

SEXUAL POSITION AND THE END OF ANALYSIS

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I would like to defend the following thesis in this intervention: the definition of the passage to the analyst, and therefore of the end of analysis, is correlative to the advance of the theory of sexualisation in psychoanalysis. My claim therefore is that any definition of the analyst, and consequently of the analytical work which is required of him for his production, corresponds to a conception of sexualisation. This thesis implies the development of several points.

First of all, why link sexuality and the formation of the analyst? Let us recall that the field of psychoanalysis is the field of the sexual, that psychoanalysis has no other pertinence than that of the clinic of sexuality. It is there that we treat the effects of *jouissance* on a subject of the unconscious determined by its capture in language. Consequently, the knotting of *jouissance* to the unconscious is the very object of an analysis.

On the other hand, psychoanalysis implies a definition of sexuality as sexualisation. The point is not so much to stress the dimension of chronological development of this process, as to take note of a disparity between the biological real of sex — defined in the human species by the difference between male and female, and therefore by a duality — and its symbolic determinations, namely the different solutions imposed on the subject by the structure of language and the defiles of the signifier. Sexualisation is then a process of complex identifications and analysis, which is the movement of the fall of identifications, has therefore for objective to reach the point of separation between the *jouissance* which sustains the subject and the identifications with which the subject covers it.

Lastly, this thesis I am putting forward implies that the knotting of sexual *jouissance* to the unconscious is, to some extent at least, open to formalisation and thus transmissible. There is no clinic without epistemology, this is one of the aspects of the ethics of psychoanalysis. The Freudian cause is the cause of the formalisation of knowledge against the bloc of the ineffable, unspeakable. It could be shown, although I will not do so here, that all the analysts who have contributed to the elaboration of analytical knowledge have been led, often implicitly, to formulate a theory of sexualisation, and that it turns out that their conception of the conclusion of the treatment depended upon their theory of sexualisation. The formalisation of the real, in psychoanalysis as in other fields, modifies the frameworks of the real. I will only envisage this articulation with respect to Lacan's teaching, since it is on the basis of his teaching that this point could emerge explicitly. But I will do this within the limits of this intervention, not in a systematic and erudite way, as would doubtless be appropriate, but starting from the pressing actuality of my current work on a question which the pass unveiled for me.

The Freudian approach to sexualisation took the form of a myth, that of Oedipus. This epic form allowed Freud to approach structure as the dynamic of sexualisation and to grasp in an imaginarised form the knotting of the sexual, traumatic *jouissance* of the body to the unconscious as ordered set of signifiers. We know that Lacan re-interpreted this Freudian sexualisation with the paternal metaphor. And thus, a conception of the end of the treatment is deployed correlative to this formalisation of Oedipus through the writing of the paternal metaphor, that is to say through the link between the function of the Name-of-the-Father and the Desire-of-the-Mother. In a seminar of January 1991, in which he elaborated the problematic informing the chronology of Lacan's teaching regarding the formation of the analysts and the transmission of psychoanalysis, J.-A. Miller studied the modifications of the conception of the concept of the phallus in the theorisation of the end of analysis. We also know that the phallus is the key signifier in the definition of the masculine and feminine sexual positions. In 1958, and at the beginning of the 60's, that is to say notably in *The Signification of the Phallus* and in *Remarque sur le Rapport de Daniel Lagache*, the phallic function organises the minimal combinatory which, based on a unique signifier, the phallus, allows the production of the two formulae of masculine and feminine desire: $\Phi(a)$ and $A(\varphi)$. As a consequence, it is also on the basis of the phallic function that analysis is thought. The phallus is the mark of desire as such, so much so that the end of analysis is envisaged from

the perspective of the uncovering and revelation of this mark. At that time, the sense given by Lacan to the term 'mark' is different from what it will be in, for example, *Note italienne*. At the time of *The Signification of the Phallus* it refers to a signifying mark, an indelible mark which language effects on the subject. The end of analysis takes account of the indelible, unsurpassable aspect of the phallic mark of desire. This epiphany is strictly correlated to the Name-of-the-Father; something unnameable of the maternal desire is symbolised by the phallus as lack, consequence of the function of the symbolic law. The phallus is the signifier of the feeling of life as it results from signifying mortification. The two formulae which I have just quoted come to replace the Freudian solution of castration anxiety and penis envy. Therefore the analysis ends on the phallic master-signifier, unveiled as the spring of desire operating in the shadow of the paternal function. From this perspective, the end of the text *The Direction of the Treatment* traces the portrait of the analyst, in the event Freud, as 'man of desire', the one who unveils its 'uncoupled signifier' which speaks [*dit*] the unique sense of life, namely that desire is carried towards death by the very fact of signifying mortification.

As early as the end of the *Ecrits* another definition of the phallus emerges which, by insisting on its correlation with the castration of the Other, situates it in the perspective of phobia and, above all, fetish, as an element which allows the subject to maintain himself in the position of 'I don't want to know anything about it'. Phobia and fetish are two possible responses to maternal castration for the neurotic subject and, by the same token, to the difference between the sexes. And at the end of *Science and Truth*, Lacan envisages two possible issues for the end of the treatment, phobic and fetishist, on the basis of the phallus defined in this way. The phallus is no longer envisaged as symbolic, a bar on the subject testifying to its relation with language, but as 'index' of a point of lack which it contributes to veiling. Jacques-Alain Miller stressed that the phallic mark of desire then revealed the central point of repression, and that the reduction of the phallus to its function of fetish allowed for a movement towards a dephallicisation of the subject at the time of the end of analysis. But, correlatively, this dephallicisation opened another perspective as to sexualisation. Until then, the latter remained open to formulation on the basis of the signifier 'phallus', and therefore strictly reliant on the universal of the paternal function, the metaphor of the Name-of-the-Father allowing the writing of a relation between father and mother. The definition of the phallus as fetish, and therefore as veil of the castration of the Other, opens a way beyond Oedipus and towards that which, of the sexual relation, cannot be written.

The movement of the dephallicisation of desire takes place in the critique of the two Freudian myths, that of Oedipus in the seminar *L'envers de la psychanalyse*, and that of Eros in the seminar *Le savoir du psychanalyste*. The thread followed by Lacan remains Freud's desire, and it is from Freud's stumbling blocks that Lacan brings to light a different position of the analyst.

Elsewhere, by taking up certain passages of the seminar *L'envers de la psychanalyse*, I have developed the fact that Lacan used the notion of the paternal metaphor to show that it was his interpretation of the Freudian myths of the father, but that, besides this re-interpretation, their structural analysis also allowed for a formulation of the quilting point of the desire of Freud, of the analyst; it is a desire to equate desire with law, or again the function of the dead father with the condition of *jouissance*: for Freud, there is no salvation outside the phallus. This analysis allows Lacan to displace the end of analysis, as well as sexualisation, towards a horizon not limited by the father and the universality of the phallic function. I will not take it up again here. Let's however stress two points. Firstly, castration is no longer defined on the basis of the register of the symbolic but from that of the real: castration is not a fantasy, "it is the real operation introduced through the effect of the signifier, and it may be any signifier, in the relation to sex". We can see that the status of sexualisation is modified by the fact that Lacan insists on the register of the real to envisage sexuality rather than keeping it in the register of the symbolic, that is to say, to envisage castration only in the perspective of the Other of the signifier.

Secondly, “there is a cause of desire only as product of this operation” and “the fantasy dominates the whole reality of desire, that is to say, the law”. It is the operation of ‘real castration’, as we have just defined it, which produces the object, the object that fantasy - an heterogeneous construction -will put in relation with the subject of the signifier. The object *a*, at the level of its production, is therefore not of the same cloth as the signifier ‘phallus’ which comes to veil it.

Sexuation is no longer to be taken as the result of the structure of the paternal metaphor alone, it requires that a real that is foreign to the signifying combinatory be integrated into it. Sexuation is defined by Lacan in *Remarque sur le rapport de Daniel Lagache*: while it introduced this major simplification of the phallus as signifier, this definition still went under the Freudian banner of the phallic phase and implied a symmetry between the two sexes on the basis of the axis of the phallus. And the stress put on the real of sexuality requires a supplementary construction.

Just as in 1969-70, Lacan tangled with the myths of the father in Freud and thus introduced an orientation of sexuation grounded on the object beyond the father and a dephallicisation of the end of treatment, in the following year 1970-71, in the Seminar *Le savoir du psychoanalyste*, it is through the critique of the myth of Eros that Lacan will introduce a new conception of the ‘One’ which will allow him to think the real of sex in the symbolic order.

On the side of biology, that is to say of the real, there are two sexes: “The fact that we may know with certainty that sex can be found there, in two little cells which do not look alike, [...] in the name of this the psychoanalyst believes that there is a sexual relation”. On side of the real therefore there are two but no relation.

On the side of the signifier, it is from the phallic signifier and the paternal exception that the sexual position is formulated. But no other relation than that of the paternal metaphor inscribes can be formulated: the father cannot be assimilated to the man and the woman is always contaminated by the mother.

And yet the Freudian myth of Eros is designed precisely in order to be able to think that two can make one, in other words Eros is there to state the possibility of a relation. “To find, in Freud’s work, the idea that Eros is founded — notice the equivocation — by making One out of the two, is a strange idea from which proceeds this outrageous idea, which Freud nevertheless repudiated with all his being, of universal love. Life’s founding force would entirely be in this Eros, the principle of union”.

Lacan’s concern, in his critique of the unifying myth of Eros, is to be able to think the One without introducing the idea of union, of the relation between the sexes. For all that, he does not define this One on the basis of the unicity of the phallus for the two sexes, since we have seen that the position of the primacy of the phallus in sexuation becomes untenable from the moment when all in sexuality is not phallic, namely when the not-all signifier is introduced beyond the dead father. The stake is to produce that which can be said of the One to fight this crude mythology, for, I quote, “nothing is more dangerous than the confusions arising as to what is the One”. Why dangerous? Because the idea of the One obtained from the fusion of two is precisely introduced through the power of speech, and because all the clinic of love yet shows that in no way, and for both sexes, is there a question of becoming One in love.

Thus, to the One of Eros Lacan opposes the One of the set: the set consists of different elements, all distinct, but without any support of either imagination or the order in which they are enumerated. In fact, every element is of the same value [*se vaut*] and is repeated: Lacan speaks of thesameness [*mêmeté*] of *absolute difference*. It is on the basis of this difference between the One of the set and the One of elements which are repeated that Lacan moves on to think the position of *jouissance* of a subject. It is possible to situate this mark of *jouissance* through its effects, and to go from the One which is repeated to the One-all-alone which makes the

difference, non-enumerable, non-countable. In this sense, an analyst is in the position of a traumatic parent, as Lacan says in the same seminar, since he must return to the point of junction where in a particular speech a unique signifier marked a body, thereby constituting a mark of *jouissance* which is repeated. It is therefore no longer the at-least-one of the father or the One of the phallic signifier that gives its orientation to the analysis, for the latter also requires that this trace of the anchoring point of S_1 on the body be isolated through its repetitions and, in the process, dissociated from object *a*.

From this critique of the two Freudian myths Lacan produces the following advance.

The step beyond [*pas au-delà*] the father through his reduction to the exception which sustains the universality of symbolic castration and the quest for a definition of the One in psychoanalysis, resting on a mathematical model which allows it to elude the fusional relation, come to their conclusion with the formulation of the set of the four formulae of sexuation which constitute a set without which, as Lacan says in Seminar *Le savoir du psychoanalyste*, "it is impossible to orient oneself correctly in what is at stake in analytical practice in so far as it deals with this something which is commonly defined as being man, on the one hand, and, on the other, this correspondent, similarly called woman, who leaves him alone."

The link between sexuation and the definition of the end of analysis is therefore established. It seems important to stress the following elements.

There is a Lacanian orientation of the end of the treatment because Lacan made a decisive step as to sexuation. It is a double step: on the one hand there is a dephallicisation of desire which goes together with a taking account of the real of the object cause of desire, on the other hand, a de-symmetrisation of sexual positions, one being the universal masculine one, that is to say including all subjects, the other feminine, not entirely governed by the universal and therefore, to this extent, of the order of inconsistency. Any analysis is therefore conducted on the basis of the set of the four formulae of sexuation which sustain the statement of that which is the compass of the analyst, the axiom: "There is no sexual relation which could be written", a statement which comes in opposition to that which founds the order of speech.

At the end of an analysis, therefore, a new dialectic of love and desire is produced. This novelty is introduced, on the one hand, by a modification of desire which is no longer defined solely as the repression of castration but on the basis of the object which crystallised the subject's *jouissance* and, on the other hand, by an inversion of the movement of love: love goes from the traumatic encounter with the real towards phallic necessity, namely from a contingency defined as a 'ceasing not to be written' towards a 'does not cease to be written'. In analysis, the movement goes from the phallic necessity 'which does not cease to be written' towards the refound contingency of the encounter with the real: what has been traumatic for a subject.

But to say that analysis is oriented through the set of the formulae of sexuation, and that it thereby requires that the feminine position be glimpsed at [*entrevue*], does not authorise us to say that the analyst is in a feminine position. In this case, what is it that differentiates the feminine position from that of the analyst? I propose the following idea: the common point between the feminine position and that of the analyst lies in contingency, a contingency which, let me remind you, is characterised by the encounter with a real that can finally be written and is defined in the formula: $\neg \forall x \Phi x$, which is the formula of the not-all. That which distinguishes the position of the analyst from the feminine one is not, either, the fact that the formula of the not-all can only be sustained there as supplementary to the two masculine formulae of the universal, since it is also the case of any feminine position. What differentiates the position of the analyst from a feminine position lies in the formula of the impossible, written by Lacan: $\exists x \neg \Phi x$, that is to say at the junction point with the real, this point which is of the order of the undecidable. It is thus on the basis of the contingency of desire, on the one hand, and of love as determined by the non-relation, on the

other, that I suggest we can grasp the analyst's position. It is specific in the sense that it is differentiated from a desiring position organised by the empire of the phallus and from a feminine position which remains organised by the object.

Translated by Bogdan Wolf

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