

THE JOKE OF SURPLUS-VALUE AND THE GUFFAW OF THE SAINT

Dries Dulsster

Doctoraatsassistent aan de UGent op de vakgroep Psychoanalyse en Raadplegingspsychologie, Lid van de Kring voor Psychoanalyse van de New Lacanian School. Privépraktijk te Gent.

Summary: Today, society is driven by capitalist discourse, which profoundly affects our way of life. In this article we discuss how, from an analytic viewpoint, we can respond to this. According to Lacan, the psychoanalyst will offer a way out of the capitalist discourse by taking the position of lathouse from the analytical discourse. This means that the analyst should incarnate the object a, and personify the lost cause or object: "he acts as trash." However, there seems to be some caution required, for which Lacan referred to the position of the Saint and Balthasar Gracian. We will discuss the tricks put to the fore by Gracian: silence, absence and appearance, which will all revolve around the question of desire. Next, we turn to the position of the Saint in Seminar XXIII, introducing three new tricks from Joyce: silence, exile and cunning. We end by discussing the concept of the 'scabeaustration'. There can only be 'a saint' when one no longer wants to be 'a saint, castrating the 'desire-to-know,' the 'desire-to-interpret,' and the 'desire-to-die.' The saint will have localized his symptom, recognized it, beyond the therapeutic changes, as a specific modality of jouissance.

Keywords: Surplus-Value, Saint, Gracian, Joyce, escabeau(stration), Capitalist Discourse, Lathouse

Received: January 1, 2018; **Accepted:** May 21, 2018

"Let whoever cannot meet at its horizon the subjectivity of this time give it up then. For how could he, who knows nothing of the dialectic that engages him in a symbolic movement with so many lives possibly, make his being the axis of those lives? Let him be well acquainted with the whorl into which his era draws him in the ongoing enterprise of Babel, and let him be aware of his function as an interpreter in the strife of languages." (Lacan, 1966 [1953], p. 264)

Introduction

In *The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis* (1966 [1953]) Lacan states that as a psychoanalyst, one should have a grasp on the subjectivity of the era in which one lives.

One cannot be a signpost to the real for the many lives that are the effect of the symbolic if one hides from the society of which one is a part.

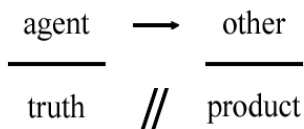
Today, society is driven by a capitalist discourse. The sole aim of this discourse seems to be profitmaking and the expansion of capital (Vanheule, 2016). According to Miller (2005), this profoundly affects our way of life: it destroys nature, scatters families and reforms the body. With the advance of the capitalist discourse, we see a disappearance of the master discourse, resulting in a society that is disrupted by aggression, jealousy, hatred and racism (André, 1992).

What has psychoanalysis to offer in all of this? Using Lacan's discourse theory, we can better grasp the effect of the capitalist discourse, understand 'the whorl our era draws us in' and see what the position of the analyst can be in all of this.

Lacanian discourse

So what is 'Lacanian discourse'? Lacan introduced this theory to reflect on the social bond, considering language and its effects. Using formulae, we can reduce the psychologizing of the social bond and study clinical practice in an efficient way (Verhaeghe, 1987).

Lacan's four discourses have the same structure, each consisting of four fixed positions: the agent of the discourse, the other to which the agent addresses himself, the hidden truth of the agent and the product, produced at the level of the other.

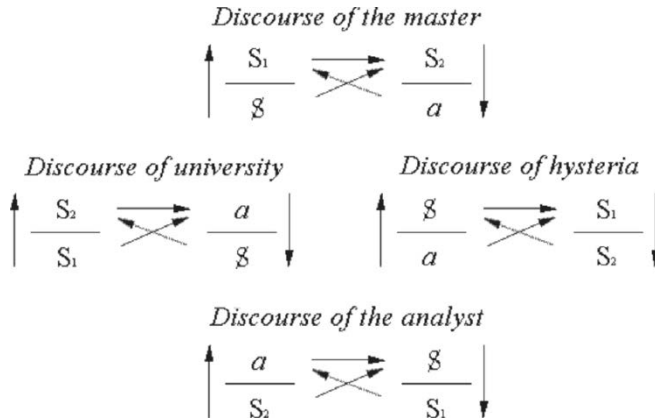


(Figure 1: 4 positions in Lacanian discourse)

Above the bar, we have a 'desiring agent' (top left) addressing (creating a social bond illustrated by the arrow) an 'other' (top right).

The part below the bar concerns the hidden side of discourse. Truth is connected to the position of the 'agent' by an arrow pointing upwards. What is essential in Lacan's discourse theory is that our actions are being determined by a hidden truth. Repressed elements motivate our actions, make us speak, make us direct ourselves to the Other. When we address ourselves to the Other, this will create a product.

What's key in these discourses is that, being confronted with a fundamental lack, we direct ourselves to an-other to respond, and as such, create a social bond.



(Figure 2: Lacanian Discourse Formulas)

By filling in these positions, Lacan's four discourses include that of the master, the hysteric, that of the university and the analyst.

Central to the discourse of the hysteric is the active formulation of complaints ($\$$) and the search for an Other who is presumed to have an answer (S_1) for the discomfort experienced. This discourse represses the truth that all desire rests on a lack that cannot be alleviated (a), and typically results in the production of narratives (S_2) that don't solve the fundamental lack (a), but engender further frustration ($S_2 \rightarrow (\$)$). As such, the hysteric is looking for a master and his knowledge to provide an answer to the fundamental lack.

The master, as an agent, will formulate a master signifier and impose this on the other presumed to function by means of knowledge (S_2). The master will repress his own division and the product will be that the other is reduced to the position of an object (a).

For example, the hysteric patient can consult a therapist about problems in a relationship. The therapist (as master) may respond by giving advice on how relationships work (S_1) and tell the patient that they should confront the problem they are experiencing, offering instructions on how one should behave in a relationship (S_2). Doing so, the therapist reduces the patient to a pawn in the game of relationships, usually producing further discontent (a). This will often engender the formulation of new ideas and guidelines (S_1) and the game continues.

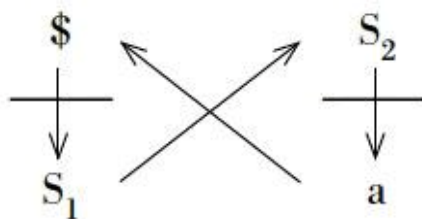
The response of the master, however, is only one option. There is also the discourse of the analyst.

The analyst will confront the hysteric with the so-called object a. The object a refers to a drive or jouissance-related remainder that cannot be named and that fuels desire. By occupying the place of the object (a) the analyst creates a place where, via free association, subjective division can be articulated (\$). To pay close attention to the singularity of the patient the analyst puts aside pre-established ideas about patients and pathologies (S2), such that key signifiers that mark the analysand's subjectivity (S1) can be formulated, which fuels the analysand's position qua object a (Vanhuele, 2017, p. 7).

Consumers

From a psychoanalytic perspective, we classically respond to the hysterical discourse with the analytical discourse. When the capitalist discourse is the starting point, turning towards the analytical discourse is not so obvious anymore. Nonetheless, Vanhuele (2017, p. 28) states that the solution Lacan puts to the fore is to firmly hold on to the analytical discourse. How should we understand this? What is essential to the position of the analyst in the analytic discourse when it relates to the capitalist discourse instead of the hysterical discourse?

So, what is this capitalist discourse?



(Figure 3: Capitalist Discourse)

Lacan articulated his model of the capitalist discourse on only one occasion, during his lecture at the University in Milan in 1972. As a mutant of the discourse of the master, the capitalist discourse was starting to replace the other discourses.

Like the discourse of the hysteric, the capitalist discourse starts from a subjective division. In the discourse of the hysteric, this is the point from which one addresses him- or herself to the Other. In the capitalist discourse, however, the arrow towards the Other disappears and as

such, the capitalist discourse will not rely on the social bond. It will try to solve the discomfort without directing itself to the Other (Lacan (2001 [1973]); Vanheule, 2017). It excludes the Other.

Capitalism will deny discomfort by incorporating it into a game of supply and demand. The market provides an answer and serves as truth for the divided subject. The market consists of isolated master signifiers, promising to dissolve the divisions, luring consumers into the belief that they can discover the truth about their discomfort. The capitalist discourse claims that consumption can be regarded as the answer to the drive and pleasure (Vanheule, 2008).

Going from the divided subject to the master signifier, without addressing oneself to another is a denial of subjective division and symbolic castration (the fact we lack something and should turn to the Other). This system only works if the master signifier refers to a knowledge (S2) that is beyond it and that guarantees the adequacy of the answer. According to Lacan (1969-1970), there is a compatibility between science and the capitalist discourse. Through collaboration with science, master signifiers become more and more innovative, so that old answers can be continually renewed. In this way, the master signifier in the capitalist discourse will not be a fixed anchor point, but a solution that can be endlessly replaced by a new solution. The only thing the system needs is a consumer, subjects who are prepared to translate their own subjective division in terms of a shortage on the market and believe in the answer of the S1.

In this system, when one denies the structural lack, desire is reduced to demand. The result is that there is no longer a need for desiring subjects, but for needy, demanding consumers. The market creates an offer and only needs to find subjects who want to make of this their demand. The system will try to identify needs of which the potential buyer wasn't even aware. The next step is to create a feeling of necessity and an urge to buy in order to consolidate the sale, after which the cycle immediately starts again. This does not immediately bring pleasure or fulfilment, but always implies a process of becoming sober. Ultimately, the consumed product is only an artefact between many others, a signifier between signifiers. It is something of value at the time of the purchase, which it no longer has once the product has been bought. The object thus never delivers the hoped-for satisfaction and is therefore always surrounded by disappointment (Bryant, 2008). The anticipated glamor is lost and the product has only one destiny: to become waste. The result is again unease and the circle starts again, resulting in even more consumption. This logic goes from need to satisfaction, without

intermediate steps. In the capitalist discourse, there is no 'time to understand,' because then the dimension of desire could appear.

Lathouses

'Machinery that gives in abundance, has left us in want'
– (Chaplin, *The Great Dictator*).

For Lacan, the era of this globalized world will create a proliferation of objects of *jouissance* on the side of entertainment (Guéguen, unknown). He will name the mass products, or objects, produced by capitalism 'lathouses'¹.

These 'Lathouses' refer to a menu of object *a*'s which we encounter on every street corner, in shop windows (Lacan, 1991 [1969-1970], p. 189). They are objects that promise a surplus-enjoyment but only confirm the axiom of capitalism: they provide an endless, unsatisfactory production of 'less-to-enjoy'² (André, 1992). One of their characteristics is that the objects are identical to one another, ready-made and easy to use. They are linked to a manual defined by a standardized procedure and serve immediate satisfaction (Brousse, 2004). Each product is just a volatile model, ready to be replaced by a new model, with just that little bit extra. We see this nicely illustrated in the cartoon of John McNamee (2015):

1. This neologism refers to 'ventouse' (The French for a suction cup) as to *Ousia* (designating substance as well as 'Being' in Aristotle his teachings). As such, it seems to be about a substance consuming/sucking in the subject.

2. Playing on the French pun that 'plus' means 'surplus,' but also 'less.'



The function of every new object is to become an object of waste and the added value, realized by the capitalist, is precisely the extent of the less-value inflicted on the consumer (André, 1992). The consumer therefore continues to search for objects, but they absorb us rather than inspire us. This kills desire and as such, what really becomes consumed in capitalist discourse is desire itself (Vanheule, 2017). Instead of a demand for love that turns to another, one only enjoys the object or is enjoyed by the object. All objects can serve pleasure and exclude the Other. 'Everything has become porn' and so 'we say goodbye to love' (Gronda, 2008). As such, the capitalist system is fundamentally an anti-social discourse.

Lacan will link the position of the analyst to this object 'lathouse.' The object of 'waste' is the value Lacan designates to the position of the analyst at the end of the treatment. Brousse (2004) states that Lacan's visionary perspective was to consider the analyst as a precursor of this type of object circulating on the market. In this era, psychologists have become objects which are consumable and interchangeable. Although presenting oneself as a lathouse, the psychoanalyst will subvert this position.

The psy-consumer and the analyst-lathouse

In the capitalist discourse we are no longer confronted with a hysterical question (a divided subject directing oneself to another), but with a question from the consumer: a divided subject asking for a direct solution to problems that arise, without going to the Other. Where previously analysts were consulted by divided subjects, looking for a subjective truth, directed towards a subject-supposed-to-know, we now receive what Vanheule (2008) calls 'psy-consumers' focused on 'getting something.' The answer to subjective unease is for sale and can be bought.

As psychoanalysts, we should refrain from responding symmetrically to the solution-seeking consumer, and radically put aside the illusory mode of gratification implied in capitalist discourse (Vanheule, 2017).

However, in these capitalist times it is anything but attractive to focus on the lack. Nor is the question directed towards a subject-supposed-to-know. To respond, the psychoanalyst must enter the market and present himself as a 'lathouse.' According to Miller (2005), this is the most logical answer to the current social situation where the object is central.

We link this to Lacan (1991 [1969-1970], p.189) stating that 'the ideal analyst is the one who makes the absolutely radical act to place himself in the place of the lathouse.' From this position, he can undermine the capitalist discourse. Where the psy-consumer will expect a product, he will get silence. The analyst will make room for a 'time-to-understand,' as well as a place for the lack, through silence for example. According to André (1992) it is all about the analyst, who from a singular position, offers himself as an erotic object, not to excite or to promise pleasure, but instead to slow it down. The psychoanalyst situates his actions outside of demand and supply, outside the game of exaltation and disappointment. The solution consists of a permanent holding on the discourse of the psychoanalyst. This means that the analyst should incarnate the object a, and personify the lost cause or object: "he acts as trash" (Lacan, 2001 [1973], p. 519). Indeed, the analyst should not be moved by the object, as the consumer is (\$), and not present a sublimation solution (S1) for the crisis of the subject.

Lacan (1991 [1969-1970], 189) will claim that it is frightening to see the analyst occupy that position. It is frightening because there are dangers associated with this position. The following questions arise: how can one take the position of the 'lathouse,' without being completely consumed (by the capitalist) or completely killed (by the miser)? How can one make sure the analyst is not feeding on the lack-of-being of the subject? What if the analyst starts to show off this position? It seems caution is required.

This seems to me to be the reason why Lacan (2001 [1973], p. 519) refers to Balthasar Gracian when he mentions the position of the saint as a way out of the capitalist discourse.

The Saint

The Saint in Télévision

'The saintlier we are, the more we laugh, that's my principle, the way out of the capitalist discourse'³ (Lacan, 2001 [1973], p. 520)

In *Télévision* (Lacan, 2001 [1973], p.520) Lacan refers to the path of the saint as a way out of the capitalist discourse, referring to Balthasar Gracian: 'no one notices the saint when he follows the silent road taken by Balthasar Gracian, which consisted of acting up too much.'

So, who is this silent wanderer?

3. *Plus on est de saints, plus on rit, c'est mon principe, voire la sortie du discours capitaliste.*

Balthasar Gracian y Morales (1601 - 1658) was a Spanish Jesuit and writer of "The Criticon of the Art of Life" (2009 [1651]) and "The Pocket Oracle and Art of Prudence" (2011 [1674]). Gracian appears often in Lacan's oeuvre, albeit often unnoticed. The quote from Function and Field, with which I started this article, can be found in Gracian's hand oracle, paragraph 20: 'to have a view of the century in which one lives.'

His most famous book, the Pocket Oracle, is a guide on how to behave at court and to ensure that one does not (literally) lose his head. The art of prudence is about a 'calculation,' considering the fluctuations in function of the circumstances, contingency. The Gracianesque art of prudence is a guide on how to deal with appearances, where the analyst knows where and when it is important to erase himself or, in contrast, to assert himself (Depelsenaire, 2009).

According to André (1992), these techniques are a way to deal with what the 'central horror' would mean for humans: envy and jealousy. As mentioned earlier, these two terms clearly come to the fore in a world where capitalism rules. The subject experiences structural discomfort and looks around in the hope of finding a solution, but usually 'jealousy' expels their eyes. Although we could understand this structural discomfort as the none-existence of the sexual relationship, the focus, in the era of Gracian, seems to be on the structure of desire. Since Gracian comes from the pre-capitalist era, the question arises as to why Lacan refers precisely to Gracian. To get a clearer grip on the position of the saint, and what this exactly means, we can consult Gracian's works. For Gracian, the art of prudence will amount to the mastery of three tricks: silence, absence and appearance (André, 1992). Three tricks that seem to have a lot to do with the notion of desire and 'the desire of the analyst.'

Silence

For Gracian, silence concerns the ethics of Full Speech. He notes that there will always be time to add a word, but never to undo one (Gracian, 2011, paragraph 160) and 'without lying you must not utter every truth, for nothing requires more circumspection than the truth, which amounts to a loss of heart. There is as much inner thought necessary to pronounce a truth as to keep it (...)' (Gracian, 2011, paragraph 181).

It refers to the 'mi-dire,' as a condition of good speaking. The analyst will say something, sideways. It concerns the truth and makes it

carefully unprotected, involving a discretion, a suspense of speaking that will maintain the secret and the mystery. For Gracian, silence touches on the dimension of truth, but silence also puts in function the desire of the analyst.

For Lacan, the desire of the analyst serves as the pivot for the treatment (Miller, 2010). This is a symbolic function in the analysis which can be summarized in the question: ‘What does all of this mean? Everything I say, me, as an analysand, what does all of this really want to say?’ (Miller, 2010, p. 115). It’s the question of meaning, but it will be detached from ‘what does it mean and will branch itself on ‘What does he want, the analyst?’ As Miller states, this will create marvellous effects, in the condition that the desire of the analyst stays veiled. The desire of the analyst should be an x and the end of the analysis will be an answer to this x : the fundamental fantasy one uses to deal with the desire of the other. To preserve this desire, the psychoanalyst does not respond to the requests of the analysand and, by staying silent, in not responding to the demand, the peculiarities of the relation of the subject to the object of his desire will unfold (Béraud, 2018). The analyst will not respond with his own desire, nor from his own fundamental fantasy, nor from his unconscious. It’s an ethics of silence. A silence which intrigues, makes enigma. When he speaks, the interpretation should keep a certain opacity. The psychoanalyst will lend his person as a support for the singular phenomena that analysis has discovered in transference. The operator of the cure will be this desire of the psychoanalyst.

Absence

The second trick is that of absence, which is closely linked to silence. For Gracian it is paradoxically a way to be more present. ‘Presence in absence. Habituation reduces wonder’ (Gracian, 2011, paragraph 81) and ‘everything can be tolerated, beside someone who is always present, that doesn’t need to be missed’ (Gracian, 2011, line 282). He suggests appearing with new splendour, every time, so that one will shine by being absent, sometimes by being present. In other words, the analyst will never be where he is expected and as such, the analyst will not play along with the fundamental phantasy of the analysand. He should always be present in absence, as an enigmatic x .

Appearance

Finally, there is the art of appearance. Gracian (2011, paragraph 77) suggests 'deliberately changing shape.' One must make use of the relationship between truth and appearance, reality and illusion. What would hurt the appearance of a person the most is that he shows that he is a man (Gracian, 1990, paragraph 289). The fact that the analyst puts himself in the position of the waste product does not mean that he should not assume the appearance of the agalma.⁴ 'Caution' demands a certain disguise to enrapture. It is therefore not just about positioning oneself on the place of the *semblant*, but the *semblant* of the object a, the object cause of desire (Vinciguerra, unknown). Again, it's the enigmatic desire of the analyst that will be the motor of the cure.

According to Serge André (1992) it is a culture of form, of presence, when one goes to the field. Instead of being veiled in invisibility (absence), it is about giving food to envy, but in an inconsistent way, which should have the effect of jealousy, accompanied by a desire to know (André, 1992).

As interesting as these three tricks are, it is still hard to grasp Lacan's remark 'The saintlier we are, the more we laugh.' Where's the laughing in all of this? For this we must make the jump to Seminar XXIII (2005 [1975-1976]).

The Saint in Seminar XXIII

"I will tell you what I want to do and what I do not want to do. I do not want to serve that in which I no longer believe, whether that is the label of family, fatherland or church: and I now want to try to express myself as freely and as completely as possible in one way or another and to defend with the only weapons that I wish to use for people - silence, exile and cunning" (Joyce, 1972 [1916]), p. 316)

In Seminar XXIII (2005 [1975-1976]), the reference to the saint will be James Joyce. Joyce will also use three tricks: silence, exile and cunning. These three artifices will clearly put to the fore the non-existence of the sexual relationship: the relationship between S1 and S2 will be an illusion, there is no relationship (exile). Therefore, the

4. Agalma is an ancient Greek term for a pleasing gift intended to woo the gods. It was endowed with magical powers beyond its apparent superficial value. Over time 'agalma' started meaning 'something beautiful – an object to be treasured.' Lacan (1960-1961) introduced the term writing on Socrates's symposium. Lacan proposed that the 'agalma' is the treasure which we seek in analysis, the unconscious truth we wish to know.

emphasis will be on the silence between the two signifiers (silence). This will then ensure that 'there is a sinthome' (cunning).

Exile

In his later teachings, Lacan will focus entirely on the non-existence of the sexual relationship. The nature of relationships is not a priori given. For 'Speaking beings,' there's no such thing as instinct. The sexual relation cannot be formalized in terms of fixed rules that apply to each relationship. There is no signifier that might name what a sexual relation consists of. We are stuck with our own jouissance and as such it is impossible to reach the Other. When one would have the idea on how to 'handle' the sexual relationship, Lacan would conclude this as 'madness,' or a delusion. The same delusion appears in the idea that we know what we say and use language to communicate with each other. What becomes crucial for Lacan is that we enjoy language, each on our own, disconnected from the Others. For Lacan, there is no better name for this than 'exile' (Lacan, 2005 [1975-1976], p. 70). Because of language and jouissance, we are fundamentally cut off from each other and need to create our own inventions to deal with this.

Where Gracian suggests "tricks" to enter the social bond, Joyce's artifices always refer to a much more fundamental level, to that of the real that is at stake. With Gracian the lack is put to the fore, for Joyce, it is about an overwhelming jouissance. One is banned from the sexual relationship because of jouissance and the analyst will focus on this point. The point of infinite distance between subject and other, the distance between oneself, our most singular point of jouissance. For the analyst, it's essential to have an idea about what his own solution to this non-existence is, to be able to function as an analyst.

Silence

When one is in exile, one becomes confronted with the fundamental silence between the signifier and the signified, between the S1 and the S2, with the silence between oneself and the Other. The silence of jouissance.

For Gracian, the emphasis is on the ethics of Full Speech, an ethics of the word, an ethics of the signifier. With Joyce as the main point of reference, it becomes an ethics of silence. The analyst holds his silence, because no predicate grasps the real and silence is the least of all evils. The analyst will no longer focus on 'the noise of meaning,' the S2's

which come to the fore. Lacan (1978 [1973]) will state that if there is not the slightest possibility that would allow the analyst to intervene on the jouissance that is at stake in the speech of the analysand, then it is better that the analyst remains silent. We should not confuse this with mutism. An analyst speaks, but with an ethics! It is a speech that reveals the non-existence of the sexual relationship, instead of covering it up.

Cunning

Finally, the concept of ‘cunning’ refers to the laughter of the Saint. Rabaté (2016) and Vanheule (2017, pp. 9-10) both clearly illustrate the link between laughter, Lacan’s concept of ‘surplus-jouissance’ and Marx’s concept of ‘surplus value’: In Marx’s *Capital* (1999), the notion of surplus value concerns the difference between the exchange value of products of labour and the value of the effort one must make to produce these products. If producing a commodity takes one hour, paying a labourer for an hour costs 10 euros, and the price of the commodity being 10 euros, then nobody makes a profit. Here, equivalent values are exchanged, so there is no surplus value. To make a profit, the capitalist must play a trick. The capitalist buys labour power to produce merchandise. The trick the capitalist will play is to pay the labourer as much as he should, but not the market value of what the labourer produced (Vanheule, 2017, p. 10). In the above example, he will pay the labourer 8 euros for his trouble and as such, create a surplus value of 2 euros. The capitalist pockets 2 euros behind the back of the labourer. Here Marx states that the capitalist must hide his smile: ‘after a hearty laugh, he re-assumes his usual mien’ (Marx, 1999, p. 126). This laughter results from the fact that the value that is created during a workday is much higher than what the capitalist pays the labourer (Vanheule, 2017, p. 10). What is new in this capitalist system, is that, due to the capitalist trying to create a surplus value, one no longer works solely to satisfy one’s needs. Production continues beyond satisfying needs, because the capitalist constantly wants his surplus value, which results in a fetishist relation to surplus value (Tomsic, 2012, 2015) Lacan (1968-1969, pp. 64-65) concludes that the secret gain of surplus value is both the product and the motor of the capitalist production system. Now, one doesn’t have to be jealous of the capitalist, because, as Marx stresses, he does not personally enjoy what he gains. He constantly reinvests his surplus value to create more. The capitalist is only the support that makes the system run. Therefore, what the capitalist system produces are suppositions and phantasies of

gratification, while in fact nobody enjoys (McGowan, 2004). Here, we see the link between both systems: In Marx's system, laughter refers to the capitalist's gain of surplus value, and to the process of alienation that this entails. In the use of discourse, laughter refers to the surplus-jouissance inherent in our alienation to the signifier (Vanheule, 2017, p. 10). In Marx's production system, the capitalist laughs with the money the system generates; in Lacan's model the user of discourse laughs to the extent that, at the level of the unconscious, a surplus of jouissance is produced which one fails to get hold of. The unconscious concerns the combined expression of half-saying and surplus jouissance. Where the capitalist reinvests his money in the system to create more surplus value, the speaking being⁵ will reinvest his surplus-jouissance in his symptom and therefore he 'enjoys his symptom.'

Psychoanalytic practice will no longer focus on the relevance of truth, but will emphasize the enjoyment present in the symptom. Where the psy-consumer is lost, and continues to search for solutions for his discomfort, at the end of an analysis one will find no solution, but a knowing-how-to-deal-with discomfort (*'savoir-y-faire avec son symptôme'*). For Gracian, the trick of appearance is about the relationship between truth and appearance, reality and illusion. For Joyce, however, the emphasis is on the 'savoir-y-faire,' which goes beyond the illusion of truth.

The saint will localize his symptom, recognize it, beyond the therapeutic changes, as a specific modality of jouissance. It is exactly because the saint 'knows-how-to-deal-with it' that he will be able to laugh. The capitalist laughs with the money generated by the system and the consumer will only be able to smirk: for both, the only option is to re-invest more. For them, there is no other way. With the saint, the laughter will concern going-with-the-flow instead of finding a solution. The 'less-to-enjoy' (*plus-de-jouir*) will no longer affect him. The saint will fall back on a *sinthome*, a 'knowing-how-to-deal-with' in relation to the lack of pleasure (Vanheule, 2017).

Scabeustration

However, this is not the end of the saintly story. In his text 'Joyce le Symptôme (II) Lacan (2001 [1979]) will reconsider the Joycean position of the saint. For Lacan, Joyce enjoys his *'escabeau'* too much

5. Introducing the notion of jouissance in Language, Lacan leaves behind his notion of the subject, introducing the 'Speaking Being.'

to be a saint. An essential feature of the saint would therefore be the '*scabeaustration*.'

The 'escabeau' and 'scabeaustration' are surely enigmatic signifiers, but what is this about and what does this mean for the position of the saint?

Lacan invented the '*SKbeau*' (escabeau) in 1975 in his text 'Joyce le Symptôme' working on the aesthetic work of James Joyce. It concerns the sublimation of the real that is at stake. Through analysis there's the invention of the sinthome, what is most 'real' for the subject, it's a singular invention to fiddle with the real. The *SKbeau* is the subject's invention to enter the social bond with this sinthome.

Illustrating this with Joyce, we can say that he has his writing and the effect this has on his body, the corporal jouissance he's experiencing while writing. On the other hand, we have 'Joyce the Artist,' his *SKbeau*, to connect in the social bond.

This allowed Lacan to situate the bodily event at the side of the sinthome, the jouissance that cannot be shared with the Other, and the *SKbeau*, allowing one to 'make a work of art'⁶ with the sinthome. The sinthome excludes meaning, concerns the 'opaque' jouissance of the body, while the 'escabeau' includes meaning, has a rapport with speech. On the one hand, there is the enjoyment of the body (the sinthome); but there is also a pleasure outside the body (the escabeau), the pleasure of speaking, identified by Lacan as the phallic enjoyment, with the dimension that supports desire (Laurent, 2016).

Although Lacan first considered Joyce being a 'Saintly man' he now states that there can only be 'a saint' when he doesn't want to be one, when one refuses to be 'a saint' (Lacan, 2001 [1979]). The road taken by the saint is silent. He walks around in the dirt of the Other, the remains of consumption. Quackelbeen (1993) calls this practice the 'archaeology of the manure heap'... Job on his dunghill, as waste in the garbage. Joyce wanted something more, he wanted the recognition of the discourse of the university (Laurent, 2016). Not a silent path at all...

As such, the *SKbeau* concerns desire and the scabeaustration therefore includes the castration of desire, 'wanting something more,' 'to get something out of it.' The analyst will not enjoy this *SKbeau*. According to André (1985), we must situate this castration, the *scabeaustration* on three levels.

First, there is the castration of the 'desire-to-know.' This desire amounts to a desire to 'see.' It concerns the belief that there is

6. In French, *Skbeau* can be heard as 'est-ce cas beau' meaning 'is this a beautiful case/example.'

something to know, something to see. For example, the analyst will not ask questions out of pure curiosity or intervene on subjects that are sensitive to him and wants to know something about it. We could refer to Freud (2006 [1914]) and the case of the Wolf man, where Freud kept insisting on the origins of the Wolf Dream.

Second, there's the castration of the 'desire-to-interpret.' This is the desire to lend one's voice and to offer the other signifiers where there are none. This not only concerns the desire to be heard, but also the enjoyment of language and enjoying one's own 'blabla.' When the analyst says something, he will not enjoy this. An analyst will only interpret what doesn't affect him, what leaves him personally indifferent, whereby his interpretations must also leave him indifferent (Jonckheere, 2003).

Finally, he refers to the castration of the analyst's desire as a 'desire-to-die.' Being reduced to the object of waste, wanting to disappear, wanting to be nothing. For some there's enjoyment in this position, sacrificing oneself for the other, and one should avoid this.

In short, it means that the analyst has gained insight into what is at stake for him in clinical work, of which one derives pleasure and what is the real of the clinician. As stated, this idea is already present in *Télévision* (Lacan, 2001 [1973]). The position of the saint brings no enjoyment with it, walks his road silently. The analyst has gained insight in this enjoyment and can allow another to do the same. The saint has a certain distance from his enjoyment. In this way, Lacan turns away from the saint who wants to take the place of the incarnated object *a* and enjoy it (enjoying being 'the gaze,' 'the voice,' 'the breast' or 'the faeces.' Therefore, there is only a saint to the extent that he does not want to be it, when he refuses to be holy (Lacan, 2001 [1979]).

Conclusion

In 'Function and Field', Lacan (1966 [1953]) states that as a psychoanalyst, one should have a grasp on the subjectivity of the century in which one lives. As stated, today, society is driven by capitalist discourse, profoundly affecting our way of life, resulting in a society disrupted by aggression, jealousy, hatred and racism. Using Lacan's discourse theory, we attempted to get a better grasp on the effect of the capitalist discourse and see how, from an analytic viewpoint, we can respond to this. According to Lacan, the psychoanalyst will offer a way out of the capitalist discourse by taking the position of lathouse from the analytical discourse. This means that

the analyst should incarnate the object *a*, and personify the lost cause or object: "he acts as trash." However, there seemed to be some caution required and Lacan referred to the position of the Saint and Balthasar Gracian.

The art of prudence, put to the fore by Gracian, was about the mastery of three tricks: silence, absence and appearance. All revolve around a question of desire. It's hard to grasp how this could help us in the capitalist era. The position of Lathouse is more about enjoyment than desire. As such, we turned to the position of the Saint in Seminar XXIII, introducing three tricks which seem similar to those of Gracian: silence, exile and cunning. These three artifices will clearly put to the fore the non-existence of the sexual relationship: the relationship between S1 and S2 is an illusion, there is no relationship (exile). Therefore, the emphasis will be on the silence between the two signifiers (silence). This will then ensure that 'there is a *sinthome*' (cunning).

For Gracian, the emphasis is on the ethics of Full Speech, an ethics of the word, an ethics of the signifier. With Joyce as the main point of reference, it becomes an ethics of silence. From this perspective, the analyst will no longer focus on 'the noise of meaning,' the S2's which come to the fore. For Gracian, the trick of appearance is about the relationship between truth and appearance, reality and illusion. For Joyce, however, the emphasis is on the 'savoir-y-faire,' which goes beyond the illusion of truth.

The psychoanalytic cure will no longer focus on the relevance of truth, but will emphasize the enjoyment present in the symptom. Where the psy-consumer is lost, and continues to search for solutions for his discomfort, at the end of an analysis one will find no solution, but a knowing-how-to-deal-with it ('*savoir-y-faire avec son symptôme*').

However, this was not the end of the saintly story. To really be a saint, there should be the '*scabeaustration*.' There can only be 'a saint' when one no longer wants to be 'a saint.' According to André (1985), we must situate this castration of desire, the *scabeaustration* on three levels: the castration of the 'desire-to-know,' the castration of the 'desire-to-interpret,' the castration of the analyst's desire as a 'desire-to-die.' In short, it means that the analyst has gained insight into what is at stake for him in clinical work, of which one derives pleasure and what is the real of the clinician. The saint will have localized his symptom, recognizing it, beyond the therapeutic changes, as a specific modality of *jouissance*. It is exactly because the saint 'knows-how-to-deal-with it,' that he will be able to laugh. With the saint, the laughter

will be about a going-with-the-flow instead of finding a solution. The ‘less-to-enjoy’ will no longer affect him. The saint will fall back on a *sinthome*, a ‘knowing-how-to-deal-with’ in relation to the lack of pleasure (Vanheule, 2017). The saint will be watching from the sidelines, with a roar of laughter, a guffaw.

Bibliography

- André, S. (1985). Lecture given at Postgraduate Training in Ghent. Unpublished.
- André, S. (1992). Être un saint. *Connaissez-vous Lacan?* Edition du Seuil. Paris. p. 165-175.
- Béraud, A. (2018). *Le transfert dans tous ses états: Sauvages, politique, psychanalytique*. Lecture given at the Circle for Psychoanalysis of the New Lacanian School on 13th of January in Gent.
- Brousse, M.-H. (2004). L’usage de l’objet. Quarto (85) Evaluation, Symptôme, Angoisse. Revue de l’Ecole de la Cause Freudienne. ACF en Belgique.
- Bryant, L. R. (2008). Zizek’s new universe of discourse: politics and the discourse of the capitalist. International Journal of Zizek Studies, (54), retrieved from: <http://zizekstudies.org/index.php/IJZS/issue/view/10>.
- Chaplin, C. (1940). The Great Dictator. Charles Chaplin Productions.
- Depelseinaire, Y. (2009). Saint homme. *Scilicet: Semblants et sinthome*. École de la Cause Freudienne, Paris. p.307-310
- Freud, S. (2006 [1914]). Uit de geschiedenis van een kinderneurose [De Wolfenman]. Werken (6). Boom. P. 474-582.
- Guéguen, P.-G. (unknown). *Don’t blame it on New York*. Downloaded on 16th of May from: http://www.lacan.com/essays/?page_id=390
- Gracian, B. (2011 [1647]). Handorakel en kunst van de voorzichtigheid. Athenaeum – Polak & Van Genneep. Amsterdam.
- Gracian, B. (2009 [1651]). De criticon of de kunst van het leven. Athenaeum – Polak & Van Genneep. Amsterdam.
- Jonckheere, L. (2003). Het seksuele fantasme voorbij. Zeven psychoanalytische gevalsstudies. Acco. Leuven.
- Joyce, J. (1972 [1916]). Een Portret van de Kunstenaar als Jongeman. Nederlandse vertaling. De Bezige Bij. Amsterdam
- Lacan, J. (1966 [1953]). The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis. *Écrits*. English Translation. p. 197- 268.
- Lacan, J. (1972). Du discours psychanalytique. In: Lacan in Italia 1953-1978. En Italie Lacan. Milan: La Salamandra, pp. 32-55.
- Lacan, J. (1978 [1973]). Psychanalyse et sa référence au rapport sexuel. Lacan in Italia 1953-1978. La Salamandra, Milan. P. 58-77.
- Lacan, J. (1991 [1969-1970]). Le Séminaire XVII: L’envers de la psychanalyse. Seuil. Paris.
- Lacan, J. (2001 [1973]). Télévision. *Autres Ecrits*. Seuil. Paris. p. 509-546
- Lacan, J. (2001 [1979]). Joyce Le Symptôme. *Autres Ecrits*. Seuil. Paris. p. 565-569.
- Lacan, J. (2005 [1975]1976). Le Séminaire XXIII: Le Sinthôme. Seuil. Paris.
- Lacan, J. (2005 [1975]). Joyce le Symptôme. *Le Séminaire XXIII: Le Sinthôme*. Seuil. Paris. p. 161 – 169.
- Lacan, J. (2006 [1968-1969]). *Le Séminaire XVI: D’un Autre à l’autre*. Seuil. Paris.
- Laurent, E. (2016). *L’envers de la biopolitique : une écriture pour la jouissance*. Navarin.
- Marx, K. (1999). Capital. A new abridgement. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- McGowan, T. (2004). *The end of dissatisfaction? Jacques Lacan and the emerging society of enjoyment*. New York: SUNY.
- McNamee, J. (2015). Cartoon. Afgehaald via <http://piecomic.tumblr.com/post/128273584437/tbt> op 7 januari 2018;
- Miller, J.-A. (2005). Une fantaisie. *Mental (15)*. P. 9-27.
- Miller, J.-A. (2010). Passe du Parlêtre. *Cause du désir (94)*. Diffusion Volumen. p. 113 – 124.
- Quackelbeen, J. (1993). *Zeven Avonden met Jacques Lacan: Psychoanalytische commentaren bij Télévision*. Academia Press. Gent.
- Rabaté, J.-M. (2016). Can you spare a laugh? Lacan, Freud, and Marx on the economy of jokes. *Lacan, Psychoanalysis and Comedy*. Cambridge University Press; p. 82 – 103.
- Tomsic, S. (2012). Homology: Marx and Lacan. *S: Journal of the Jan Van Eyck Circle for Lacanian Ideology Critique*, 5, 98-113.
- Tomsic, S. (2015a). The capitalist unconscious. Marx and Lacan. London & New York: Verso.
- Vanheule, S. (2008). De kapitale vraag. *Inwit (4)*. *Tijdschrift voor Psychoanalyse van de New Lacanian School*. p. 125-138.
- Vanheule, S. (2017). Capitalist discourse, subjectivity and Lacanian psychoanalysis. *Frontiers*. Downloaded on 16th of May from: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01948/full>
- Verhaeghe, P. (1987). *Tussen histerie en vrouw*. Acco. Leuven.