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Pre-text 2

TRAUMA: EVENT AND ADVENT OF THE REAL

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From the moment we decided to work on the theme of the advent of the real for the next International Rendezvous, I wondered about the clinical implications of the expression. As I have researched on trauma for years, a question immediately emerged for me: if we consider the *tuchic* factor of the trauma, is there any difference between the traumatic event and the advent of the real? I present my reflections here.

In the history of psychoanalysis, the traumatic event enabled not only the discovery of the unconscious but also the differentiation between the traumatic event and the structure of the trauma, understood as a hole (*trou*), written $S(\lambda)$ [signifier of the lack in the Other], as Lacan proposed towards the end of his teaching. The passage from the traumatic event to the *troumatism* orientates the direction of the treatment in every analysis. The elaboration of a knowledge about the *tuchic* moment makes of the trauma the index of an undecidable real.

Within the itinerary that goes from the trauma to the *troumatism* we distinguish between several conceptions of temporality: that of the deferred action (*nachträglich*), that of the act, which assigns a privileged position to the topological cut, and finally the moment of the Borromean knotting. All of them partake of the logical temporality proposed by Lacan: the moment of seeing, the time for understanding and the moment to conclude.

Speaking of 'the advent of the trauma' instead of 'traumatic event' may serve the purpose of highlighting the traumatic moment and of marking its differences with its elaboration. I will refer to this aspect of the question later. In our community we have spoken of the event of the S_1 , the signifier 1, of the passing of the *tuché* as an event of jouissance and of the ones of repetition. It seems to me that taken in this sense event and advent are synonymous - which we can read in the dictionary. But the advent emphasizes the arrival and not only the different traits of the event.

On the other hand, if we refer to the advent, we need to discriminate between two acceptations that appear in Lacan's teaching: the advent of the subject and the advent of the real. These are not the only acceptations; but they are the most relevant ones.

The notion of ‘the advent of the subject’ has its origins in the developments on the symbolic and was formalized as the operations of causation of the subject: alienation and separation.¹

I briefly point out that in the alienation through the *vel* of exclusive disjunction the subject chooses between either petrification or sense. According to the logical anteriority of the subject’s causation, the second operation concerns separation, whose effect is object a^2 , the subject thus entering into the metonymy of the signifying chain (S_1 - S_2).

It may be added that at a ulterior moment the *vel* of exclusive disjunction is used to indicate the division between the subject and *jouissance*. Here the accent is on the enjoyed signifier - the enjoying substance which is what finally what comes [*advienne*] from the real, if we take the S_1 into consideration.

In fact, we can read the contingency of the advent of the real by means of a signifier S_1 both in the operations of causation of the subject and in the writing of the Borromean knot.

The advent of the real as irruption of S_1 appears in the references to the subject and in the developments on the *parlêtre*. Both share the same logic, but it seems to me that as far as temporality is concerned the causation of the subject emphasizes the traumatic *a posteriori*, as it refers to a real that remains as an extimate limit, whereas in the case of the knot, given its cardinal nature, the advent of the trauma is knotted. The 1 of the traumatic is 3: real, symbolic and imaginary. In this sense, ‘the advent of the real’ may well suit the Borromean trauma, as it indicates that the trauma comes to be [*advienne*] as knotted.

In the years 1974 and 1975 we find a differentiation between the advent of the real and the event of saying [*decir*] which requires the temporality of the knot. In *Seminar XXI, Les non-dupes errent*, Lacan refers to the event of saying as a writing of the knot, and discriminates between the symbolic, the real and the imaginary events.³ A certain passage came to my attention: ‘The event as such only occurs in the symbolic order. There is no other event than in the saying [*decir*]’.⁴ Time is needed to write the knot of the saying, the knot of the *parlêtre* done around the Borromean trauma.

We can now move forward, towards the expression ‘advent of the real’ in *La Tercera [The Third]*⁵. In this conference, which is contemporaneous with *Seminar XXI*, Lacan says that the analyst depends on the advent of the real, as Colette Soler has already underlined in her book *Avènements du réel, de l’angoisse au symptôme*⁶ and in the first Pre-text of the Barcelona Rendezvous, 2018. Following that, Lacan refers to interpretation as equivocal and to

¹ Lacan, J. (1977). *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis [Seminar XI]*. London, Tavistock.

² Lacan, J. *The Seminar, Book XIV, The logic of fantasy, 1966-1967*. Session of 16 November 1966. Unpublished transcript.

³ Lacan, J. *The Seminar, Book XXI, Les non-dupes errent*. Session of 18 December 1973. Unpublished transcript.

⁴ Lacan, J. *The Seminar, Book XXI, Les non-dupes errent*. Session of 15 January 1974: ‘L’événement, lui,

⁵ Lacan, J. *La tercera* (1 November 1974). In *Intervenciones y textos 2*. Buenos Aires, Manantial, 1993, pp. 73-113.

⁶ Soler, C. (2016). *Avènements du réel, de l’angoisse au symptôme. Cours 2015-2016*. Paris: Éditions du Champ lacanien. Collection Études, p. 170.

lalangue which, as detritus of the unconscious, becomes the sediment of an experience that leaves knowledge as a remnant. The interpretation operates with *lalangue*, which does not prevent that the unconscious be structured like a language. This means that the interpretation operates with the Ones of jouissance, so that the *parlêtre* becomes Borromean.

If the trauma is the knotted advent of S_1 , an irruption of the real, that is the clinical proof that the trauma is the knotting of a real. Although from the perspective of the trauma *advent* and *event* are synonymous, we also find a differential trait. The emphasis on the advent of the real involved in the traumatic signifier is not without consequences, as it transforms the *a posteriori* into an act and into knotted logical time. Furthermore, the considerations on the *moterialité* that is proper to the Borromean knot have implications for the *nagträglich* sense. In the clinic it is necessary to force (mathematical *forcing*⁷) the word in its *moterialité* so as *to read in what is heard* to then produce a writing. Therefore, searching for the sense of an event is not the same thing as aiming at the enjoyed-sense of knowledge. This does not mean discarding the fantasy, as that would not be possible in the clinic; but it means being at the service 'of what functions as real in knowledge'⁸. The statements [*dichos*] of the traumatic event allude to the event of a saying [*decir*] and evoke the knotted real that ex-sists to sense (*absense*).

Lastly, the advent of the real of the trauma calls for a reflection on the Borromean clinic, bearing in mind the real unconscious and the hole in knowledge. Once again, to speak of trauma in psychoanalysis is to speak of psychoanalysis. It is not a mere coincidence that Freud's questioning of the trauma led to the discovery of the unconscious.

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Translated by Leonardo Rodríguez

⁷ Lacan, J. (1976-1977). *The Seminar, Book XXIV, L'insu que sait de l'une-bévue s'aile à mourre*. Session of 19 April 1977. Unpublished transcript.

⁸ Soler, C. (2009). *Lacan – The Unconscious Reinvented*. London, Karnac, Paris, p. 19.