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THE SYMBOLIC IN THE EARLY LACAN AS A
CYBERNETIC MACHINE, AS AUTOMATON AND
TYCHÉ, AND THE QUESTION OF THE REAL

A Review and Response to: Brahnam, S. B. (2017). Primordia of Après-Coup, Fractal Memory, and Hidden Letters: Working the Exercises in Lacan's Seminar on "The Purloined Letter."

It is well known that the early period of Lacan's oeuvre included a detour through cybernetics. Lacan did not continue this train of thought that was picked up most notably by Guattari and Deleuze with their notions of the unconscious as a creative machine (the *machinic* unconscious or "L'inconscient *machinique*"). However, as far as I can tell, their notions of desire and of the mind as a machine did not include a detailed incursion into binary logic and computer programming such as that seen in Lacan's exercises at the end of his text on the purloined letter. The connection between letters and numbers is that letters are meant to be read while numbers are used to perform arithmetical operations and functions. Letters and numbers both have an effect outside meaning or can be senseless units that must be combined to generate meaning within a system.

Drawing upon the work of Friedrich Kittler, Johnston stresses, quite to the contrary, the absolute "*necessity* of cybernetics to Lacan's theory," underscoring that when Lacan says "the symbolic world is the world of the machine," he is referring to computers (Markovian machines, finite state machines, and Turing machines). (Brahnam, 30)

Lacan's formulation of the Symbolic as a formal language, incorporates formal logic, Boolean logic, and the binary logic invented by Leibniz and prevailing in the field of computer programming, cybernetics, and cognitive psychology. Lacan's interest in binary logic responds to the attempt to understand and develop Freud's idea that the unconscious determines the conscious ego. He wanted to figure out how a formal language determines the subject even if it is the "active" subject that engages such a language. Like in all logic and mathematics, problems and equa-

tions require repeated practice and exercises. This is precisely what Lacan attempts to do in the “Suite” following the text on the Purloined Letter.

Such efforts take Lacan outside the parameters used by Freud to define the unconscious. Even though Freud was well-aware of how the unconscious worked within language (in jokes, dreams, and everyday life), Freud believed that images and not words prevailed in the unconscious. It was Lacan’s contribution to give an account of the signifying chain operating within the unconscious. However, in 1955 he had not yet developed the concept of the signifying chain with the aid of the graph of desire or the concept of the Real, in its two periods.

One of the important merits of Lacan’s text of 1955 is how he links Freud’s clinical and phenomenological observation of the Fort-Da game in a child, with an exposition of the Even or Odd (Head or Tails) game as it appeared in Poe’s text. As the former constitutes an empirical/structural moment of psychoanalytic developmental theory, the latter represents a foundation for probability theory. The result amounts to an informal proof of how automaton, as a supposed form of chance, or randomness, represents an actual form of causal determination. This form of chance or randomness is how the Real first appears to Lacan. I will examine first the concepts of automaton and *Tyché* as they appear in Seminar XI before returning to the Fort-Da game and the machine made of signifiers as presented in the Exercises. However, Lacan’s final concept of the Real is articulated in Seminar XXIII (see Moncayo 2017).

Tyché and automaton

The early Real is ominous, painful, awful, hazardous, accidental, and is often not differentiated from the concept of reality in general or the two are used interchangeably. The second Real is more like *Tyché*, a true hole that generates consonance and concord, is benevolent, and auspicious. This view coincides with *Tyché* as the Greek goddess of Fortune as something surprising and undetermined at the heart of the structure of determination, the point where structure vanishes or does not exist.

Automaton and *Tyché* are the two forms of chance that Aristotle considered. In the Suite or Exercises, the two are not clearly differentiated and both are subsumed under the principle of the repetition compulsion. “What are you, figure of the dice I roll in your chance encounter (*tyché*) with my fortune?” (Lacan, 1956, 28). It is important to ‘remember’ that in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud (1920) pointed out that repetition in trauma, or the return to the place of trauma is not only a *daemon* of repetition, but also an attempt at catharsis, healing, and repetition with a difference that makes all the difference.

The Lacanian concept of the Real eludes and disconcerts because it is situated in a dimension beyond formal logic/binary language and the senses and yet it is intrinsically ‘bound up’ with language and the senses. Lacan links the Real to the concept of *Tyché* in Aristotle. Aristotle (350 BCE/2002) distinguished between causality and

chance as an accidental form of causality. In the *Physics*, Aristotle distinguishes between two modes or types of causality: causality proper (four causes) and two kinds of chance. The two kinds of chance are *automaton* and *tyché*. It is important to distinguish between the two types of causality (causality proper and chance) and the two types of chance because these are often confused. In fact, Lacan also refers to *tyché* as a form of causality instead of as a form of accidental causality.

More recently, after Aristotle, Hume (1748, *Of Probability*) distinguished between causality and probability. Due to our ignorance or the limitations of our cognitive and perceptual functions we miss many small, numerous, or complex forms of causality. At some point complexity renders prediction, impossible. From this perspective, the most we can know is various degrees of probability that certain events may be causally related to one another. Chance is an everyday word used when speaking about an event taking place while probability is a precise measurement of that chance. In the roll of the dice, each of the six numbers/sides of a dice have a 1/6 chance of manifesting. Probability is a special branch of mathematics that helps people decide the percentage of likelihood of an event taking place (according to large number computer runs or calculations).

For Aristotle (*Physics*) there were two forms of chance or accidental/spontaneous/random causality: *Tyché* and *automaton*. Of the two only *Tyché* is truly spontaneous or Real. *Automaton* appears random because it disrupts predictable social behaviour derived from social norms but is determined by very precise signifying chains of conscious or unconscious causality. *Automaton* is the disruptive psychical causality associated with the Freudian Unconscious while *Tyché* is the type of causality linked to the Lacanian Real unconscious.

There is what cannot be represented about the drive (*Tyché*) as well as what cannot be measured or predicted due to the complexity of factors and causes at work (*automaton*). In formal logic certainty is expressed in terms of the probability that preferential states and beliefs will manifest and prevail in the relative frequencies of the facts of existence. Propensities, tendencies, or human habits, “must obey” the usual probability calculus. Objective probability represents the hope that nature functions according to the categories of formal logic. *Automaton* or accidental causality refers to the unconsciously repressed elements that we do not expect (accidental/random) and are not socially desirable and yet remain an intrinsic aspect of the facts of existence. What appears random and irrational may obey and be determined by logical and mathematical principles of a different order.

Tyché for Lacan represents an encounter with the Real and manifests in free association. Encounters are things that one suffers/enjoys in abeyance or pending receiving the necessary attention in the practice of speech or analysis. *Tuche* (as written in Seminar XI) or *tyché* and *automaton* are accidental causes. *Tyché* is destiny, and *automaton* is chance associated with instincts and non-rational beings and their fate but that in humans Lacan associates to the signifying chains of language and the Unconscious. Accidental causes produce unintended outcomes or conse-

quences. What appears random and irrational may obey and be determined by logical principles of a different order. Instinct and drive are also organized by logic and numbers of a different order (symmetrical dialectical logic and irrational and imaginary numbers). In addition, in Chaos theory, the Chaos of complex causality in nature, is not without the strange attractors that organize a pattern or regularity amidst and despite the Chaos.

Automaton is more characteristic of nature and “unreasoning agents” as in the example of animal instincts. Here the connection between unconscious psychical causality, nature, and instinct cannot fail to be made. Automaton as unconscious determination is also linked to chance and its derivation from the Latin *cadere*—to fall, and to fall away from the norm and towards decadence. Games of chance are also associated with decadence and with leaning or decline rather than being upright.

For Lacan the Real is beyond and behind automaton and can be linked to accidental events that have an effect on a subject’s destiny and this is to be distinguished from fate that represents a fall as in the case of Oedipus who ended up killing his father and marrying his mother despite his otherwise preconscious and socially acceptable intentions.

Lacan distinguishes between lawful regularity in nature and what he calls causality in the form of a gap (of causality). The notion of cause in Lacan turns causal determination on its head and instead refers to something undetermined. *Tyché* as causality in the form of a gap, *acausality*, and the unconditioned/undetermined, is a new and surprising enigmatic knowledge emerging in the Real of here and now experience as a missed encounter. However, there is also a need to differentiate between what could be known under different logical/rational principles and the existence of un-determination per se, the emptiness of inherent nature and what may be inconceivable or unknowable by logical principles of any kind whatsoever.

Some authors confuse automaton with causality proper. This is not accidental (pardon the pun) given that automaton is a type of chance that only appears to be arbitrary or contingent. In fact, automaton is the result of structural and unconscious unintended consequences. For example, a person wanted to say one thing and instead said the opposite. Here chance in the sense of change only appears to be something new or spontaneous. Automaton is the permutation of pre-determined structural factors. Change or chance here does not escape determinism. This is particularly true of unconscious psychical causality and the repetition of trauma and suffering, whether in pain or pleasure, in desiring the desires of others or repeating their painful mistakes.

Lacan instead relocates *automaton* within the network of signifiers in language. It seems the ego has autonomous choice but in fact the subject is determined by the heteronomy of the signifier and the fact that language and the Other speak through the subject. Finally, the heteronomy of the signifier can work equally for desire/

wishing that may conflict with social norms or for the regulation of desire according to the laws of signification, substitution, and censorship.

Tyché is the more distinctly human type of chance which, on the one hand, represents the possibility of something truly arbitrary, contingent, as well as new, but can also be linked to what Aristotle called luck or virtue in the sphere of ethical actions. Although the results/effects of moral choice appear undetermined until a choice is made, the only thing undetermined is the emptiness or the yet undefined nature of the choice itself. The structure and arc of possible choices, and what the consequences may be, are pre-determined. However, depending on the choice the results may vary and lead to different permutations of the structure. Human nature is undetermined or unfixed until a choice is made and the outcomes of our choices return in the various forms of causality including automaton.

Lacan says that the encounters with the Real are missed encounters or failed encounters. It is the failed encounter with the Real that links the two forms of accidental causality. The Real lies beyond or behind automaton, and un-determination interacts with determination or begins where determination, symbolization, or interpretations ends or fails. The Real unconscious remains unborn or unrealized in language and is realized as a form of jouissance that is beyond representation.

A missed encounter fails in the sense that the encounter or the jouissance at stake remains unrepresented as something suffered or enjoyed. When the Real is symbolized, something of the Real is lost in translation. There are the gaps in the signifying chain left behind by the work of repression (the false hole of Seminar XXIII) and then there is the gap that appears in the Symbolic due to the Real (a true hole) being the Being of non-being and non-being refers to what does not have being or existence within the chain of signifiers. Whether this is an ontological or pre-ontological state of affairs is a mute question because the larger Real manifests or opens within the chains of being yet closes and retains the quality of non-being or emptiness with respect to the Symbolic.

Using Godel's theory (outside the PM arithmetical system) I can say that the gap in the symbolic chain is the incomplete or the unproven truth that renders symbolic chains consistent. What is undetermined about the Real causes a gap in the chain that sets the chains of causality into motion, but the concept of the lack belongs to the Symbolic while the lack of a concept belongs to the Real. Automaton does not determine the Real (that remains undetermined) but does circumscribe or determine the limits beyond which the Real can be found.

The Symbolic does not cease in its efforts to represent how the Real appears as a gap within the Symbolic and at the same time the Real does not cease from NOT being written because the Real is beyond the signifier. This is how the two forms of accidental causality are interwoven: causality functions as a gap within the Symbolic yet the gap or Real itself beyond/behind the signifier is undetermined. The missed encounter is only on the side of the Symbolic.

With regards to the unconscious, the ego fails or makes allegedly unintended mistakes, and the unconscious represents threats to the ego's imaginary self-image. However, with regards to the subject, the Real is always beyond the ego's reach, and beyond moral determinism and conditioning, whether positive or negative. The unconditioned Real does not fit within the structure of symbolic laws or moral determinism and, therefore, like an unpredictable earthquake, the Real can shake the foundations of lawful regularity. The symbolic unconscious and the pleasure principle are organized around a core of defenses/avoidances and wishes and yet the wishes and defenses themselves represent an irreducible core of emptiness or lack of being. Neither the Imaginary nor the Symbolic can render the Real because the Real remains *acausal* or unconditioned.

There are two levels of chance, corresponding to two levels of the Real: The Real as a true and false hole, as *tyché* and *automaton*. The ambiguity regarding the nature of the binary signifier precisely refers to the division of the subject. Such division is reflected in the division between the primarily repressed signifier, and the representative substitute which then will become the object of a secondary repression. However, the division of the subject is also revealed in an ambiguity or uncertainty between the primarily repressed signifier at the core of being, and the disappeared subject qua-nothing or non-being (as the essence of the core of being or the non-being within being).

The S of the subject can either be the pre-subject (that appears at the top left of the L schema) or the imaginary object the child represents (under primary repression) as an object of the mother's desire. The S then needs to be barred (\$) and the S as \$ or S_1/S_2 becomes the relation of signification between metaphors, and between subjects and signifiers. In the *matheme* for the fantasy or phantasm, the subject appears as a divided subject in relation to the primary part object of fantasy cause of desire ($\$ \diamond a$). But in the signifying chain or narrative of social discourse the subject appears subordinate to the Other: $s(A)$ or $s(O)$. In the upper chain the subject appears as the capital S pure signifier of the subject designating the place of jouissance and the subject of the Real as a hole in the Other $S(\emptyset)$ since the Other does not have the signifiers to represent what is Real about the subject.

The Real of jouissance can be of the order of the primarily repressed (the jouissance of the Other precipitated by the object), or of what remains of the subject qua-nothing behind a bar that has or acquires a different meaning (the Other or Third jouissance). Rather than a primary and primarily repressed object/thing, the subject now represents the 'no-thing.' For this 'no-thing' that the subject is, the bar now represents not the source of a prohibition, but the impossibility of representing what the subject is in and of the Real. Instead, what appears of the subject is a metaphor that represents the subject and at same time fails to represent or conceals what of the subject is in the Real. It is this failure that is experienced as a missed encounter. The repressed/repressive primary signifier or first representative of the drive or the representation refers to the type of primary repression known to Freud, while the absence of a signifier is due to a different form of primary repres-

sion instantiated by the fact that the Real cannot be grasped within language and the Symbolic.

The primarily repressed signifier represents a false hole since in the gap left in its wake “lies” a repressed signifier that represents *automaton* or a centrifugal first cause mover of the chain of ideational signifiers responsible for a structural form of change that only appears to represent change or something new. In contrast to this, a true hole is a semblance of a causal hole but in fact represents an absence or emptiness of causality that functions as a centripetal force for the generation of new signifiers out of the unmarked Real within the Symbolic. The subject of the Real, the no-thing or emptiness, the no-mind, precedes the differentiation between language and being and between being and non-being. The subject-qua-no-thing remains unrepresented or lacking in the mark, stain, or gap of repressed representations. The Real is both beyond representation and the very crack, stain, and concept of the lack within symbolic representation.

The signifying machine

Returning to the Fort-Da example, and to the theory of the Symbolic as a cybernetic machine, a register is established (within the Mind or with a scientific method), using the resources of language, to record the alternation and undulation of the mother’s even presence or even attention with her absence and emptiness. Even receives a + sign and absence receives a –sign. The plus and minus signs associated with the object (the *objet a* and the phallus) are conceived in various ways within Lacanian theory. In addition, presence and absence can also be conceived as polyvalent or at least representing a quadrant with each element of presence and absence potentially having both a + and a – sign. There are positive and negative presences and positive and negative absences that refer to each other within a quadratic pattern of differentiations.

Though it might be assumed that heads connotes presence (and with its positive valence maps to plus) and that tails connotes absence (and with its negative valence maps to minus), no key is provided. The meaning of each sign lies solely in its relation to the other: what the one *is*, the other *is not*. Consequently, no definitive reconstruction of what took place is possible from such a record. Thus, from the start, there is no true or false; there is only the inscription of a pattern. (Brahnam, 4)

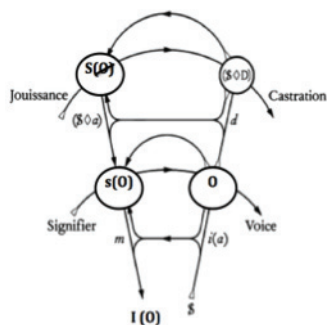
The apparent randomness of the mother’s presence and absence, her comings and goings in and out of the child’s immediate subjective world is the juncture where phonemes (Oooo-Aaaa), as the phonological or sound dimension of the letter, capture the first object, and the object world, therefore, in a net of configurations and significations provided by language. The sound of the letter or phoneme points to the Real and to an immediacy of the object or *Das ding*, and an original form of experience that is lost in the system and structure of language or what Lacan calls the ‘symbol’s conditions.’

A phoneme is converted into a script, character, or hieroglyphic, and the latter can be reconverted back into a sound/phoneme that now functions within a system of signifiers and numbers. The script or hieroglyphic represents a unary trace while the signifier represents a unary trait present in all signifiers and numbers. The object now is no longer represented as an icon, or a part-image of the object, but as a sound or an acoustic image that converts the visual image into a signifier. Dream representation reverses this ancient process every night for the brain to get some rest.

However, the immediate link to the object remains as a potential presence within the function of the letter, the sound, and the effectiveness of the structure as a vanishing point instant. A sound in the air, like the insubstantiality of ideas, the impregnations of the Imaginary, and the place where words vanish once they are uttered, are examples of the nullibiety or utopia of the signifier. The latter represents both 'machinic' effectiveness and a failed attempt to recover and suture (through a text) the lost object and the gap produced by the loss of the object. I will have more to say about this further on.

The result of a flip of coin depends "on a single parameter: the angle between the normal to the coin and the angular momentum vector... As Persi Diaconis, Susan Holmes, and Richard Montgomery put it, "coin-tossing is 'physics' not 'random'" (Brahnam, 4). The angle and the momentum are the determining physical/material factors. In addition, Lacan states that even or odd, winning or losing, heads or tails, are already a symbolic structure or pattern (the articulation of one word with another). Unconscious thought selects even or odd and, once selected, the symbol organizes the result. Finally, the subject that selects or makes the choice becomes an element in the chain that is organized according to symbolic laws. The participation of the subject in the choice, explains why in the graph of desire, the capital S for the subject is a component of the unconscious signifying chain (see the matheme at the top left of the graph). Further on I will differentiate between thinking, non-thinking, and the signifier as components of thought.

In Lacan's paper, the organization of structures and patterns of symbols explains the functioning of the unconscious signifying chain. However, this formulation does not include what Lacan (1966) later discovered through the graph of desire. There are two signifying chains (Romanowicz and Moncayo, 2015) and the two are organized differently. What he says in his 1955 paper applies to the lower conventional signifying chain but does it apply to the upper chain? The upper chain is not organized by binary logic the way that a binary computer is.



In binary logic, a man is a man (1) and cannot be a woman (0), or a woman is a woman (1) and cannot be a man (0). For a computer 1 or 0 are one or the other but not both and neither. In dreams and in the unconscious signifying the 0 and 1 can be found superimposed and a subject can be man and woman, or a female dreamer can appear as a man in the dream, and a male dreamer can appear as a woman in the dream. But the unconscious signifying chain cannot be entirely or modally transcribed into the narrative line of social discourse.

The ego is involved in the lower social chain of discourse, while the upper signifying chain contains the pure Signifier (S) as a representation of the subject in the place of jouissance. In Lacan’s text of 1956 under consideration, he uses the S for the subject that is included in language and in the signifying chain but in both cases what he calls the signifying chain refers to the lower level of the social narrative associated with Preconscious language (unconscious in a descriptive sense).

Four years later (1960) he uses the S as the pure signifier of the lack in the Other (S[∅]). Here not only does he differentiate two signifying chains but he also differentiates the *Je* from the *moi* (the subject from the ego). The ego goes with the lower chain and the subject with the top chain. The subject now moves further away from the ego and in the direction of a subject in/of the Real. The upper chain transcribed into the lower chain can be handled by a binary system but not the other way around. Conversely, psychoanalysis and the psyche require a different logic that cannot be adequately expressed with the logic of non-contradiction. Perhaps in the future quantum computers will be able to handle something closer to a human system and capacity.

Signs and symbols, which here mean the same thing for Lacan, are organized into various types of patterns: the symmetry of constancy (+++ or - - -) labelled 1, and the symmetry of alternation (+ - + or - + -) labeled 3. Asymmetry instead combines opposites (++ - or - - +) and is labelled 2. The record of tosses can now be organized in the form of a numeric code. So far this type of formal language or system could be descriptive of the descriptive unconscious or the Ucs./Pcs. System but not of the Unconscious proper, whether repressed (Freudian) or Real (Lacanian). Lacan also widens the structure that is based on symmetry and asymmetry by establish-

ing rules of how the two types of symmetry can be combined in such a way that symmetry is mediated by asymmetry. It is the repetition or iteration of the codes (1→11; 2→22; 3→33) that ultimately determines the form of the signifying chain in this model. And as if this were not enough, such rules yield additional codes composed of the various relations among symmetry and asymmetry in various combinations. Lacan uses Greek letters to label such new codes in binary terms (0,1).

Outside Lacanian theory and twenty years later, Matte-Blanco (1975) attempted to construct what he called a bi-logic to formulate the unconscious in terms of symmetrical/asymmetrical relations. I would not be surprised if Matte-Blanco knew about Lacan but ignored his work in obeisance to the IPA's rejection and ignorance of Lacan's gift to psychoanalysis. The IPA ignores Lacan or reads and plagiarizes him in the hopes that this will go unnoticed given the general active ignorance of his work within the organization. Unfortunately, some Lacanians (the World Congress of Psychoanalysis would be an example) also ignore other forms of psychoanalysis and dismiss attempts to engage other forms of knowledge. Both Freud and Lacan engaged the scientific and psychoanalytic knowledge of their times without worrying too much about conceding validity to alternative points of view. Otherwise arguments are not strengthened by open dialogue and instead are upheld by a dogmatic and sectarian self-referential stance.

Memory and the machine

Brahnam in her paper also brings out the connection that Lacan makes in his text between memory and law. The structure of the language that we use is what allows for memory and reversibility and for what is legal and acceptable within a system. However, in Freud this would be more representative of the secondary process than the primary process at work in the Unconscious. In addition, Lacan forges an equivalence, perhaps justified, between the rules of thought and the judicial and cultural concept of Law. I cannot presume to give an exhaustive account of the psychoanalytic concept of memory but perhaps a few indications will suffice.

Which is that the remembering [*melioration*] at stake in the unconscious—and I mean the Freudian unconscious—is not related to the register that is assumed to be that of memory, insofar as memory is taken to be a property of a living being (31)...Whereas it is quite obvious that, in doing without this subjection, we can find in the ordered chains of a formal language the entire appearance of remembering, and quite especially of the kind required by Freud's discovery (31)... Thus, right from the primordial symbol's first composition with itself— and I will indicate that I have not proposed this composition as I have arbitrarily—a structure, as transparent as it may still remain to its givens, brings out the essential link between memory and law (36). (Lacan, 2006)

Lacan appears to be distinguishing between what he calls a property or capacity of the living being and the ordered chains of a formal linguistic structure upon

which remembering and the Freudian unconscious is organized. Human capacity, and linguistic and mental structure are all interwoven in phenomena and structure in general. The distinction between capacity and structure parallels the distinction between the physiological aspects of vocalization and speech and its cultural/numerical linguistic components. For Freud memory begins with the experience of satisfaction and frustration where the first memory of the mother's breast is registered. This is also the beginning of fantasy life that later will lay the foundations for organized thinking. Memory proper begins with the secondary process and the capacity for reversibility.

The arch between these two forms of memory (fantasy and organized thinking) is reproduced in the relationship between memory and screen memory. In Seminar XXIII Lacan used the distinction between reminiscence and remembrance to underscore this double aspect of memory. Remembering takes place within a structure and its members or component elements are recombined in memory. Memory is a copula of letters and signifiers, implies a record, and is a mental response to demands of the body and the drive. From the point of view of energetics, memory is an attempt to find a constant name or number or to keep the number constant in the Name. To remember is also an ideal or the ideal of a formal structure.

Memory proper is marked by fantasy, trauma, and repression. Screen memories bear the defensive mark of the secondary process that produces a socially acceptable version of memory. To add to this, Rapaport (1951), in the North American ego psychology school, used the literary device of segmenting the me from me-mory. Memory represents 'meness.' Memory is an aspect of our subjective way of representing the world. I guess this notion goes along well with the notion of ego used by Freud and ego psychology, although not necessarily. We appropriate the structure of language not so much to personalize language but to include ourselves into the structure that is passed down through the generations of families and nations.

The appropriation of language represents imaginary-symbolic formations or the imaginary face of the symbolic as represented by the ego ideal. The ego ideal both reveals and conceals the nature of structure and anti-structure. The ego ideal defends/embodies castration but also defends against the Other who can annul the subject. Instead of the capital S being incorporated into the signifying chain, ego memory falsifies the structure by possessing it and attributing it to itself (a false cogito, therefore). This is the key to understanding the question that Freud asked (regarding the unconscious nature of the ego) and that perhaps finally Lacan or Lacanian theory has answered or will answer.

The symbolic machine and intersubjectivity

However, is it enough to say that the discourse of the subject is the discourse of the Other that annuls the subject or the circuit in which the subject is integrated as a machine? Not only is the subject integrated into the machine, but the machine itself and the discourse of the Other is integrated into the actions of the subject.

What interests me today is the way in which the subjects, owing to their displacement, relay each other in course of the intersubjective repetition. (Lacan 1956, 10)

This is what happens in repetition automatism. What Freud teaches us in the text I have been commenting on is that the subject follows the channels of the Symbolic. But what is illustrated here is more gripping still: it is not only the subject, but the subjects, caught in their intersubjectivity, who line up—in other words they are our ostriches, to whom we thus return here, and who, more docile than sheep, model their very being on the moment of the signifying chain that runs through them. (idem, 21)

When subjects interact with each other they are enacting, down to the very small details, the machinic structure of the Symbolic together with its imaginary impregnations. The structuring effect of actions may produce what was intended or its unintended opposites. Either way the Other in this case is the unbarred and complete Other of the early Lacan who determines and constitutes a lacking or incomplete subject in its intersubjective relations.

There is an ambiguity between the subject's own unconscious desire, and the structure it reveals, and the plurality of subjects constituted by the public Symbolic order and subjects own private unconscious desire.

Coinciding with the contemporary experience of the fall of personal, social, familial, and political ideals, Lacan signifies this era with the *matheme* for the lack in the Other: $S(\emptyset)$. The Other now is barred, castrated, or lacking. However, there is no return to the complete Other of before because now we understand (thanks to Godel) that a complete Other is inconsistent. The Other lacks or is incomplete but this also means desire which represents the truth that cannot be proven within the system and yet this is precisely what makes a system consistent. Although now the Other or the order of numbers or signifiers and statements are revealed as having something missing, this something missing or truth of desire that cannot be proven within a system, or the lack of a signifier, constitutes an organizing hole for the entire structure.

Communication in groups typically does not produce its intended effects since, as Lacan says, between people miscommunication or the *misencounter* is the norm.

The first dialogue-between the Prefect of Police and Dupin-is played as if it were between a deaf man and one who hears. That is, it presents the veritable complexity of what is ordinarily simplified, with the most confused of results, in the notion of communication. (idem, 12)

In the late Lacan, the Other is incomplete and lacking rather than the lack being solely on the side of the subject with the subject either rejecting or idealizing the perceived completeness of the Other. With the lack in the Other, or an incomplete Other, the subject can pretend to be complete and reject the Other, or can be adversely affected by the lack in the Other, both of which would be imaginary ma-

noeuvres and results. The subject either refuses to hear or is deaf about the Other's completeness or incompleteness. In addition, the ego is blind with respect to the unconscious determination of the structure or how structure determines the actions and motivations of the subject and the Other.

The audacious creature is, of course, reduced here to the state of imbecilic blindness which man finds himself in relation to the wall-like letters that dictate his destiny. (idem, 30)

Automaton at work in the signifying machine dictates the fate and repetitions of the subject. However, this form of the machine is consistent with the big Other of the early Lacan. There are two features of the Other worthy of consideration at this point. First, now we know that the big Other is incomplete and lacking and does not even exist! So, the big Other that determines the subject has clay feet and may not even exist yet it performs a function. This lack in the Other also has two characteristics: it provides the empty space to rearticulate the structure and is also the place where the subject in/of the Real can be found.

The emptiness of the Other and the subject

The divided, subordinated subject that is annulled/alienated by the Other ($\$=S_2 \rightarrow \$$) is both lacking the object that the Other has taken from the subject and at the same time this object is also missing in the Other. The phallus is the signifier of a lack and it is this lack or emptiness that the subject searches for in the Other. In fact, this is where the emptiness of the subject and that of the Other meet. There is no Being inside the Other and so the Other cannot give the subject his or her Being. Being emerges from the divided subject itself at that place where the signifier fails. This state of affairs can also be represented by the formula for the analyst's discourse (Lacan, 1969):

$$\frac{a}{S_2} \longrightarrow \frac{\$}{S_1}$$

<u>agent</u>	<u>other</u>
truth	production

As an empty agent, a master of none, or a master of suspended authority, the analyst alternates between being an imaginary object and lacking the *objet a* in the Real. The *a* as a void places the S_2 of knowledge in the place of truth for the analyst. $\$$ in the place of the Other represents that the alleged complete Other lacks or fails to generate new signifiers (S_1) in the place of truth. In the analyst's discourse, it is the divided subject in the place of the Other that will now have to produce new signifiers that may be consistent with the *savoir* in the analyst and the unconscious *savoir* that emerges in the analyst and when the Other of the Unconscious is in the place of truth.

This how the Other is transformed in history and the history of the subject. First the complete Other annuls the subject, then the Other is appropriated (sometimes without a due appraisal of the materiality and gravity of the Other) by the ego, in its imaginary wholeness, completeness, and inconsistency; and finally, in an anti-structural moment, the ego is released from its defensive function and finds itself as a subject, in the proper sense, in the place of the lack of the Other. The lack in the Other is the place where the structure is empty, or incomplete, as an original form of experience and where new relations become possible thanks to the voidness of self that temporarily (in relative sidereal time) re-integrates the structure.

Voidness of self is another way of speaking of the subject of thought as *jouissance* and not only as a signifier. Thought as a form of *jouissance*, rather than a signifier, is a form of non-thinking (*apensee*) in relationship to thinking and the signifier. The transcendental subject of knowledge is a *sujet sans substance*. But this is not the same as the annulment of the ego or the subject by the Other of the machine because in the process the machine itself and what is machine-like about a subject is also annulled or found lacking. It is the human subject and not the machine, or the Other not as a machine, that manifests the true undetermined *Tyché* rather than automaton.

To the succession of letters, numbers, and codes Lacan also adds a structure of inhibitions/prohibitions and facilitations (switches—on/off) intrinsic to language that in previous work (Moncayo, 2012) I have argued goes a long way in explaining the problem of the unconscious censor. At different times, or at key moments, there are letters that go missing or that are found missing in the structure and that are required by the repressive function of the structure. Such letters may also have phonological elements that link them to the Real or represent the aspects of letters or writing that bear a link (of *jouissance*) to a lost object world.

In her paper Brahnam makes another important point in noticing the function of the missing letters in generating displacements that structurally, and in Lacanian terms, represent a crossing from the Symbolic to the Imaginary (the interruptive dislocation patterns mentioned in the text). The imaginary face of the Symbolic and of language constitutes this reminiscence and narrative produced by the Imaginary based on the symbolic structure and the missing letters within the Symbolic that precipitate the construction of a fiction to close the gap left by the missing signifiers. Such crossing is represented in schema L, as noted by the author, but it is also found in the graph of desire in the lower conventional signifying chain or narrative/story that crosses the vector of desire (see graph in pages above).

Conclusion

The lower signifying chain attempts to use the social narrative and statement to close the gap in the subject and the Other. A computer only follows rules and programming but cannot invent anything new without a new program from a human subject. It is the human subject and not the machine, or the Other not as a machine,

that manifests the true undetermined *Tyché* rather than automaton. A social narrative generates displacements and a fractioning of numbers. This dislocation pattern within a cybernetic system, generates different symmetrical and asymmetrical patterns that have varying ways of relating to the Lacanian categories of the Symbolic and the Imaginary. Obviously, images are also part of a cybernetic machine or a computer, that like images in dreams conceal the language code on which they are built.

If the social narrative (or $s[A]$) does not attempt to close the gap in the signifying chain by using S_2 type of signifiers, then out this gap, a new S_1 of the pure capital Signifier [S] (or the subject of the Real) can emerge. Such signifier can re-arrange the structure of the signifying chain. If the gap or ambiguity of the sentence is left open, then a new S_1 can emerge from the place of the signifier of a lack in the Other [S(\emptyset)]. The last word or S_2 of the sentence cannot capture the S_1 of Being, so the said or S_1 remains behind the saying or the statement. S or S_1 , let alone Being, cannot manifest in a cybernetic machine because when faced with missing signifiers all a machine can do is to produce an imaginary dislocation pattern.

The further problem to be resolved here is how this imaginary displacement produces not only the conscious ego structure and narrative but also the Imaginary as a privileged semiotic modality of the unconscious. Thanks to this paper we can now think of the imaginary axis of the L schema as an actual and early unconscious structure that would self-replicate in dreams. In dreams, all characters represent the subject ($a'-a$ or $i[a]$) through a process of imaginary identification and yet for Lacan the subject is the structure of the dream itself and the navel of the dream is the senseless enigmatic signifier pointing to the Real rather than to another signifier or program within the structure. Because the Real operates as a non-trivial hole within each human subject our machinic structure is still under construction and subject to increasing degrees of effectiveness thanks to the vanishing point of the structure.

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