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THE SEED OF SEGREGATION

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.....the offering to obscure gods of an object of sacrifice is something to which few subjects can resist succumbing, as if under some monstrous spell.
(Lacan, 1964 [1992], pp. 282-283).

The context of Lacan's words is, precisely, when he himself was the object of sacrifice negotiated by the French Society of Psychoanalysis in order to get the recognition of the IPA. That negotiation offered its object of sacrifice: Lacan himself, who was removed from the list of training analysts and segregated from the analytic practice recognized by the association founded by Freud. Thus, Lacan was prompted to leave that association and found his own School. But Lacan gets the idea of a sacrifice to obscure gods from a specific social and historical event, one which fractured the 20th century and changed the Western episteme, the *Shoah*:

There is something profoundly masked in the critique of the history that we have experienced. This, re-enacting the most monstrous and supposedly superseded forms of the holocaust, is the drama of Nazism. I would hold that no meaning given to history (...) is capable of accounting for this resurgence—which only goes to show that the offering to obscure gods of an object of sacrifice is something to which few subjects can resist succumbing, as if under some monstrous spell. (Lacan, 1964 [1992], pp. 282-283)

Therefore, the face of the obscure gods within the context of this class in *Seminar XI* (1964 [1992]) still has the hues of the SS uniforms; however, based on Lacan's statement we wonder what the obscure gods of our time look like.

These are the questions *LAPSO* seeks to answer in this issue: Who are the obscure gods of our time? Who are their objects of sacrifice? Who are those that succumb to their fascination?

Lacan will no longer use the representation of the obscure gods to refer to the processes of segregation, but throughout his teaching he will not cease to worry about—and refer to—this subject.

Thus, in 1967, Lacan somehow links segregation with the capitalist discourse when he says, "Our future as common markets will be balanced by an increasingly hard-line extension of the process of segregation" (1967 [1992], p. 22).

In the same year, Lacan articulates segregation with science:

...the most burning issue of our times in so far as this era is the first to have to undergo the calling into question of every social structure as a result of the progress of science. This is something which we are going to be contending with (...) and in an ever more pressing fashion: segregation. (2012, pp. 382-383)

One year later, he refers to segregation as the condition of the fall of the Other, embodied in the

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figure of the father, and its symbolic function:

I believe that in our day and age, we could classify the mark, the scar, left by the father's disappearance under the heading and general notion of *segregation*.

The common belief is that our civilization's universalism and communication standardize human relations. I, on the contrary, believe that what characterizes our century—and we cannot fail to be aware of it—is a complex, reinforced and constantly overlapping form of segregation that only manages to generate more and more barriers. (2016, p. 9)

Later on, when Lacan teaches his seminar *Ou Pire* (1971-1972 [2011]), he will relate segregation to the body. Even though he includes the word “fraternity” in his discourse (which refers us straight to the imaginary statute of the body and the intrinsic aggressiveness of the imaginary a-a' axis), it should be noted that the body, at this moment in Lacan's teaching, resonates with the real from *jouissance*. Lacan says:

Since I must not all the same allow you to look at the future through rose colored glasses, you should know that what is arising, what one has not yet seen to its final consequences, and which for its part is rooted in the body, in the fraternity of the body, is racism. (1971-1972 [2011], p. 236)

However, there is a central quote from *Seminar XVIII* (Lacan, 1971 [2009]) that needs to be highlighted. Once again, Lacan is talking about narcissism, but this time to refer to the process of identification at play in mass psychology. He states the following:

What must be simply said is that there is no need for this ideology for a racism to be constituted, and that all that is needed is a surplus *jouissance* [*plus-de-jouir*] that recognizes itself as such. (1971 [2009], p. 29)

In this paragraph, Lacan goes beyond the ideal stated by Freud as a condition of identification for the conformation of the mass. Lacan refers to the condition of *jouissance* which lies in the crux of the matter, and with that he relates segregation to *jouissance*.

This quote is central because *jouissance* is always foreign to the subject; he does not recognize it. By contrast, his *jouissance* tends to surprise him every now and then when it deregulates in some way and causes him to stumble.

The fact is that, very early in his teaching, when he was doing research on paranoia, Lacan said, “it is precisely the kakon of his own being that the madman tries to get at in the object he strikes” (1946 [2002], p. 165).

That is where we can find, indeed, what Lacan announced as the seed of all segregation. What is unknown is our own *jouissance*, and it is when some of our own *jouissance* returns from the other that the most fundamental rejection is put into action.

Thus, what is rejected and segregated is the other's *jouissance*, but more precisely that which in the other's *jouissance* refers us to our own, our own unknown *jouissance*.

That is why the process of segregation cuts across all Lacan's teaching: it touches the core of the analytic experience, which is the encounter of the subject with his extimacy: his *jouissance*. Agnes Aflalo, the French psychoanalyst, puts it very accurately:

Self-hatred and hatred of the other are two sides of the same coin that haunts the division of the subject of the unconscious. Unbeknown to us, it surrounds our own wickedness never held on a leash. (...) Indeed, if wars are always wars of religion, it is that religion and neurosis do not cease to want to write the belief in the unspeakable that inhabits us with the letters of fire of totalitarian logic. (2017)

LAPSO takes up the matter of segregation that Lacan was much concerned with—from that signifier in *Seminar XI*, “obscure gods”—to call it into question at present. Therefore, in this issue the reader will find the effects of segregation that always go hand in hand with violence and appear in new holy wars; in terrorism; in the management of marketing at the service of religion; in the remainders generated by the imperative of *jouissance* as it encourages consumption; in the waste of capitalism; in the effects of scientific discourse and in the ideal of “mental health”; in the transformation of urban culture and Third (as well as First) World cities’ lifestyles; in the radical segregation implied in culture by that which is feminine; in the spread of bullying. All these aspects of the matter are developed with mastery by the authors contributing to this issue. Two interviews—one with an artist and the other with a jurist—will allow for fruitful conversation between psychoanalysis, the culture of its time, and other discourses.

Finally, in the LAPSO Interview, Miquel Bassols, the president of the World Association of Psychoanalysis, leads us to the core of the psychoanalytic clinic by developing, in his conversation with Mariana Gómez, the existing relationship between the obscure gods, the uncanny in Freud, and the Lacanian Real, as well as the relationship between segregation and subjectivity.

LAPSO’s second issue deals with a fascinating and topical subject that psychoanalysis has much to say about and do research on. Please read on!

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