. The father's presence is both preserved and masked by the voice which obscures his unchecked jouissance. His desire is no longer felt as "unheimlich", a threat to the subject's very being: the voice keeps it "geheim".

The Father, the Bouddha and the gods must be humoured in their desire if they are to continue to desire. In this way they answer to a law which delimits their power and keeps them at bay.

ROUSSEAU, LACAN: THE FRAME OF ANXIETY

by Katharine Swarbrick

Lacan's choice of the schema of the two mirrors in order to map phenomena of the uncanny and their attendant anxiety, privileges the specular field, and focuses the edge, here edge of the mirror, as frame of the specular illusion. Upholding the latter are the absence, central to the entire system of representations of the minus phi, $-\varphi$, and the point I of the ego-ideal, whose default, with the onset of anxiety, reveal the specular identity of the self as a narcissistic illusion. Beyond this image, the non-specular, unnameable object tied to the edge of mirror, makes its appearance in the place of phallic emptiness, $(-\varphi)$, the result being an abrupt recession of the familiar, visual landscape, and the emergence of radical unfamiliarities of the kind masterfully conveyed by writers such as E.T.A. Hoffman.

Let us attempt to add to the explanatory force of literature's contribution to the psycho-analytic themes of anxiety and the uncanny, by proposing an incident from the seventh book of Rousseau's Confessions as a means of exploring Lacan's insistence of the importance, to the phenomenon of anxiety of the following: specularity, the scopic object, the double, the imaginary phallus, the ideal and the frame.

By way of general introduction to the episode which portrays the débâcle of Rousseau's meeting with a Venetian courtesan named Zuletta, we might summarize the hero's dilemma as lying between the irreconcilables of natural beauty and the social significations surrounding a woman assigned to him as a reward for professional services. The incident lies at the core of an elaborate narrative framing technique which spans book seven, and progresses in three stages correlative to the descending sequence which punctuates Lacan's seminar on anxiety: inhibition, symptom, anxiety. Rousseau, inhibited on the threshold of sexual pleasure by a sudden mortal chill which runs through his veins and makes him unable to stand, passes to the symptomatic idea of a hidden flaw on the courtesan's body, which, rendering the otherwise adorable young person odious, would account for his unrivalled possession of her; and he finally proceeds to the actual discovery of the vicious defect which takes the form of a "téton borgne" whose identity has confounded Rousseau's commentators, but which we might begin by calling an inverted nipple. The appearance of the latter puts the projected sexual encounter out of the question.

The co-ordinates of anxiety, demonstrable at every stage of the débâcle, begin with the "tout d'un coup", the 'all of a

sudden' which initially brings Rousseau to his knees, and culminate in the manifestation of this pre-eminently mysterious piece of flesh, which, affecting one of the courtesan's breasts disrupts the specular symmetry she affords, and shatters the imaginary mirage which textual detail has carefully constructed. For Zuletta imaginarily condenses whole categories of feminine beauty, cloistered virgins, houris, women of the harem, and functions both as an imagic totality of rare perfection, and as the mirror which reflects the hero's own idealised self-image, until the underside of the beautiful surface comes to light. The brusque dysmmetry of that moment illustrates something missing from the specular image, whose place has been usurped by an indefinable, real presence here intimated in the undecidable nature of the inverted nipple.

The image in which Rousseau no longer finds himself, is the one in which he loses the supporting point I of the ego-ideal, towards whose vacillating protection he turns in the reference to "ceux qui devraient se la disputer". The other man, the prohibitive third term which would distance this no longer specularisable other which Zuletta has become, this unnameable jouissance she incarnates, is actively beseeched; but beseeched beyond the image where the multiplying ideal identifications, the worthier rivals, take on that extremist form of the uncanny, the form of the double. For of Rousseau's possible rivals the text names only one; a former lover, Brémond, and Zuletta's initial pretext for throwing herself unannounced into Rousseau's arms, because an unaccountable similarity between the two men causes her to mistake the stranger, Rousseau, for the discarded beau!

The feelings of inferiority which Jean-Jacques expresses in describing Zuletta's interest in him as inconceivable, and the shame with which he is left after her rapid abandonment of him, suggest that we might focus Rousseau's sexual anxiety around the incompletely symbolised lack of the imaginary phallus, registered less as impossibility, than as key-note of the venetian scenario - impotence. Clinically and classically the inherent problematic of symbolising the - φ advances an evasion of the abyss of castration in a substitution of the anal object and a reinforcing promotion of the scopic field, neither of which elements are absent from the textual connotations which, in Rousseau surround the appearance of the fabulous defect: for the latter sign stigmatises Zuletta first and foremost as seat of moral depravity, "rebut de la nature", scum of the earth, yet additionally evokes in its quality of "borgne" literally meaning blind, the scopic dimension, the very eye of conscience. In other words, Rousseau faced no longer with his own likeness, but with the Other of jouissance, has recourse to self-representation in two, possibly 3 objects, oral anal and scopic, the latter intimating the blindness of the subject's own removed eyes, to paraphrase Lacan at the

zenith of anxiety the impossible view which menaces him from his own eyes on the ground.

To conclude with frame of anxiety, the edge where the object resides; Rousseau's seventh book unfurls in an infinite regress of frames, the most immediately apposite being the very edge or neckline of the courtesan's gown, adorned as he tells us with pink pompoms and subject to the sudden movement which, like the opening of the window-frame in the dream of the "Wolf Man", reveals the full scope of its unfamiliarity. On each side of the failed encounter lies the beginning and end of Rousseau's acquaintance with a Venice well equipped to reflect by implication a multiplex form of the scopic object, in its hidden political machinations, we well as in the masked faces which make up its abandonment to the much prolonged carnival season. Framing the Venetian story is the account of Rousseau's dedicated ascent of the echelons of Parisian society, of the determined exploits of a self which in the central sexual encounter of book seven, steps forward as the hollow myth which loses even its own virtual image. And finally, the framing of the second half of the autobiographical enterprise opened by book seven, is constituted by Rousseau's dire prognostications concerning the encroaching persecutory plot which, at the end of the last book, entirely surrounds him. This last frame of anxiety, encapsulating Rousseauian paranoia, is nothing other than the author's sustained attempt to close the window frame itself, an act which, determined by the self-imposed injunction to confess to everything, remains, till the end, unrealised.

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1. cf Ecrits pg 674
2. Rousseau, J-J Oeuvres Complètes Tome 1 Bibliothèque de la Pléiade
3. Lacan, J Seminaire X: L'Angoisse 1962-1963
4. Rousseau, J-J Oeuvres Complètes pg 321
5. ibid pg 322

Child Analysis Working Group

The programme for next term is as follows:

1. 25 October 1988 - Katharine Swarbrick: Rousseau's "Emile."
2. 29 November 1988 - Bice Benvenuto: The cases of Little Dick and Little Richard - Melanie Klein and R Lefort in Lacan's Seminar I.
3. 13 December 1988 - Danuza Machado: The Mother-child relation and the Symbolic order.

R E A D I N G L I S T

- Emile - J J Rousseau
- Seminar I - J Lacan (Available in English) in particular chapters 6, 7, 8 for 29 November and chapters 13, 14, 17, 18 for 13 December.
- Participants are advised to read M Klein's case of Little Dick, in The importance of Symbol-formation in the Development of the Ego. 1930, The Hogarth Press, London 1948.

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