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SEMINAR ON THE DUAL UNITY AND THE PHANTOM

THE NECESSITY OF INTRODUCING THE DUAL UNITY INTO METAPSYCHOLOGY

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Translated by Tom Goodwin

What use is the dual unity? My response: *anasemia*, which is to ask, how is this analytical concept structured and what specific analytical problem is being addressed? The answer here is that it transforms the symbol into metaphor. This additional step is metapsychological in that it concerns a system of concepts that has no status in language other than as the foundation—the condition of possibility and ultimate recourse—of everything we consider to be human. No logical or ontological status can be granted to this construction, and yet it is not arbitrary.<sup>1</sup> It is necessitated by clinical requirement, to transform what appears as symbol into analogy, into metaphor.

Analytical listening begins the moment when we hear symbols, in place of what the patient says. But what then is the symbol? It is the result of an operation that remains hidden. What appears for example in dream symbolism is in reality a series of enigmas that allude to something different from their apparent meaning. However, every symbol is originally a metaphor. It is only by a forced forgetting, through the repression of its metaphoric origin, that it becomes a symbol, which, of course, implies a mechanism of repression. When the two “parts” come together,

the symbol ceases to be a symbol. But where does the metaphor come from? It comes from the incorporation of the original detachment that is overcome. Having lost one of its parts, the metaphor becomes a symbol; the metaphor realizes this cut (*coupure*) metaphorically. The symbol, therefore, is in its very being the analogue of this cut (because of what it lacks) which may, however, be grasped in the resemblance of its complement to what is lacking in the subject. So when the missing part is returned, the original metaphor is restored. The symbol is therefore a double metaphor, symbolizing that which is cut and the cut itself. When we listen to our patients and take their words as symbolic, we have made up our mind to restore what is cut with the moment of cutting (introjection of the repressed) and to create, at the level of the word, a new totality. The transformation of the symbol into a metaphor, however, seldom succeeds by means of the metapsychological "witch," particularly in cases where the unconscious contains a phantom (the presence of a foreign body in the unconscious) or when there is a crypt in the ego.<sup>2</sup>

Ultimately the great discovery of psychoanalysis was this possibility of transformation. Psychoanalytic theory is fundamentally a theory of this initial experience, which is subsequently enriched by others and requires the continual reworking and readjustment of the psychical apparatus. This establishes psychoanalysis as a science capable of evolution; an exact science like theoretical physics. It was with regard to the Wolf Man, for example, that Freud began to reformulate the "witch" in 1914 over concerns with melancholic identification. Even if this reformulation began too late as he sketched out his second topography, the fact remains that his notion of the superego took an important step toward the idea that filial relationships produce psychical topography in the individual. Admittedly

though, this filial relationship is restricted to the superego and does not yet extend to unconscious desire.

It is necessary to introduce the dual unity into metapsychology as the exemplary genealogical concept to successfully transform the symbol into metaphor in cases where metapsychology has been hidden or distorted by the presence in the subject of what we call the phantom in the unconscious. It is the same for certain cases of cryptophoria or in other cases where the subject has been entirely decentered by the phantom of an object or a phantom object. The dual unity is thus the witch's broom that allows metapsychology to take flight and land in a more suitable place.

The Concept of the One as a Separate-Unseparated, The Parable of the "Society of My Right Hand"

The notion of a unity can only be defined in terms of its separation from a context. It is because it has been ripped from a context that a thing acquires the quality of denoting the idea of unity (the atom). That is, the ONE is the separate-unseparated so far as it is "non-separable." This gesture of separation is prior to the advent of unity and can only be a repetition of other similar gestures.

Returning to the first separation (if indeed such a fiction is legitimate), the original schema for this act is Plato's myth of the androgyne; the fictional separate-unseparated being that Freud cites as the ultimate origin. Separated into two (the male and the female), even when these parts are reunited, they will never again yield the fictional unity of the original non-separation.

For Imre Hermann, it is not the initial non-separated man-woman in the myth of the androgyne that is the original fiction, but instead the unity of the unseparated mother-child; or the *païdo-métér*.<sup>3</sup> Here, as with the androgyne, the original separation brings no possibility of recovering an initial unity. Unlike the male-female couple, which inscribes in each of its parts the essence of the lacking sex (constituting a foundational bisexuality), the division of the *païdo-métér* only inscribes in the two parts the wound of a single lack, that of the mother. There is a fundamental paradox here: where the child lacks the mother, the mother is still herself lacking the mother of the child she once was. While genital complementarity is inherent to bisexuality, filio-maternal complementarity obeys only one principle, the filial instinct. The androgyne and the *païdo-métér* offer a double myth-hypothesis, a double instrument of thought from which to orient a psychoanalysis concerned with early sexual development. Moreover, they open up fields which have remained relatively inaccessible, such as “manic-depression,” “cryptophoria,” and “internal hysteria.”

The dual unity is the non-separate-separated, or the separation included within the non-separated. The non-separated, the in-dividual, emerges through an internal separation. When we separate a “thing” by a mental act of cutting, it is only by tearing it from its context that it can appear as one. In other words, its unity comes from the very act of separation. But, to accomplish this act of separation, we must acknowledge that our internal unity—in whose image we fabricate external unity—is itself the product of a separation within us.

While all this seems very philosophical, the thesis can be illustrated with a short, fantastical analogy, but one that will clarify. Imagine a man who loses his

right arm. What exactly would happen within him? To begin with, he might deny the loss of his limb and, through this negation, maintain a sense of unity. He will continue to feel as if the limb is still there, providing as proof the most varied sensations. This illusion of the phantom limb is a hallucination of the desire for wholeness and as such functions as a kind of unity. Consider, for example, the prayers of Homeric heroes going into battle, addressing their own limbs as “my dear legs”—this melancholic identification with the beloved legs imagines the suffering they would endure in necrosis, “losing myself as a mother.” See also the case of the bereaved man described in “Mourning or Melancholia” who eats two successive meals in a restaurant.<sup>4</sup>

Another possibility is that instead of denying the trauma, the maimed man attempts to incorporate it. It is repeated on his body through the refusal of healing, the throbbing sensation in the stump (not in the lost limb as above) and even in the paralysis of the opposite limb. This will still define a new unity. To be alone with his lost limb, to reconstitute by repetition the moment of its loss; this separation achieves a second form of unity.<sup>5</sup>

We could also imagine a third possibility: the fortuitous meeting of several one-armed men where one of them has the idea of founding a sect called something like “My Right Arm.” As a result, the lost limb acquires a symbolic existence through this designation; and within this named society (and this word is important), the members could commune together. We could imagine the life of such a society, with a huge right arm as its emblem, periodically raised and flourished; initiation ceremonies that detail in a book the circumstances of the loss of the precious limb; a liturgy or some other symbolic reminder to make the story

public; exorcism ceremonies for those individuals who might experience a recurrence of a regressive phase of incorporation which should have been symbolically surpassed. These exorcisms would consist, for example, of replacing the paralyzed left arm with a false one, or staging a magical battle against the antisocial tendency feared in the phantom limb's return. The purpose is to move on from the phase of incorporation through means such as touching the stump with the emblem, and also the invention of effective prosthetic right arms (a characteristic of our technological age). With each of these "social" solutions there is still dual unity, but the dualistic partner that is no more than a symbol.

What vital source allows for such subterfuge? It is not through the symbolic replacement for the lost limb, but more precisely through the affective communion of individuals engaged in social ritual, magical acts, or through technology. We can see, therefore, how the symbolic dual unity is achieved at the level of the social body, not the individual.. What happens when this symbolic operation with its emblems and rituals is broken? The member of the Society of My Right Arm (and what society is not like this?) would then sink irresistibly into melancholy or regress to the phantom-limb stage.

Although not implausible, this fantastical example lacks at least two aspects essential for psychoanalysis and any further discussion: the child and metapsychology. The omission of the child is easy to rectify by substituting in the example the "lost right arm" with the *eclipsed mother*. Irrespective of our personal history, therefore, we must accept that we are all *mutilés de mère* (mother amputees) through the effects and nature of phylogeny.<sup>6</sup> To speak in terms of Sándor Ferenczi's bio-analysis, each childhood stage only repeats that which

constitutes the formation of the species; that is, the historical succession of various traumatic ways of losing and symbolically recreating the mother-child unity.

Through the various inscriptions of successive modes of the dual unity in the course of child development, each age involves the repression of the maternal complement specific to the preceding age. In the journey to adulthood, therefore, a whole stratification of maternal "imagos" is formed in the dynamic unconscious. Maturity transforms the dualistic mother-child union into the inner dualistic union of the unconscious and the ego. The final stage of this transformation is the intervention of genital maturity whose terms are prescribed by contingent social institutions.

These hastily drawn ideas lead us to understand the fundamentally dual character of the concept of unity with its "origin" in an act of separation. Its operation is demonstrated in "individuals" who bear its mark ("divided-indivisibles"), in basic modes of social structure, and finally—another myth—through the specific nature of this separation as a phylogenetic event of the loss of the mother, the ultimate object of the filial instinct. These summary considerations situate the dual unity as fundamental to psychoanalytic intelligibility and necessitate a few examples of real and fictional case studies.

The Phantom: A Crypt in the Other, The Phantom of Leonardo and the Secret Desire of Catarina

A fictional case study:

The basis of Freud's reflections on the case of Leonardo da Vinci was, among other things, the painter's varied creative talents and his method of "dawdling" with little



concern for finishing a piece of work. Biographical details, recently brought to light by Ilse Barande, situate the “turning point” in the painter’s attitude around his fiftieth birthday, after the death of his parents.<sup>7</sup> It has also been brought to light that as he was raised as an illegitimate child in the da Vinci family and well cared for by his father Ser Pier, he could have easily encountered his young and estranged mother, Catarina, who lived nearby.

If the mother-son bond remained intact, the bond between Ser Pier (father) and Caterina (mother) was definitely broken. It is precisely this broken bond between his mother and father—deeply felt within the mother—that works problematically in Leonardo’s unconscious. Transmitted to him in accordance with the dual unity, all Leonardo’s preoccupations are evidence of his being haunted by this matter, manifest in his concern with how the impossible might one day become possible. But the impossible what? It does not matter, but if this is resolved it might resolve other things. In this way “my mother will have my father to herself, and I would be able detach from them both by introjecting the bond” (because a broken bond that is illegitimate and secret remains non-introjectable).

Painting is a good way to do this, because we can represent anything through it. In the successful portrait—more alive than nature—the absent model is still present. But the means offered by painting to present the absent, is only one way among many. We know that Leonardo tried them all. He produced the most ingenious solutions (in aero- and thermodynamics etc.) for those who consulted him with technical problems. Indeed, all his inventions responded to the original question that haunted him, even if we know that he was rarely interested in implementing the solution. These solutions only provided temporary salvation and

he found that nothing was more loathsome than doing the work of an engineer or painter on command. So when a wealthy Florentine commissioned a portrait of his wife, Leonardo dragged it out, procrastinated, and despite financial difficulties, abandoned the project. Inspiration came, however, at a moment (which historians have established with precision) that coincides with the date when his elderly father joined his already deceased mother in heaven. Leonardo then resumed the painting and finished it with the greatest care, but not to deliver it to his client, but to keep it for himself for the remainder of his days. The painting is, of course, the Mona Lisa, la Gioconda, the Blessed, she who finally united with the object of her desire in heaven.

“How could this possibly happen?” The answer to this question addresses Leonardo’s very motive for living. The famous smile of la Gioconda is that of one dead person addressing another; it is both fascinating and unbearable to view. She is offered to spectators as an image of the fulfilled life, but she will never belong to us, just as she never belonged to Leonardo. She is the object of fetish who reassured Leonardo that the impossible happiness of his dead mother had finally been realized.<sup>8</sup>

The Peregrinations of a Phantom

A real clinical case

A nun is possessed by a dead man. She is melancholy. When she seduces a young girl, she hears the dead man’s words: “I am dead. I love you forever.” With these words of the dead in her, the nun in turn says to the student, “I love you.” The

patient, another little girl, was only a witness to the idyll. Usually so serious, Sister Brigitte's eyes shine and her lips tremble. Her young lover looks at her numb with happiness. She, the patient, would kill them both, but how then would she hold onto that pleasure, the *jouissance* that Sister Brigitte models?

The dead man returns to the patient, in the guise of a phantom that Sister Brigitte, having lost him, incarnates (in the patient's unconscious). This is the man who breathed his last breath with the beloved's name on his lips in spite of the patient's fantasy in the moment recounted. Indeed, being left aside also wounds the patient. Her satisfied friend will later take the veil, but she will reject religion, which remains for her both the phantom and the fantasy in which it is manifest.

With such a fantasy and such a phantom how can the patient bond with a man destined to live on? In contrast to Leonardo who reunites his parents in death, she devises a plan to revive the nun's lost lover and return him to her through the magic of words. To do this, she takes as a lover a man who loves her, who is just her type. His first name is Vital (with a name like that there can be no risk of dying) and his surname is Brigue. In this conjunction of names Sister Brigitte (Brigue) regains her lover and the patient will be relieved of the oppressive phantom. This inspired idea is a work of art, but is the solution really a bond with Sister Brigitte's ghost, albeit made immortal? The answer is no. The patient could not resist the temptation to resemble her former mistress by becoming a tease to young girls (even if these young girls were, in fact, adult males). Her lips would then form a heavenly smile that suggests the words, "I belong to heaven, just die with my name on your lips and you will find me again in heaven, virgin."

The circulation of phantoms, however, does not stop there. The verbal marriage of Vital with Brigue was not of a type that was likely to give pleasure. Thus the affair between Vital Brigue and the patient falters and is broken. While the affair breaks apart, the man's love persists. Vital carries with him the phantom of Sister Brigitte from his former lover. I learned incidentally that Vital soon found a male lover and had to turn a blind eye himself as, consumed by a chaste love, this friend commits suicide, articulating in his last breath the name of the beloved.

The phantom of Sister Brigitte is far from being laid to rest.

#### Clinical and Metapsychological Notes on the Phantom

We have asked what exactly is expected of the notion of the dual unity? The answer proposed is the broadening of analytic listening wherever efforts to metaphorize the symbol fail. Failure occurs when the analyst is faced not with translatable symbols but instead encounters real puzzles or oddities that he cannot deal with, and that will not directly pass into metaphor. This raises the question of where the symbol and thus the metaphor are buried, which in turn is a question of the buried truth. The truth of analysis, after all, is none other than experiencing the symbol as metaphor. It will be necessary therefore to invent new capabilities for the metapsychological witch such as ventriloquism (to locate parallel speech), mediumship (to commune with the phantom), spiritualism (to materialize the phantom), or magic (to reconcile two contradictory phantoms).

One consequence of introducing the notion of dual unity into a renewed metapsychology is that it allows us to speculate on one or more "foreign bodies" in the dynamic unconscious that are not manifest in the symptom-symbol of hysteria,

but through haunting. These bind the subject to reactive behaviors that are not directly symbolic, but aim instead to provide momentary relief for the ego from the persistent trauma produced by a phantom presence. Ideally, these behaviors would enable the phantom to be healed, but in fact they only manage to deceive or temporarily paralyze him.

What must the phantom's topography be for it to require these specific measures? Here, we first need to ask what gives rise to behaviors that do not directly symbolize the phobia or obsession, or to particular changes that do not directly express the body, and so on. This is related to the second question of how the phantom settles in the unconscious. It is by providing concrete answers to these inseparable questions in the course of analysis, that words and behaviors can begin to recover their metaphorical sense.

We all recall the hysteric's paralysis linked to a "false step" from which it figuratively derives.<sup>9</sup> To metaphorize the symbol, it is necessary to put in place the concepts of censorship, the unconscious, dynamic repression, the return of the repressed and a few others. This is, of course, in addition to an impulse to transform the symptom into metaphors. But when, for example, the haunted subject states that he "smells decay all over his body" (or that someone gives him "Sleeping Beauty's awakening by Prince Charming")—or yet other oddities of language—then such a metapsychological frame proves insufficient. Firstly, the patient cannot make things known (which would not happen in the previous case) and secondly, his odd expressions seem to leave him indifferent. It will take this illegitimate and fatherless child years to find out that he shelters in his unconscious the phantom of the father that his mother had once loved and who, because of

political abuses, had been described as a shit (*fumier*) by the maternal grandfather.<sup>10</sup> “I am your shit of a husband”—here is the metaphor whose expression allows for the Oedipal trajectory to return, and because “as I am your shit of a husband you cannot refuse loving me,” the restored Oedipal dynamic harbors a phantom. The metaphor has been achieved at the cost of introducing a phantom into the unconscious. This figure is born of the mother’s love, which, once interrupted and then despised, is preserved in her unconscious and transmitted to her son’s. His attempts at being imprisoned were no less metaphorical in relation to the father whose story he had not known.

What analyst worthy of the name would not tear out his hair at the idea that the patient’s behavior, bordering on delinquency, could be interpreted as an attempt at self-punishment or congenital masochism? As that which realizes the Oedipal drama, it is the metaphor shit/*fumier* that provides the basis for all those behaviors that work against his well-being. To imagine this “decay” as the transposition of anal pleasures, or to consider his claustrophobia as an identification with some ingested penis are all serious misconceptions of the libidinal level where the symptom is situated. What needs to be determined instead are the historical reasons that gave rise to the metaphorical conversion in this patient. The metaphor, that is, of an Oedipal love that is not directly related to an authority figure, but to a phantom. We must follow the mother’s gaze in the direction of the prison, where her “shit” of a lover can be found. This shamed Oedipal ideal lodged in the unconscious must not be overlooked as this would be to confirm its shame and, as an analyst, reject it.

The patient is an illegitimate child who houses the phantom of his father that the mother still loves. Assuming that he could be the son of an incestuous relationship between his grandfather and mother, the patient revealed the story of what happened to his mother during the war. All becomes clear; his tendency toward delinquency, being handcuffed and so on. Sacrificing his hair, another neglected fact, also reveals its meaning as the mother shorn.<sup>11</sup> The grandfather said of the patient's father that he is a *shit/fumier*, which is a compliment provided that we understand his phantom. More than life itself, it is important for him to be a shit, to be his mother's lover. If he can say to his mother "I am your shit of a husband," the Oedipal metaphor can thereby be achieved by way of the phantom.

How can we perceive the presence of a phantom in our first sessions? It is important not to pinpoint it too soon to avoid short-circuiting the analysis. To conduct the analysis, the hypothesis of the phantom must be maintained so that if there is a phantom it can be made manifest. This approach begins with the question of localization and where exactly the speech elements come from. An analyst with no conception of the phantom, would consider the patient's "decay" as an aspect of self-aggression, and would thereby direct his work toward the object that is supposedly "attacked." All the presenting symptoms—seeking imprisonment, hair loss, self-deprecation—would be interpreted as "self-punishment." The consequences of this type of "application" could range from a simple short-circuit to the catastrophe of an imported melancholy. Such an interpretation would signify to the patient that the analyst is uninterested in his life and risks "importing" a catastrophe into him that creates the same effects as those described in "Mourning or Melancholia."<sup>12</sup>

## Mr. E.'s Beetle

This case refers to Freud's letter to Wilhelm Fleiss (no. 80) dated December 29, 1897:

Dear Wilhelm,

A few days after my return I managed to grasp a small fragment of interpretation. Mr. E., whom you know, suffered a bout of anxiety when, at the age of ten, he was trying to catch a black beetle (*Käfer*), but the beetle would not be caught. The meaning of this bout remained obscure until now. When dealing with the theme of "perplexity," he told me of a conversation he heard between his grandmother and aunt. They were talking about the marriage of his mother, who was already dead at that time; he concluded from the discussion that she had hesitated for a long time before deciding to marry. Mr. E. suddenly interrupted this account to speak again of the beetle, which he had not mentioned for many months and then of ladybirds (in German *Marienkäfer*—the patient's mother was called Marie). He burst out laughing and falsely explained his glee by saying that zoologists name these insects according to the number of black spots, e.g., *septempunctate*, etc. This is despite it being the same insect. The session ended there and at the beginning of the next session he told me that he recalled the meaning of "beetle" (*Käfer*). It was *que faire?* = the "Perplexity."<sup>13</sup> Surely you know that a woman can be described as a "kind beetle." His nursemaid and first love object was French and he learned French before German. You will remember our conversation about the use of the words *hineinstecken*, *Abort*, etc. (*Hineinstecken*, *Abort* = to insert, abortion and toilet).<sup>14</sup>

To grasp with the hand is to avoid having to grasp with the mind. The patient, however, has the anxiety attack at the prospect of "grasping" (i.e., understanding). If he can grasp it with his hand without fear, if he can act, he will be liberated from his wish to grasp in his mind the thing it is about. As a breaker of rocks,<sup>15</sup> he continues breaking rocks without understanding why. Again, we see how to deal with language where the meanings produced avoid the original drama. We do not know what the event is, but we are certain that it is a dramatic event for the mother (*Abort-hineinstecken* = to abort, to insert). He plays to prevent



understanding. And what does he play? The drama of the perplexed pregnant mother; should she or should she not abort?

Almost unimaginable from this fragment of text, the drama is expressed through *que faire?* (what to do?), which has been removed through the homophone *Käfer* and acted out—to keep it unspoken—around this new signifying possibility. All this signifies that the patient “close his eyes” to the mother’s dilemma concerning the shameful event that must not enter the child’s speech. The game enacts the phantom as Mr. E. plays out the word. It is the failure of the game that triggers the anxiety.

#### The Butcher of Words

This story is from before the last war. A butcher abused his eldest daughter, after which he committed suicide by hanging himself on a window catch. This is the family shame; their guilty secret. After the event, the grieving mother and the brothers and sisters are supported and raised by an uncle. The father’s name is no longer spoken. One of the sisters, who was six at the time, grows up, marries, and has children. It is her daughter, the granddaughter of the butcher, who presents obsessive-phobic symptoms and undertakes an analysis.

The analysis reveals an inner life dating back to early childhood that is as varied as it is enigmatic. One of her most prominent and recalcitrant symptoms is a fear of beetles, while other symptoms include compulsively dissecting words and reading backward. She has erotic fantasies involving knees and hanging. She abstains from eating anything labeled “meat,” which would refer to “butcher,” but

allows herself charcuterie. She knows nothing of the history of her grandfather and it's possible her mother doesn't either.

The child is fascinated yet terrified by a hallucination: a brilliant bird at the window translates from a foreign language into French, as if to say "with her own pa" (avec son prop pé) or "with her own papa" (avec son propre père).<sup>16</sup> This is the phantom haunting her. Is it possible to think that at this tender age she is dreaming the story of her incestuous aunt? How could she know? Perhaps from the governess who, after ten years of service, would have sensed the family secret? She is mysteriously discharged from one day to the next; a measure that the guardian uncle takes to settle the matter and prevent the secret from being known? This, however, is the philistine's illusion, because although it is unspeakable it is known anyway; the surname, first name, and profession of the abuser are intensely alive in both the little girl's and her mother's unconscious. In the latter, the haunting takes the form of a shameful and cryptic Oedipus complex with her father, which manifests in her falling in love with an adventurer suffering from a shameful illness. It is a blemish for a young girl to marry a history like this. Thanks to the vigilance of the uncle, she marries a wholesome bourgeois instead.

If, as a child, our patient deprives herself of meat or dreams of an individual bearing the disguised name of her grandfather, or (as a true butcher of words) cuts his first name into pieces, all this is the result of haunting and the return of a secret that bypasses her imposed ignorance. Haunting is there from the beginning. Her first impression of her analyst was this: "It is strange, you have the hands of a butcher." Can we call this transference? Yes and no. Her attraction to this butcher is not the child returning. It manifests instead a haunting that reveals the mother's

secret Oedipal desires, which are mysteriously passed on to the daughter. No analyst can interpret this Oedipus complex without knowing the facts, but these very facts are avoided from the outset. They will be constructed or reconstructed a decade later with a new kind of listening that attends to the phantom.

Meanwhile, the analysis continues under the auspices of a personal Oedipus complex and fraternal issues. But no matter the content of the interpretations, the nostalgic relationship between the mother and her father finds its symbolic expression in what happens on the couch. In the analytic dialogue each side will speak.

A dream: In a greenhouse at the zoo, you have to climb up a floor to see magnificent plants called "Alcestes."

Interpretation: You have to climb one generation (one floor) to see the incest ("with her own father," as the granddaughter had hallucinated).<sup>17</sup>

Another dream: A hieroglyphic memorial to the place where starving people had dismembered a horse. It was true butchery (a butcher's shop)!

A strange, recurring dream, "with strange, unspeakable affect:" I committed a crime—me? or someone else?—somewhere in the mists of time. Was it or was it not me? There was a crime and they judged me; I had cut someone up and eaten them.

The butcher is at work.

When she was little, the patient also had a whole exorcism ritual in order to touch the table cutlery.

The analyst has to wait a long time to finally understand the dream and how the beetle functions as a phobic object. This allows the phantom to be identified

and dispelled. The patient watches her analyst trying to dissect the beetle, which in her mother tongue is "BOGAR." The analyst glances over at the patient and pulls on a piece of cord he notices hanging. This piece of cord is like both a light switch and a shower chain. In her language "to shower an affair" is to hush it up. As for the dissected BOGAR it suggests the game of cutting up words into anagrams and mosaics: the butcher of words at work. It is, however, enough to repeat the word BOGAR very quickly to see reunited, in reverse order, the two parts into which it has been cut. BOGAR becomes GABOR, the first name of the suicidal grandfather whose story is revealed, along with many other details, by a distant relative who recently visited the patient.

The analyst and the patient are both astonished by this revelation and from then on the entire dramatic history of the maternal family, passed over in silence, is easily reconstituted and rendered legible. In particular there is the suicide of the patient's mother, which was obviously modelled on that of her secret oedipal object; both hanged themselves on the window clasp, while kneeling.

A writer of a little talent could make a fantastical tale by bringing together these mysteries that demonstrate the mode of unconscious communication from one generation to another. As for the analyst, these facts open a number of questions about his practice and theory. To highlight just a few: 1) the problematic of unconscious communication; 2) the relationship of these phenomena to the libido; 3) the precise topography of "phantom" formations; 4) the proper mechanism of its return as haunting, and how this differs from the return of the dynamic repressed.

## The Repetition Compulsion and Its "Beyond"

This section refers to Freud's "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" and the affinity he notes between fate neurosis, traumatic neurosis, and his observation of the child's reel game. My understanding of fate neurosis refers to the phantom. Traumatic neurosis, on the other hand, is the repetition of its characteristic traumatic moment, not as it was experienced but as it could have been experienced. We tend to compare trauma to the orgasmic experience that results from the sudden opening of the unconscious. This is not to say, however, that the trauma involves such an orgasm, even if they are analogous. On the contrary, it is most likely that the real or fictitious opening of the unconscious during or after the trauma has the power to awaken the phantom that has been troubling the unconscious.

In situations of extreme danger the opening of the unconscious can reveal a mother figure within who offers her "help."<sup>18</sup> But as she has her own topography, often with traces of her own necessarily silenced and secret wounds, these moments of sudden opening prove particularly conducive to allowing a phantom to threaten invasion of the entire Ego. It is here that traumatic neurosis—characterized by recurrent dreams of the "objective trauma that struck"—works as a safeguard against this phantom invasion; invasion, that is, by elements of an drama actively unknown to the one who is experiencing it (and that is maintained in ignorance for and according to the demands of the other). This "fear of the external catastrophe whose arrival is imminent and from which the mother awakens me" guarantees that the internal catastrophe for which the mother "puts me to sleep"

does not return. In this dreamlike repetition of the objective trauma, the frightened mother hopes that her secret, in an extreme moment, will not be revealed.

The words the mother offers to signal the impending dream catastrophe have a specific objective; they must allow us to unequivocally designate and verbalize the thing we have to fear (the trauma). Paradoxically, however, in the traumatic neurosis this thing has already happened. At the base of this paradox we must assume the unexpected opening onto other horizons of the same word, which lead to other, unnameable catastrophes that have happened in another life "beyond me" (the mother's for example). In this other life and this other topography, the other horizons of the same word (secret and not openly considered) are destined for non-existence, silence, and a death without burial (the mother's encrypted drama for example).

It is only in the course of analytic work with the traumatized patient that we can uncover other words in the same word (so many messengers from encrypted horizons "beyond") through homonyms, cryptonyms, rhymes animated in actions, and so on. There are also many haunting effects that bear witness to the intensity and tension that return, suggesting an initial drama become fixed and mute in a "beyond me."

What are the similarities between these cases of fate neurosis, traumatic neurosis, and Freud's example of the child discovering the powers of speech in the reel game, the game of "fort-da?" Before this discovery, the child, strictly speaking, has no unconscious, just as he has no conscious. To be more precise, he has no conscious or unconscious other than that of his mother. Like her breasts and hair, her gestures, her emotional being with its harmonies and contradictions directed

outwards and to herself, the mother's words are also where, for the child, her conscious and unconscious are merged. We can thus say that the word, the mother's word, is a *bout-de-mère*, a piece of the mother. The child's discoveries occur when these words or pieces-of-mother move away from the mother's person to designate objective events; that is, events unencumbered by the mother's unconscious.

When the child in Freud's observation sends the reel into his crib saying "o-o-o-o" (*fort* = far, gone, there), he understands the word as unequivocal, especially as it is detached from the mother and her unconscious. At the moment when the child makes the word and event coincide, he achieves the repression of the mother's unconscious, allowing (without losing too much) speech to be opened up and used with others. What matters in the fort-da game is less the discovery of the phonemic difference between two syllables, than the difference that, through the magical effect of coinciding words and things, now separates the child's consciousness from the mother's unconscious.

In place of the mother's unconscious, speech now signifies the objectivity of the external world. This substitution is analogical, or to be more precise, through the repression of the maternal unconscious, the analogical substitution of the maternal verbal environment with objective language enables analogues of the mother to be found in the external world. Furthermore, it allows a return to the mother at another level of communication that, from the time of "latency," tends to disregard her unconscious in favor of an objectivity that purports to be without unconscious. Through the word, the child only appears to be freed from the parental unconscious because by simply learning to speak, he must account for

what I have named the "phantom." It is through this phantom that the child's speech contains the maternal unconscious.

We have seen how the objectivity of the original maternal words comes up against the maternal unconscious in examples of obsessional and phobic symptoms, as well as the traumatic neuroses. It is here that we can clearly apprehend the analogy of the fort-da game with the other two manifestations of the death instinct that Freud cites. It is, effectively, where the word's objective reference involves the repression of the maternal unconscious that there is introjection but also the risk of creating or awakening virtual phantoms. The pleasurable repetition of discovery is of the same kind as the two other types of repetition that Freud identifies; they are all precautions or counter-investments against the return of the phantom. This repetition is also pleasurable in the same way as a joke because, through the magic of words, it chases away the specter of death. In short, it can be said that words are pieces of the mother amputated from her unconscious in such a way as to be replaced by objective meaning.

A few words must be said about metasemia; that is, changes in the meaning of a word determined by context and figures of speech.

Unravelling the "Reel," The Speech of the Phantom, The Specificity of Spoken Language

Is the child's game a cathartic (Aristotelian) psychoanalysis or is it the psychoanalysis of a wounded narcissism that attempts to symbolize with the



suffering hidden in the mother's unconscious and that is organized through the maternal words? This child's play is nothing other than the symbolization of the wound inflicted on the maternal psyche, which the child had inherited from the mother in the moment under consideration.<sup>19</sup>

If trauma is defined by the failure of a repression analogous to that which comprises the mother's psyche (and not that imposed on the child as a fictitious psychological apparatus by maternal prohibitions) then we can say that it is the game (and secret games in particular) that symbolizes this failure. To take phobia as an example, the phobic child is just playing out (symbolizing) the parents' fear that their psyche—inherited from grandparents—is itself at risk. It is in this sense that we must understand the game of fort-da.<sup>20</sup>

Freud's observation includes a surprising detail; we know that before the invention of the complete game the child throws objects away saying "o-o-o-o" (*fort*, gone). Curiously, however, when the mother returns from a long absence, the child greets her with the words "Baby, o-o-o-o" (baby, gone) even though he is present (*da*). It is as if he is saying "When you say o-o-o-o Mummy, you think of a-a. You have a problem with o-a."<sup>21</sup> While Ernst expresses his understanding of objective meaning through the reel game, by saying "Baby, o-o-o-o," when being present here (*da*), the mother is not fooled by the unconscious meaning of his "o-o-o-o-a-a" that she represses. Mama, therefore, may well have returned (*da*), but she is preoccupied by Papa, who is far away (*fort*, gone to war). We can already see the beginnings of a phobic communication. Similarly, when he next plays with the reel he celebrates the fact that Mama's preoccupation ends with the reappearance of his grandfather, the father substitute (Opa, to everyone).<sup>22</sup> The

game implicates the mother's repression, specifically her repression that the grandfather and father are not the same.

This explains the poetic character of the fort-da game, considered in the same way as speaking symbolic language for the first time. In these two vowels there is already the symbolic telling of the story of the mother's unconscious, as well as that of the grandfather. Just think of the game of "war" during which Ernst throws objects away, saying "Geh weg in K(r)rieg!" (= gone to war). *Krieg* has a dual use as: war (the objective pole) and (through *kriegen*) to obtain or receive (the unconscious pole). With the father away, Opa (grandfather) and his daughter Sophie can be *bekriegen* (= belong to each other).<sup>23</sup> But the story of these two vowels still continues in the name of Ernst's father who is "o-o-a-a-a" (the photographer Halberstadt).<sup>24</sup> The investigation of child's play should not only be able to find symbolic dramatizations of personal impulses, but also that of unconscious information inherited from parents. This is the case for all symbolic dramatization in child's play or, indeed, elsewhere in the linguistic domain.

In the vast field of language that includes symbolization through actions, gesture, or sound, why do we distinguish spoken language? This privileged status is because among all the different means of communication, words alone possess the characteristic of double polarity, which returns through phonemic presence that which is objectively absent or that which is absent because it has been repressed. The privilege of words over other modes of symbolization is apparent in dreams, which are constituted from words, even though violent affects or gestures seem to appear as well. It is a matter of finding in the objective pole of certain words their unconscious symbolic root.

## Language and Dual Unity

Although language as such is not the domain of psychoanalysis, psychoanalysts continually encounter words, phoneticism, accents, statements, and non-statements. Insofar as we believe that psychoanalysis is the exemplary foundational science, we hope that it can formulate fundamental propositions to address this subject area and aid linguistics in solving many of the problems that still remain in the field.

It was initially thought that psychoanalysis dealt with meaning such as that of the hysterical symptom. One of Freud's discoveries was that these still-to-be-deciphered meanings should be reduced to injunctions and, therefore, to words. Its aim was thus to find and reconstruct these words and thereby resolve the symptom; in these cases, words were dramatized in strange bodily states, as if they were bewitched. In other cases, such as dreams, he again found words in the dream image; and this also applied to parapraxes and slips. To briefly summarize Freud's theory, it consists in explaining the central role of the word with a theory of mediation between different levels. The initial connection between the Organic and the Psychic is made via the instinctual Messenger. Within the Psyche, the representation of perceptions and affects joins the unconscious drive to the Preconscious-Conscious system. Finally, words and other signifying modes codify the connection from the Preconscious to the Conscious.<sup>25</sup>

What basically emerges from these theories is that the origin of the word comes from outside and is stored in the Preconscious-Conscious system as an acoustic representation. These acoustic representations, however, are themselves

inwardly connected to the representations of "things" (this includes both acoustic representations of "things" and word-things) grafted onto the drives. The tiered systems are therefore interdependent and yet separated by more or less permeable barriers that the messengers of different levels cross in both directions. This means that from its inception psychoanalysis conceives of words as bipolar, working in opposed "outside-inside" directions, or better still, between centrifugal and centripetal actions.

That is to say, these two symmetrical poles are not identical and the word can mean something different for both the conscious and the unconscious. What has also become evident is that the word is received as a mnemonic trace from the outside, from what we might call "the maternal function of the environment." Furthermore, it is through successive moments in the establishment of psychical topography that words acquire their bipolarity. There remained, however, the problem of how words become both the preconscious representatives of the drive and the barrier to these drives. Freud's second topography does not answer this question because, for it to be effective, the superego had to maintain the words pertaining to prohibited drives in the unconscious parts of the self.

One objective of the analytic cure was to liberate these words and let the ego decide how to deal with the instinctual demands once they were made conscious. The introduction of the death instinct has yet to solve the problem of how the superego, as the "pure culture of the death instinct," could take charge of verbal representatives that in all likelihood are the exclusive preserve of the libido. To recall Freud, the death drive works in silence and thus is not mediated by words; it is essentially mute. If, however, it gives birth to the superego, it is its

entanglement with the libido that makes it, through fear of castration, an ideal. Prohibitions then act through language like so many of the libido's vital orientations. It remains to be seen how the instinctual messengers can be diverted in this way from their original purpose. The theory of dual unity provides an indirect response to this question.

For Hermann, the unconscious is basically constituted from closely related filial and genital instincts. The unconscious exists insofar as there is phylo- and ontogenetic repression of the desire to form a dual unity with the mother. Extending this point, words would not only be the messengers of repressed instincts but also, and by definition, the very instrument of their repression. In this way, they are also bipolar and contain the dynamism of their opposed dual function. If the word still serves to communicate with an external maternal function, it is also witness to the breaking of the dual unity since the subject must borrow it to enter into a relationship with a mother who is conceived as both distant and the cause of this distance. Verbal communication, therefore, involves at once the impossible desire to cling to the mother to detach from her. It is this dual function of the word that allows it to simultaneously prohibit and make possible the fulfilment of desire. We see that language, because of its dual and opposed function, is always primarily an act of de-maternalization.

MARIA TOROK, 1977

This June 1974 seminar was from a series whose traces have unfortunately been lost. Further reflection leads us to believe that its thread can be found in an expression Nicolas Abraham uses in regards to the phantom:

A surprising fact gradually emerges: the work of the phantom coincides in every respect with Freud's description of the death drive. First of all, it has no energy of its own; it cannot be "abreacted," merely designated. Second, it pursues its work of disarray in silence. We should add that the phantom is sustained by secreted words, invisible gnomes whose aim is to wreak havoc, from within the unconscious, on the coherence of logical progression.<sup>26</sup>

Indeed, what does the expression "gnome" tell us? Can we not get from this "opening" the continuation of what was in the lost notes? Does it not contain an implicit response to the question of the "passage of unconscious words from one unconscious to another?" The word "gnome" contains the following seeds: gnome = knowledge; but gnome, as a crippled being = knowledge truncated (one supposes by non-knowledge); gnome = an invisible being, controlling the elements from within the earth.

Remember that the work of haunting can only be conceived in the context of the dual unity and that its progress will be different in each case where the mother's psyche contains a cryptic inclusion. In these cases, the bipolarity of words in question cannot refer to the mother's unconscious and the objective, intersubjective handling of words (de-maternalized). Rather, they refer to the mother's "artificial unconscious," which is a crypt residing within her ego and its bizarre expression, which makes the haunted subject incapable of normal intersubjective communication.

For the mother, these cryptonyms function as the gnomes that watch over the maternal crypt while also being its crippled messengers; the "paralysis" they convey keeps their dramatic origin unknown. For the child, it is these cryptonyms, the crippled verbal manifestations of the word's origins (crippled by cryptonyms, rhymes, etc.) that have the power to put to "work" the child's potential unconscious

schemata by making these animate the mother's rhymes with further rhymes.<sup>27</sup> The effects of haunting thus constitute a second-degree disguise for the maternal cryptonyms (another step in the evolution of the degree of "deception") that will further obstruct the function of "de-mothering" normal to speech.

Let us add that if we denote the crypt's wish as "Where ego was, there id shall be" (that which was conscious becomes unconscious),<sup>28</sup> then the child produced from the cryptophor can only confirm and reinforce this particular topography (embodied in a reversed topography) where his bizarre "reality"—partial or total delirium—will symbolize with the mother's cryptic reality. This bizarre "reality," however, is no less intersubjective and "vital" than the intersubjective "reality" of normal life, although it will have a sole particularity; it will function according to a vital intersubjective drama "elsewhere," in a "beyond-self," in the mother's crypt, from where those who suffer the effects of haunting will engage in the repetition of a deathly scene.<sup>29</sup>

## Words and Their "Dead"

Word and topography share the same structure. This means that the word has its "dead" in the same way as the subject does. When two subjects talk to each other, it is presupposed that they share a common basis of symbolic communication in the meaning of the word. This structure corresponds to the basic structure of social life.

When we sleep, however, we disconnect from the "shared dead" in the words that are erected as symbols: dream words do not derive from the subject, but from the "dead" lodged inside his unconscious. Thus the particular meaning of these words remains somehow within the "dead" in the subject (their latent meaning). The dream image is none other than the visual realization in "the dream world" of words stripped of their meaning. It is no surprise, therefore, that this realization as an image comes to avoid—through the subject's effort—the meanings that have retreated from the unconscious; the unconscious creates these representations from words that do not disrupt the functioning of topography. Dream interpretation consists of using dream images to reconstruct the words of the "dead" and following (the thread of) these reconstituted words to find their unconscious meaning.

The word is to meaning as the "child" is to its "dead." Codified language is a substitute for the dual unity's structure. Dictionary meanings are similar attempts to replace the dead drama of the word, which has separated the word from its dramatic meaning. The signified is not secondary, but with it, meaning is cut off from the signifier of drama. The structure of linguistic communication is comparable to the "Society of My Right Arm." There is a common signified, which allows two



subjects to communicate but only by means of a third party. How does this structure of communication work?

Additional Note: Freud's "The Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words"

*Ken-Kan*: The seemingly oppositional character of the "same word" is not because it designates a quality (qualitative thought being much later) but because it designates the very drama where the "opposition" originates and gives rise to qualitative judgment.<sup>30</sup> During this process of discernment one antithetical quality enters language thanks to the second, the latter somehow constituting the unconscious of the first.

For the child, words do not initially bear meaning; rather, words have a memorial function, to remind of the drama that brought the words into being within the urgent need to bring about a distinction, and to allow for differentiation. This moment is often traumatic and the two antithetical meanings are therefore repressed as well. The drama is only then evoked (for economic reasons to clarify) by a third meaning, that is to say, a homonym.<sup>31</sup>

Language can lead us into a static mentality where we call a spade a spade. Originally, however, there can be neither static meaning—that is, meaning not arising in difference—nor a solitary signifier denoting the signified. Thus for the child the word emerges in a necessarily dramatic relationship with an amputated signified. The amputation is either that of the child's desire (for something forbidden), or of the mother's unconscious when she communicates her fixed vision of the universe. Generally it is both at once: the transmission of the cleavage that occurs in the context in which the word comes into being.

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These few notes remain of a seminar of 1974–75 given at the *Institut de psychanalyse* titled “L’unité duelle et ses vicissitudes en clinique psychanalytique, dans la socialité humaine et dans les activités symbolisantes” (The dual unity and its vicissitudes in clinical psychoanalysis, human society, and symbolic activities), published as “Notes du séminaire sur l’unité duelle et le fantôme,” in *L’écorce et le noyau* (Paris: Éditions Aubier Montaigne, 1978). The seminar included a roundtable with Dominique Geahchan, Jacqueline Lubtchansky, René Major, and Maria Torok. Several scholars have contributed to the following notes: Maria Torok (MT), Nicholas Rand (NR), and Tom Goodwin (TG). Notes without attribution are in the original seminar notes.

<sup>1</sup> See Abraham, “The Shell and the Kernel,” 16, and “Pour introduire ‘l’instinct filial,’” 347; as well as Abraham and Torok, “The Broken Symbol,” in *The Wolf Man’s Magic Word*, 79.—NR

<sup>2</sup> Abraham draws here, as elsewhere, on Freud’s notion of the “Witch Metapsychology,” which he introduces in “Analysis Terminable and Interminable.” The term denotes the recourse to speculative and theoretical generalities when the uncertainties of a particular problem cannot easily be resolved (if at all). The answer proposed is always therefore unsatisfactory and incomplete. Abraham’s point here, as in much of his and Torok’s oeuvre, is that the “witch” of metapsychological theory, while necessary, is also inadequate to the particular instance (the phantom

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in this case) and allows (indeed, encourages) continual transformation at the level of theory.—TG

<sup>3</sup> The coupling of child-mother; I have kept Abraham's term.—TG

<sup>4</sup> Abraham and Torok, "Mourning or Melancholia," 129.

<sup>5</sup> See also the case of the little boy who steals underwear for his dead sister in *ibid.*, 130–31.

<sup>6</sup> Abraham here is playing on the phonic similarity with *mutilés de guerre* (war amputees).—TG

<sup>7</sup> Abraham was aware of Ilse Barande's text *Le maternel singulier: Freud et Léonard de Vinci* when drafting his comments here.—NR

<sup>8</sup> We can almost guess the mute words of this fetish image (we know, for example, that the singularity of her smile—among other pictorial effects—comes from the near lack of eyebrows). These words might sound like this: "Here I am blessed (Gioconda-Catarina) since you are here (Ser Pier); you come to me with your hair (bristles) (*poils*)—tool of our painter son—who paints beautifully and that is the end of my sorrow."

Indeed, consider: *poils* (hair/bristle), in Italian = *pelo*; *pinceau* (paintbrush) = *pelo-pennello*; *à merveille* (marvelously) = *a pennello*"; *peine* (sorrow) = *pena* As we wait to be able to decrypt the "screen memory" [recounted by Freud in "Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood"—TG], it is also of note that *plume d'oiseau* (bird feather = *penna*; oiseau (bird) = *uccello* (whether vulture or kite); *ciel* (heaven) = *cielo*; *celibataire* (unmarried) = *celibo*.

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In the context of this fictional clinic, an exchange of views during the seminar between Nicolas Abraham and Alain de Mijolla on the “case” of the poet Rimbaud is significant. Mijolla, author of “La désertion du capitaine Rimbaud,” writes of the poet’s identification with his father who was absent in his childhood. He also touches upon the need to consider the maternal connection to the place, precisely where Nicolas Abraham saw the “phantom” of the poet emerging.—MT

<sup>9</sup> Although unstated, the allusion here is probably to Freud’s Dora case study where the young patient develops a hysterical limp which Freud interprets as the “false step” she took in rejecting Herr K.’s advances.—TG

<sup>10</sup> *Fumier* literally translates as “manure” and hence the “smell of decay,” but it also has a more vulgar and abusive meaning similar to the English “bastard.”—TG

<sup>11</sup> As happened to French collaborators with the Nazis at the end of World War II.—NR

<sup>12</sup> Abraham and Torok, “Mourning *or* Melancholia,” 137–38.

<sup>13</sup> Of being unable to make up one’s mind as is Freud’s point.—TG

<sup>14</sup> *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess, 1887–1904* have been translated into English by Jeffrey Masson. To maintain the flow of Abraham’s argument, however, this is my translation from French.—TG

<sup>15</sup> See Abraham, “Notes on the Phantom,” 175. As translator Nicholas Rand notes, the reference here is to a patient whose lover had been sentenced to forced labor = breaking rocks (*casseur de cailloux*).—TG

<sup>16</sup> Two forms expressing the term “with her father.” I thank Nicholas Rand for his help in translating the first, more colloquial, expression.—TG

<sup>17</sup> *Alceste* is a near homonym of *l’inceste*.—TG

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<sup>18</sup> See Hermann, *L'instinct filial*.—NR

<sup>19</sup> See Torok, "Story of Fear." The "finger" that little Hans did not "put there" (on his penis), according to the mother, who described this gesture as "dirty." Because she says "finger" and not "hand," the infant Hans can easily understand that it is in fact a masturbatory problem for her, not for him. See also in this regard Barbro Sylwan, "Le ferd-ikt." Sylwan delves even further into the phantomatic story of this phobia: "Do not put the finger there, because it is 'dirty,' since by the same gesture of touching you risk waking up *the* dirty thing which must lie dormant in you and in me, namely that this gesture would make you touch with the finger what Freud forbids us to touch."—MT

<sup>20</sup> It should be noted that the vowels used by Ernst—Freud's grandson who plays with the reel—were denoted as *fort* and *da* by his mother, Freud's daughter.

<sup>21</sup> The consonants Ernst's mother suggests for the vowels he uses—*frtd*: *f(o)rt-d(a)*—may emphasize what seems to haunt the Freud family for several generations. See Sylwan's "Ferd-ikt," an important component of a larger work in progress, which seeks to examine Freudian texts for the *auto-in-analysé* of Freud, an apt term coined by Jacques Derrida [in "Freud's Legacy" in *The Post Card*—TG], to denote the possible phantom or crypt effects of Freud himself and the clear implications of this for theory, clinical practice, and metapsychology.—MT

<sup>22</sup> The remarkable debate in Derrida's reading of Freud's unconscious in his unpublished seminar "La vie la mort" should also be mentioned (see also "Freud's Legacy" in *The Post Card*). Derrida claims that Freud's negation of philosophy is itself negated in the very person named Sophie, through her "serious" son, Ernst, who returns—specularly, speculatively, and spectacularly—to his grandfather ("PP")

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the unconscious movement that is inscribed but not "written." This movement, furthermore, produces further speculation, this time "written," on the life and death drives.—MT

<sup>23</sup> By only italicizing "kriegen" in *bekriegen*, the English translation hints at *be-kriegen* = be-get, suggesting an encrypted as well as repressed sexual component.—TG

<sup>24</sup> Halberstadt was the surname of Ernst and his father.—NR

<sup>25</sup> See Abraham, "The Shell and the Kernel." Abraham capitalizes a number of terms here to denote them as authentic psychoanalytic concepts; that is concepts divided between the sense of the symbol and the anasemia that points towards the non-sensical movement of *différencement* that characterizes the kernel of meaning (and being).—TG

<sup>26</sup> Abraham, "Notes on the Phantom, 175.

<sup>27</sup> Returning to the case of the butterfly hunter reported in "Notes on the Phantom," he encloses in his can of cyanide the Lepidoptera called Bombyx: an animation of the person who disappeared at the time of bombs, during the war—an unknown X—(locked in the mother's heart), locked in, or suffocated in a gas chamber. In this regard, see also an ancient grammar bewitched by a "grimoire" that René Major ciphers and deciphers in a case of a typical phantom in *Rêver l'autre*, 85.—NR

<sup>28</sup> This is a reversal of Freud's classic phrase "Wo Es war, soll Ich werden" from *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis*, 80.—TG

<sup>29</sup> We have described the cryptic operation particular to the Wolf Man who, as is well known, had no descendents who could inherit the phantom from him. It would be interesting, however, to study the haunting—caused by his undetected crypt—in

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his “analyst-child,” Freud. Indeed, is it not a remarkable phantomic oddity that was constituted by Freud’s construction in his “From the History of an Infantile Neurosis?”—MT

<sup>30</sup> The pairing of *ken-kan* appears in Freud’s “Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words” (158–59) and is used to illustrate how certain ancient terms, in which one word denoted two antithetical meanings, became less ambiguous with the slight phonetic alteration of one of the terms in the binary. The ancient Egyptian word *ken* meaning strong-weak divides into *ken* meaning “strong” and *kan* meaning “weak.”—TG

<sup>31</sup> The metathesis (or other phonetic variations) has the same function as homonymy.—NR

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