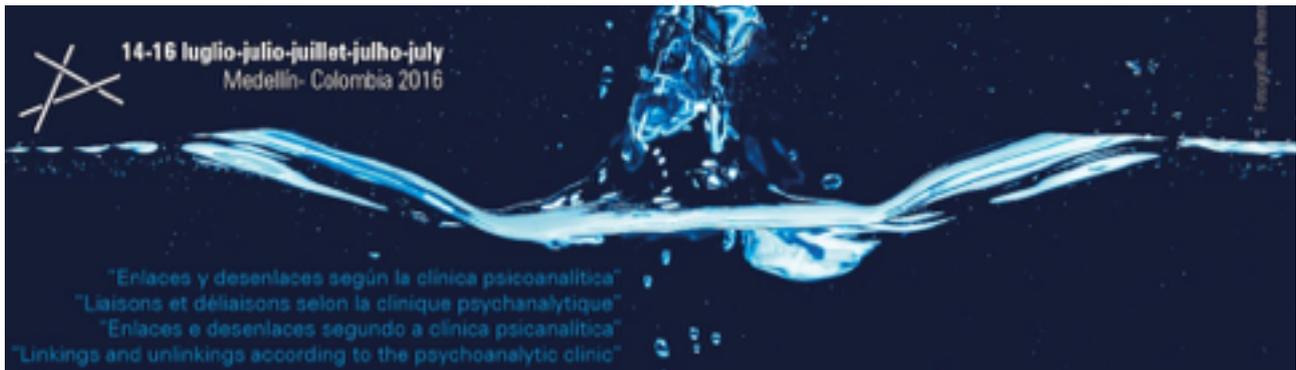


Medellín 2016 - RVI - Prelude - Diego Mautino



What is it that undoes the links?

I. Preamble

The title of our next Rendezvous convokes us: ‘*Enlaces y desenlaces según la clínica psicoanalítica*’¹ [‘Linkings and unlinkings according to the psychoanalytic clinic’]. In the Italian language we have proposed ‘*Legami e slegature...*’ to highlight the interest in the two terms, which open questions as to what is linked or not of the three dimensions, R, S and I. This makes possible the simultaneous entry into the Lacanian field of the problems of both the Borromean knotting and unknotting and of the human bonds. Had we chosen ‘Knottings and unknottings’ as a title, our choice would have been too narrowly focused around the Borromean knot and would have made us run the risk of forgetting about the knots of love. ‘Linkings’ [Italian *legami*; Spanish *enlaces*] designates in principle the links of love, but is also retains a more general sense. We have translated *desenlaces* [‘unlinkings’, ‘unravelings’] as *slegature*, which is not used frequently but which is fairly intelligible, and which has the advantage of being a word that already exists in Italian, in contrast with, for instance, *slegàmi*, which does not exist. The infrequent use of the word, in addition, leaves the question of what it is that has to be linked or unlinked open, thus enabling the inclusion of both the knotting and unknotting of knots and the social bonds. Had we chosen as a title ‘Linkings and unlinkings *in* the psychoanalytic clinic’, we would be confined to the topic of the dramas and the unraveling [*dénouement*; in French in the original] of the transference in the treatment; whereas ‘... *according* to the psychoanalytic clinic’ expands the theme, thus allowing for the consideration of what occurs not only inside the treatment.

The experience of psychoanalysis derives from the discontents of culture and the dramatic epic of our times confirms this in a decisive manner. I am only referring to the unravelings, conclusions, ruptures, or to put it briefly, the undoing of ties, verifiable in the areas of work, the family, love relations, the generalized instability of social groupings, ephemeral relations, loneliness, precariousness and defencelessness in the face of generalized violence. The question ‘what is it that undoes the ties?’ presupposes a preliminary hypothesis about what, in contrast,

¹ The proposal of this title, in Spanish, originated in Paris, July 2014.

knots, ties and establishes links. As Colette Soler reminds us in her Presentation², the theme of the doing and the undoing of social bonds has been present in psychoanalysis since its inception, when Freud, following the words of the analysands who consulted him, revived the ancient couple formed by *Eros*, the god of union, and *Thanatos*, the ‘demoniacal’ power that disassociates.

Lacan re-thought and re-launched the Freudian experience in terms of language, discourse and knots, with which he re-ordered the doing and undoing of ties. Firstly, he ordained the ‘aggregations of Eros’ on the basis of the chain of language, through demand and desire. Then he wrote the structure of discourse, thus establishing four different social bonds. Finally, he resorted to the Borromean knot in order to deal with the ‘real subject’ in the act of saying [*decir*].

II. The symptom: there are no two without three

Freud found in the symptom the function of an assumed or rejected substitutive satisfaction, which Lacan condensed in the formula: ‘There is no sexual relation’. We speak of suppletion produced by the lack of a relation. There where the signifier that would inscribe the jouissance between the speaking bodies is lacking, something – a phrase, a scene, a trace – fixated by a contingency forges the conditions of jouissance. Truth, as the repressed cause of the symptom, is consistent with the hypothesis of the unconscious-language. It speaks with the signifiers articulated in the chain of saying [*decir*], but it cannot be confused with the statements [*dichos*]: being repressed, it is produced with the statements. This cause also implies something that derives from the real of the trauma and that poses an objection to the knot of jouissance with a semblable. Lacan writes: ‘There is something of the One’, making it clear that this does not constitute a bond.

At the time of restituting Freud’s saying with the formula, ‘There is no sexual relation’, Lacan points out that the speaking being has, instead, a relation with his own body, and this is a relation of adoration. The first formula (‘There is no sexual relation’) emphasizes that which is lacking when it is a question of writing a relation between the sexes; he then writes: ‘The malediction on sex’.³ The second formula (‘There is something of the One’ [*y a d’l’Un*]), in contrast with the negativity of the first, seems to be instead a real positivity – although not one that brings pleasure, as it does not represent the subject, in so far as it is inscribed in the field of jouissance. ‘There is something of the One’ is what repeats itself as a missed encounter. This leads Lacan to assert in *Television* that repetition is...the subject’s happiness. ‘Any piece of luck is good as something to maintain him, insofar as it repeats itself’,⁴ since in every case that remains as One only. What in the last analysis is repeated in the missed encounter is... the non-relation with the Other.

² Colette Soler, Presentation of the Theme of the IXth Rendezvous of the IF-SPFLF, 22 December 2014.

³ Lacan, J., *Television*, New York and London, Norton, 1990, p. 30. The malediction of the unconscious is the impossibility of the relation, and in two words, *male-diction*, evokes ‘saying bad’ [or ‘saying badly’]. Besides, in French *malediction*, written with the circumflex accent, contains *mâle*, male, which evokes what Freud said in relation to the only one libido, masculine in nature.

⁴ ‘Where in all this is what makes for good luck [*bon heur*]? Strictly speaking everywhere. The subject is happy-go-lucky [*heureux*]. It is his very definition since he can owe nothing if not to luck, to fortune in other words, and any piece of luck is good as something to maintain him, insofar as it repeats itself. ‘Happiness’ is the translation of the French word *bonheur*. In writing it as *bon heur*, Lacan emphasizes the dimension of good fortune, of luck, present in the term *heur* – which is also homophonic with *heure* (‘hour’) and *heurt* (‘clash’). Ibid., p. 22.

What are the matters with which psychoanalysis deals, which are traversed by the real, that never ceases to repeat itself? They are the matters of love, those that concern the ties between men and women, and that which interposes itself so as to prevent that things proceed, what is that, but the real, defined by the impossibility of writing the relation? The formula ‘There is no sexual relation’ is a sign of the real of the non-relation, a particular modality of jouissance fixated by the trauma. It is the One Jouissance that derives from the non-relation. The One of the jouissance that is inscribed in analysis demonstrates the impossibility of writing the non-relation; it is the sense of the non-relation. This is to say ‘that in the ciphering there is jouissance, and certainly sexual jouissance, [...] this is what poses an obstacle to an established sexual proportion, and therefore it makes the writing of this proportion impossible [...]’.⁵

III. The *sinthome*: from three to four

That the real is the sense of the symptom, as the real traverses it, may enable the knotting of a function of the symptom that is not contained in the definition of the symptom as a metaphor. One cannot speak what is truthful in the real, and yet the symptom reveals the real: it is a sign of the real of the non-relation, and shows a particular modality of jouissance, fixated by the trauma. This One of the jouissance of the symptom acquires the sense of the non-relation; it is a suppletion for the lack of jouissance that the sexual relation would inscribe.

How are we to understand what Lacan says when he states that ‘the mission of the analyst is to oppose the real?’⁶ Does this mean to oppose the impossibility of the social link, proceed against the symptom of the proletarian to which the capitalist discourse reduces it by depriving it of the means with which to make a link? How can the psychoanalyst respond in order to validate the link established by his discourse? The analyst may intervene with the offer of an interpretation that is not satisfied only by truth and that takes the real into account, a condition to move from impotence to the impossible.⁷

At the beginning of the analysis, the act of *a-saying* [*un-decir*] may oppose that which derives from the real in the undoing of the links. And what at the end? Lacan shows that the end of the analysis is the inscription of a hole of which the subject may participate as object *a*. This hole does a knot with the co-occurrence of the three holes (R, S, I). As from the Seminar *RSI* (1975-1975), Lacan shows another knot: a knot of four, in which the fourth element (*sinthome*) takes the function of suppletion. What is it that may hold together the three consistencies conveyed by the word... a fourth? In the knotting and unknotting of the human links, can we then say: there is no three without four?

Diego Mautino Rome, 25 July 2015

Translated from Spanish by Leonardo S. Rodríguez

⁵ Lacan, J. Introduction à l'édition allemande d'un premier volume des *Écrits*. In *Autres écrits*, Paris, Seuil, 2001, p. 556.

⁶ Lacan, J. La troisième, discours de Rome of 31/10/1974. Unpublished transcript.

⁷ Lacan, J. ‘It is only by pushing the impossible up to its last entrenchments that impotence acquires the power of making the patient turn to the agent.’ *Radiophonie*. In *Autres écrits*, Paris, Seuil, 2001, p. 446.