

The subject is happy-go-lucky (heureux) – Colette Soler

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For my title, I have chosen this sentence of Lacan from 'Television' "the subject is happy go lucky", we could say 'fortunate'. He puts forward this proposition in a chapter that follows his developments on affects, and a paragraph that is dedicated to his concept of repetition. And he poses the question where, in all of this, is that which makes up the happiness? He responds- 'everywhere', ('*partout*'). The subject is happy.

He is (happy) by definition, that is his definition, since he repeats himself. So, this phrase merits all our attention. It could seem ironical to say 'the subject is happy' since he is doomed to repetition, the repetition that makes up his suffering, and yet, evidently, it is not an irony, and one could ask oneself what founds this proposition. We could start from the repetition, which is a clinical fact, which Freud had underlined before Lacan, and which led Freud to discover his 'Beyond the pleasure principle'.

And Freud recognises within repetition the insistence of a pain, of a ruinous *jouissance*, and this is what led Freud to his notion of the 'death drive'.

Lacan, as you know, had a different take on things, since he defined it- at the time when he constructed his own conception of repetition, in 1964, in Seminar 11- he defined repetition as a missed encounter, which situates it immediately at the level of the links of the subject. But we need to note that it is not the only level at which it operates.

We know the example which he recounts, that of the repetition within the link between a father and a son, with the famous dream: "father, can't you see I'm burning?" This example is pathetic enough to indicate from the start that the repetition is experienced as a misfortune, '*malheur*'. And a misfortune that insists from the origin and forever. Lacan attempted to construct the concept of this misfortune, starting from a point which Freud already saw, that repetition is repetition of a loss. Besides, it is not psychoanalysis that has discovered this loss, it is mythified in the concept of the Garden of Eden, and also in 'Adam's rib'. In fact, this repetition of a loss has a name in the common discourse, it is called 'destiny', that which is inevitable, therefore- that which does not depend on you, and Lacan will say: what is necessary, that which pertains to the logical mode of the necessary, that which does not cease.

Freud himself notes in passing the idea of '*Ananke*', the necessity". I underline that it is present before and outside psychoanalysis, for a precise reason: it is that all that which humans had recognised that they have in common, Lacan translates all of this as 'effect of structure', what the structure of language imposes upon the living of the human species. Therefore, the destiny is the name of that which is structurally inevitable and incurable.

So, how with all this *malheur*— misery and misfortune- of repetition, how can Lacan say 'the subject is happy'? It is because even before entering into any link, the subject is constituted by this very loss. And therefore, it is within repetition, through repetition, that he maintains himself as subject. He maintains himself as himself one could say, as a dog-eared being, as a being deprived of a part of himself, this part that Lacan ended by defining the object *a*; it is what we condense by saying that he

maintains himself in all kinds of occasions as a divided subject, deprived of this object a, of which Lacan gives the simplest definition in 1976 when he says: it is that which is missing, and which, as missing, constitutes the subject.

The subject repeats himself within the missed encounters, but he himself is something that came to be, was born, through a constituting missed encounter. I will come back to this point.

Firstly, he repeats himself through the encounters, the encounters that exist within reality: between father and son (it is the first dream that Lacan comments in Freud), and most generally in the encounters between generations, but above all, between the sexes, when it comes to love encounters. Those encounters are not at all of the necessary, they depend on chance, on what we call in French '*l'heur*' without the "e" which is not 'the hour' of the clock, but luck (*tuche*), chance, fortune we could say. This is the great novelty that Lacan introduced into the concept of repetition, the novelty of the function of chance. The repetition of a loss takes place at the mercy of the chance of love encounters. Before Lacan, with Freud himself, repetition was only conceived of as an automaton.

The chance encounters are very varied in life, more or less favourable, when we read a biography, this is very evident, there are better and worse encounters, but all of them are missed encounters.

In fact, in this field of love, in the encounters, good or bad, what is it that the subject can encounter?

The subject, in so far as it is represented by a signifier, is nothing more than a supposed one between the signifiers. But as a thing, *das ding*, the thing, the effect of language upon a living individual, he is incomplete (il est décomplété). He is defined as lacking the object a, this is what I was talking about earlier, and thus, he is searching for his complement as the object a, his true partner. At the beginning of his teaching this is something that Lacan evoked in the simplest way, he said that when one says to somebody 'I love you', it is a way of saying to that person 'you are my lack', that is the definition of a love encounter. But, saying 'you are my lack', that is 'you are my object a', is like saying you are myself to me, and in fact we say in common language 'they are just one', those two. A few years later Lacan completed and added that to say 'I love you' is not only to say 'you are my lack', but it is also to say 'you are my *plus-de-jouir*', my object as surplus jouissance. In both cases, I do not encounter anything other than myself within the love encounter, that is, this extimate object that is my only consistency. And it is there that Lacan refers to Dante, the Italian poet, who said it well before Lacan and before Freud as well, Dante who said of his Beatrice that she is to him nothing more than a gaze. Therefore, what is missed, is the encounter of the other as an alterity, '*hétérité*', the subject repeats himself in all encounters, thus he is happy to sustain himself in this way.

Thus, it was not an ironical thesis, it was a very well-thought and constructed thesis.

Among all of those chance encounters, there is one that has a particular interest for us. It is the encounter of the love of transference. In my opinion, there is a major fact that happens within psychoanalysis- it is the fact that this unhappiness of this 'happy' subject, according to Lacan, has been revealed to Freud through the transference and nothing else. It is the very demand of the transference which allowed him to discover what Lacan will call the original missed encounter. In order to grasp this, we need to re-read the first three chapters of Freud's 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle'.

Freud evokes the traumatic neurosis of the war, he evokes the play of the child with the fort-da, which convokes the repetition of the absence of the mother, but neither one nor the other allow him to conclude regarding the compulsion to repeat. It is only in the third chapter, when he speaks of the transference, that he is led to conclude regarding the compulsion to repeat. He does not only conclude, but before concluding he describes, he describes the traumatic experience where we can say with Lacan that the 'happy subject' has engendered himself. And what he describes is what we could call with Lacan, the first relationship with the traumatic parent. The traumatic parent is not a specific parent, it is something that describes the function of parenting as such, that is to say the very first love relationship as traumatic. And Freud writes over a whole page the triple inevitable loss which is played out from this first love relationship.

Triple loss: loss of love, narcissistic loss, and loss of jouissance.

It is at the beginning of seminar 'From the Other to an other' that Lacan takes up the question of the loss again, in the first lesson of the seminar towards the end, Lacan takes up this theme while adding to it a structural demonstration. He demonstrates that to be made into a subject is something traumatic. The subject as an effect of language is a traumatised subject. What is interesting is that Lacan names this original and constitutive traumatism: 'the cry of truth'. We know with Lacan that the reference to truth is inherent to speech, from the moment we speak the dimension of truth is convoked. And we know the famous phrase "Me, the truth, I speak". And when I speak, I fall under the logic of language, obviously. And therefore, the truth is made inconsistent, 'half-said', says Lacan at the end, not all said, which means the truth can never conclude.

In other words, the speech of truth cannot say the truth of being.

So, where is the truth of being in the structure?

It is in the 'cry' of the subject, it is a cry that wails – I quote Lacan: "... non-jouissance, misery, helplessness, and loneliness.". This cry is not a pre-verbal cry, on the contrary, it is the cry of a being marked by the verb. And all these terms that Lacan enumerates, which are very close to the description used by Freud in chapter three of "Beyond...", all these terms are the sign of the subject, of a subject which had fallen under the blow (*coup*) of loss and of the lack of object a. And Lacan insists on one point at the end of this first chapter to say that within the Other of discourse, the Other of discourse which is to be found within the partner as well as within the subject, this place that is made only of signifiers cannot say what is the truth of the being of the subject. And therefore, the only respondent is not the Other it is the object a, that which lacks to the subject, but which is also substantivized as plus-de-jouir, surplus of jouissance, which Lacan calls the counterpart of that which is lacking.

An analysis, what is there of repetition within an analysis? Lacan has an expression which I quite like: he says *the repetition that comes under our charge*, under the charge of the analyst. An analysis confirms the 'no remedy' of repetition, it confirms that it is what does not cease, which is confirmed through the whole of the signifying articulation of what an analysis is made of. In fact, the well-known expression, 'destitution of the subject', that indicates he is nothing else but this object a, is a manner of saying (*une façon de dire*) the repetition that does not cease.

And therefore, the analysis confirms the unhappiness of the happy subject.

In fact, it is also the same thing we evoke every time we say that a subject experiences the blow of castration in an analysis.

Therefore, we could ask ourselves in what way is it beneficiary?

Since we always speak of the end of an analysis as beneficial, I don't know if you have noted this? Never deficient, always beneficial!

In which respect is it a change to perceive the inevitability of repetition?

It is a change in regard to everything that happens in common life, since in everyday life we experience the losses in question, but we always perceive them as accidental, which is due to circumstances, to particular circumstances therefore not necessary, perhaps something that can be ascribed to bad luck or bad constellation of the stars, and one can always hope that this bad astrological configuration is something that will cease. And I am always surprised by the fact that many subjects who present themselves to the analyst in the very first sessions, tell about all kinds of life accidents that happened to them or took place in the life of their ancestors, accidents that have to do with the war or disease, of particular accidental things, but which have apparently no connection at all to the suffering that the subjects experience at that moment, at present, and yet those accidents are evoked by the subjects. So, I say that in common discourse we perceive this series of losses which everyone has experienced and continues to experience, we perceive them as accidental.

And this is true even when one feels guilty about it, and the subject often says 'I was not able to avoid it', and he attributes this kind of a loss either to bad luck or to his own incapacity to do otherwise. Well, within analysis, and precisely because analysis operates with words, and with words only, one can know that repetition is not accidental, that it is the very result of words onto the living, speaking being (*le parlant*). This is the beneficial effect of transference repetition, since the subject repeats himself within the transference which as such is not repetition. The transference is not repetition, but demand.

We have a whole series of expressions in our Lacanian vocabulary, which we have assimilated over the years, that often come from Lacan, to describe this original constitutive traumatism which repeats itself. We can make an exhaustive list, I will only mention a few of them: traumatism (evokes the French trou – a hole), the dog-eared being (*l'être écorné*), one says holed knowledge, to make oneself into being, there is such a thing as the One (*y a d'Un*) and nothing else; all these negative formulas situate the incurable for everyone.

While all have come to analysis in order to reduce their suffering, there is something paradoxical about this. It is important to underline that not all sufferings can lead to an analysis. The only sufferings that can lead to an analysis are the sufferings of being a subject.

To be a subject is to be helpless (*sans recours*), without recourse to anything else than the object a. It could be a way of opening up the question of the entry into analysis. We speak of subjective rectification, of putting the symptom into focus (*la mise au point du symptôme*) at the entry of the analysis. Well, I am speaking here of putting into focus the sufferings that could be linked to the very fact of being a subject, the sufferings that are in fact the sign of the subject, a dog-eared one, a divided subject.

With everything I have evoked so far, how can we situate rightly what Lacan said in the preface to the English edition of Seminar 11, 1976, when he speaks about the term 'urgency'? And the urgency he speaks of, he qualifies it in a very clear manner: it is the urgency of assuring the satisfaction at the end, or of the end, it is something that we could discuss. It is not the first time that Lacan evokes the fact that the end of an analysis insures or could ensure a satisfaction. In the proposition of 1967, he did not speak of the satisfaction but of the peace, he spoke about the peace of the subject. He did not make of it an urgency; he implied that it is something that would come quietly in due time.

Ten years later, in 1976, he does make of it an urgency. And even, The urgency, in the singular, of each analysis. One needs powerful reasons for this change of accent after ten more years of experience, when furthermore it has become an urgency. I have often underlined it a long time ago and on numerous occasions, that this is a major turning point to be noted in Lacan's teaching: the fact that he situates the end of analysis with affects. It is remarkable, since the affects are not a structural given. We can have typical affects, but in general affects are always singular. And besides, as you know, everyone repeats it, Lacan says in seminar Encore "the analytical thing will not be mathematical'.

So, we have a series: the peace, in the proposition, 1967, then we have enthusiasm, in the Italian note, 1973, then satisfaction, 1976. There is another expression, 1975: when he (the subject) is happy to live ("heureux de vivre"), well, that's enough.

In other words, to make of this subject 'happy', as he is in Television, that is to say, to make of this subject which is affected by the unhappiness of being one and one all alone, a subject that is defined by what he lacks and who continues to search to be completed (*qui cherche son complément*), to make of him a subject 'happy to live'. It resembles a little bit what Freud had said, that with an analysis one passes from a neurotic unhappiness to one that is banal.

But it is only a homology, since the unhappiness of being a subject is not a neurotic misery, it is structural. And perhaps this is what contributes to the fact that we always lose more of the notion of neurosis.

So, to bring, satisfaction. But, but, but- many subjects, after many years of analysis, do not find themselves in any of these affects, and it is even the majority. It is not Lacan who said so, it is Balint who, before Lacan, had described a satisfaction of the end of an analysis, but who honestly added that it is not something that would happen for more than 30 percent of the analysands. And we can ask ourselves if the insistence of Lacan, ten years after the proposition on the urgency, if that insistence is not proportional to the fact that he observes the same thing as Balint: it does not happen in the majority of cases. Not only that it is not for everyone, it is not even for the majority. This poses many questions which are clinical, practical, and some questions for the pass. Are we going to make of the satisfaction the norm of the terminated analysis? I will not go into detail now, but I can say that Lacan had never ever made a 'norm' of this.

I will refer to a series of points that will demonstrate this. Firstly, he said that the ways of behaving after the pass are numerous.

In the Italian Note, one could imagine that he puts forward an imperative since he says that if your *passant* is not led to enthusiasm, do not nominate him analyst of the school. But it is not an unconditional imperative, it is necessary not for the practice of psychoanalysis as such, but for the survival of psychoanalysis within civilisation, since we need enthusiasm in order to produce the knowledge, without which psychoanalysis could disappear – this is what he says. So, it is a conditional imperative. And he does also say very precisely, there are many other texts which refer to it, that one can be analysed and a practitioner without the affect of enthusiasm being there, and even without any desire for knowledge. Finally, in this preface, he says that this satisfaction, one cannot be sure of being able to bring it about. Therefore, the so-called urgent satisfaction of the end is also something uncertain.

Hence the question, which I am working on right now: what is it that decides upon the differences? More specifically of the dissatisfaction maintained at the end.

I will finish on this point, but only to highlight the issue without going into the details, but only to show the problem. Lacan says that to be able to procure this satisfaction of the end, one needs to have weighed the demand at the entry into analysis. To weigh, it is clear what it says, we don't have to look into the dictionary, it means to evaluate the chance to arrive there. So if we can weigh them, I don't know if he is right in saying, I am not saying he is right, I am not making a decision regarding his words, I am only following line by line his words. If we can weigh it, this is because the differences are not aleatory (random) but determined at least partially. So, one can ask, what is it that decides if a subject passes to the affect of satisfaction or not at the end, with all that he has learned from his analysis? I am making a hypothesis- which I am working on, it could be the result of the form taken by the traumatism which from a living being had made a subject.

The trauma is universal, this is true for all living beings, but the form of the trauma is particular. Freud himself thought that the universal trauma would leave typical marks, that there were some type of 'traumatised' subjects after the universal trauma, still chapter 3 of 'Beyond the pleasure principle'.

I am speaking of forms which are particular, which pertain to the one by one. It is not excluded that the configuration of one's trauma has left for the being that is marked by it, not a signifying mark but a kind of imprint, an imprint of affect. The sign or the mark of an affect at the level that I gladly call the disposition of mood, of fundamental mood. Every single subject has a sort of fundamental mood proper to him, apart from the mood swings or emotional troubles he may experience. For some, we know, it can lead them to this 'curse' cast on life, that Lacan underlined with the expression 'better not to have been born'.

It could well be that the fundamental mood is the sign, what remains of this imprint I am talking about. Less radically from this curse cast on life – a decided dissatisfaction, maybe a way of not giving ground to its (the subject's) particularity, as if the subject was saying that if he is supposed to be a subject like all others, then he might as well identify himself to his own suffering – as the only thing which is his own. Obviously, the most important and correlative question- is how the analyst can, should situate himself before this very position. I will leave you with this question.