

RELIGION AS CRITIQUE, CRITIQUE AS RELIGION: SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE MONOTHEISTIC WEAKNESS OF CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM

marc de kesel

If you meet the Buddha, kill the Buddha.

— Anonymous

Critics persist in describing as "deeply religious" anyone who admits to a sense of man's insignificance or impotence in the face of the universe, although what constitutes the essence of the religious attitude is not this feeling but only the next step after it, the reaction to it which seeks a remedy for it. The man who goes no further, but humbly acquiesces in the small part which human beings play in the great world — such a man is, on the contrary, irreligious in the truest sense of the word.

— Sigmund Freud¹

My position with respect to Religion has considerable importance at the present moment, of which I have begun to speak. Some of my students are religious people, and there is no doubt that, in coming years, I will have to enter into relation with the Church on problems that the highest authorities would like to understand in order to make their decisions. Suffice it to say that I am going to Rome this September to give the report for our Congress this year, and that the subject of this report is no accident: the role of language (by which I mean: Logos) in psychoanalysis.

— Jacques Lacan²

THE COMTIAN PARADOX

In the work of Auguste Comte, we find the idea that eventually religion will be definitively behind us, as it is only a fable fit for little children or those in mankind's infantile phase. During youth religion surely is edifying, but will inevitably be replaced by a less "fabulous," more rational approach to reality. We finally reach a level of maturity, which allows us to face reality in a concrete and "positive" way — without religious fables or metaphysical rationalizations. Such is what Comte thought in his day, and is more or less still the opinion many claim today. Even those who do not consider religion outdated have at least separated it from science and public life, reducing it to a mere private matter.

Did Comte, however, not teach us that a positivist approach to reality is at the same time the one and only true religion? Did he not consider himself the founder — the “Saint Paul” — of a new universal “Religion of Humanity”? By changing the name of his “positive philosophy” (*philosophie positive*) into a “positivist philosophy” (*philosophie positiviste*),³ he soon made it a doctrine and religion, and anointed himself its “high priest,” writing his well-known “positivist catechism” without any trace of irony.⁴ For Comte, a radical positivist approach to the world is effective only when it is a “proved religion” (*une religion démontrée*).⁵ Positivist science thus cannot create a new civilization without performing a new dogmatism. As one commentator notes, “the special aim of [Comte’s] research is to definitively replace the supernatural bases of civilization ‘whose decline can no longer be denied.’”⁶ Yet, Comte’s reply to such a collapse is not issued with the hope of destroying or overcoming religion, but in founding a new scientific religion freed from all obscure fables and characterized by the clarity of positive science. Nevertheless, Comte’s critique of religion ultimately ends up with religion again.

Comte’s “positivist religion” may seem naïve and even paranoid to us (as it did for his closest disciples), and in his later years Comte did in fact suffer from paranoia. Nonetheless, as Lucian Scubla has recently argued, he appears to have acknowledged *in advance* what other critiques of religion are often forced to face *afterward*. Scubla notes, in particular, how Marxism vehemently sought to unmask religion as a political weapon in the hands of the ruling power only to end up functioning as, and even becoming, a religion.⁷ Unlike Comte, Marx (as well as many later revolutionary thinkers and political leaders) failed to foresee the eventual religious character that his own doctrine would acquire. As naïve as his doctrine on religion might seem, Comte considered his theory, as well as modern science or modernity in general, as religion. In light of recent history, it is worth questioning if such a position is as stupid as it might seem. What does it mean for Comte both to criticize religion and acknowledge the religious status of his criticism?

As old fashioned as Comte’s religion and his critique of religion may appear, they raise the question with which modern criticism is currently struggling. Although for centuries we have fervently criticized religion, it has not only survived but has overtaken this very critique. Once thought to be “the opiate of the masses,” religion led people away from politics and real life through the manufacture of illusions, never becoming the kind of “proved religion,” for which Comte hoped. Although it remains an opium-like illusion, religion today seems nonetheless capable of bringing people back to politics. The battles of our globalized world are waged in the name of religion, however false and superficial the references to religion might be. In a way, it is religion that provides today’s non-western people the critical voice indispensable for taking part in global democracy. Those fabulous opium-gods now offer a critical position and make it possible for such groups to belong to the globalized (that is, western) world. If at one time religion was the prime object of ideological critique, it now has become the very condition, if not the inspiration and guarantee, for such critique.

Do we not encounter here one of the reasons for current criticism's *positive* interest in religion? For contemporary political criticism, too, has made such a turn, especially toward Christianity. Saint Paul has become a positive reference point for left-wing political thinkers like Badiou, Agamben, and Žižek.⁸ Current criticism not only fights Christianity, but looks upon it as a mirror image. It is as if, in Christianity's vicissitudes, criticism recognizes its own. Christianity has failed to answer the crucial questions of modernity — but has modern criticism not failed as well? Is the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 not a sign of its final incapacity to build up a viable alternative to the traditional (capitalist bourgeois) system, which it has criticized for so long? If this long critical tradition is now under attack, is it not for the same reasons for which Christianity was once attacked? Christianity, however, resisted such attacks, and moreover stood its ground within a world of criticism. Perhaps modern criticism, incapable of performing an alternative to the existing political system, turns to Christianity in an effort to deal with this incapacity. How do we criticize the existing situation without having any alternative to propose? Such is the modern — or, what amounts to the same thing, postmodern — question we are facing. Does it not come close to the question (post)modern Christianity must deal with: how to criticize existing (post)modern illusions while having only an illusion to offer as an alternative?

We approach here the crucial point in psychoanalytic criticism. For psychoanalysis, criticizing religion as an illusion cannot effectively present an alternative that would be entirely beyond illusion. Religion is, of course, a fable that represses the unconscious trauma upon which civilization is built. But it is still necessary to emphasize, however, that the unconscious is not so much the object of psychoanalysis as it is its very condition. Thus, psychoanalysis is not a science that discovers the unconscious, but a science aware of the fact that all consciousness and knowledge, including psychoanalytic knowledge, is built upon the unconscious (that is, upon that which escapes any consciousness). Psychoanalysis is not a science among other sciences; it is a critique of the modern (Cartesian) premises of science. It deprives science of its basic *certitude* and radically redefines both the condition of knowledge and critique. From a psychoanalytic perspective, criticism can no longer be based upon any insight into the real state of things. Critique can no longer be “platonic,” distinguishing the real from unreal, essential from fictional. The world as such is now to be considered a “fiction,” and truth is not to be found outside this fictional horizon (as Plato taught), but lies entirely within it. Since Nietzsche and Freud, truth can no longer be the alternative to fiction and fable. In other words, psychoanalysis can designate repressed wishes and traumas, but it cannot completely eliminate repression and trauma. It can designate the repressed traumatic structure lying underneath a religious “fable,” but it cannot overcome such repression: psychoanalysis cannot make people live without a fable.

If we return to the Comtian paradox, we see it affecting not only science, but criticism as well. A psychoanalytic critique of the religious fable can only result in the installation of a new fable. It cannot remove a repression, but only replace it with a “better” one. What, then, is the difference

between psychoanalysis and religion if both install and maintain repression? Is the aim of an analytic cure not the installation of a better repression? Is psychoanalysis not also producing its own religion? It might not be the scientific “religion” of Comte’s positivism, but it is a kind of *critical religion* — a *critique as religion*, which, having no remedy for the illusion it fights against, can only celebrate its own critical gesture. Having no real anchor for its critique, such criticism relies upon its own critical move for foundation: its last support hinges on faith in its own critical gesture. In this respect, critique comes very close to religion. As a fable it reminds us that criticizing fables remains within an inherently “fabulous” horizon. Critique must then believe in itself, and have faith in the fact that it has a sense of its own. It is a criticism that approaches the Kantian notion of *Vernunftglaube*. Thus criticism ends up with religion, again.

But why should we move so fast? Why should we run immediately to the end? Perhaps it would not be a bad idea to turn first to the religion it all began with, not to avoid the problems and questions we are currently facing but precisely to delve further into them, as questions and problems.

RELIGION AS CRITIQUE

The religion it all began with, as well as the religion it perhaps ends with, is not simply one religion; it is monotheism. For centuries this has been the focus of modern criticism, and is quite possibly what it will end in. If monotheism is a religion, it is certainly a special one. At the very least, it is a religion that claims that religion is never simple, that we should never trust any religion that claims to be simply a religion. “Simple,” “natural” religions trust themselves, and trust the trust they have in their gods. Monotheism, by definition, is critical of this kind of trust. Not so much faith in one God, it is a claim or an insight that only God is God: what we *suppose* to be gods or God is, in fact, not God. God is never something or someone we spontaneously believe and trust. Such a God would be a false one, an idol. Spontaneous or “natural” religion, monotheism claims, is no religion at all. True religion is not based on a “basic trust,” but on a permanent critical inquiry into what we trust. In God’s name, we should not trust our trust in Him, we should distrust it.

Only a critical attitude makes us sensitive to revelation, which is the hallmark of the monotheistic God. Only by subverting the securities we have settled into can we open ourselves to what comes from a radical outside. An unapproachable, inconceivable “outside”: this is the place from which the monotheistic God breaks into our world, intervening in an unnatural, disturbing, and subversive way. The god who gave Jacob the new name of Israel is a strange god. Preferring the cunning youngest son over the rightful elder (Esau), this god fought unto death with him in order to change his name to the one who has “struggled with God and with men and has overcome” (for this is what Jacob’s new name literally means). As the well-known passage in Genesis tells:

That night Jacob...was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, 'Let me go, for it is daybreak.' But Jacob replied, 'I will not let you go unless you bless me.' The man asked him, 'What is your name?' 'Jacob,' he answered. Then the man said, 'Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome.' Jacob said, 'Please tell me your name.' But he replied, 'Why do you ask my name?' Then he blessed him there. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, 'It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.' (Gen. 32: 22-31)

This passage touches the very core of the entire monotheistic tradition: religion has a strained relation with the divine, and is a struggle or even an outright fight with it. If God is thought to be graceful, such a belief never comes without first having fought with Him, and this only occurs after having fought — and unmasked — other false gods.

Indeed, monotheistic religion is first of all a fight against false gods: the Jewish and the Christian Bible, as well as the Koran, repeatedly tell us of the never-ending battle against false gods. The Jewish tradition starts with it — Moses destroying the golden calf — and the apocalyptic scenarios of all three monotheistic books end with it, telling their own version of an ultimate war against a false god. This is what monotheism is about: what people suppose to be god is not God, only God is God. Natural, spontaneous ideas and feelings about God are illusory and empty. True religion is there to fight such illusions. Monotheistic religion, however, is also a fight against its own persistent inclination to slide back into a normal, natural religion that would have faith in what or whom we think God is. In a way, monotheism is a religion that makes “religious distrust” the very kernel of religion. It is, in other words, critical religion *par excellence*. This critical attitude toward itself, as religion, is the very kernel of its religiosity.

Certainly, monotheism must have once been a “simple” religion — that is, the religion of a people having trust in their own god as guarantee of power and prosperity. This must have been the case in early Israel, during the time of the Davidian kingdom. But the real origin of the kind of monotheism that would lead to modern Judaism, Christianity, and Islam should be located in another period, during the time in which the Hebrew people, with their “simple” religion, were on the verge of disappearing. It was during the Babylonian Captivity that this religion was interpreted as false. In Babylon, they learned that true religion did not consist in the political power and prosperity of a nation — such “false gods” were to be renounced. True religion was a religion of the heart, involving a personal conversion, leading one to a spiritual and moral life, a lifestyle respecting the “orphan and the widow,” the “poor and the needy.”⁹ This is what the “prophets” had foreseen in the centuries before the Exile. At that time they were considered to be dissident prophets, refusing to yield to those in power. Now, sitting in tears “by the rivers of Babylon” (Ps. 137), people remembered those dissident prophets, just as they remembered that

other traditional story about the exodus out of Egypt, in which they received the law that the prophets told them was their religion's kernel. Being "God's people" could not be equated with being owners of a powerful land, since it was first of all an "inner" category, defining those who obey God's law, wherever they are, and in whatever situation they are in. Even here, by Babylon's rivers, despite having lost everything, they could be what their God had commanded them to be: faithful to the one and only God, obedient to a law that is not so much religious (which would establish an economy between the mortal and the immortal) as it is human (which would establish a just society). To serve God is at the same time to serve the "orphan and the widow," "the outlaw and rightless." Those who *only* serve God serve an idol, and their religion is a false one; in fact, it is not a religion at all. True religion is never *purely* religion, never *purely* an affair between man and God. True religion is never religion *alone*.

From a monotheistic perspective, it is not easy to define exactly what "religion" means. On the one hand, it is what monotheism is fighting against: a false belief, a celebration of idols, an obscure traffic between men and gods, between mortals and immortals. Monotheism can only be extremely suspicious of this kind of religion — a suspicion forms its very kernel. Hence, monotheism is itself a genuine critique of religion. Its God is, by definition, the result of an unending critical attitude. No one who we think is God can be God. Only God is God. Doing justice to God means nothing other than doing justice to our neighbors, especially to "the poor and the weak" among them.

On the other hand, this critique of religion ends up being a religion. It functions as a cult, having its own rituals, prayers, saints, sacred objects, and gestures. In short, monotheism establishes a "holy economy": it is critical of sacrifices, especially human sacrifices, which it explicitly forbids.¹⁰ In general, it criticizes the idea that life, which is given by the divine, should ever be given back to it. The monotheistic God is supposed to be too sovereign for such "life/death traffic."¹¹ He does not require the gift of those he created in order to live, which is precisely why pagan gods are false: to remain alive, they need food, which is given through human and other sacrifices.¹² If the monotheistic God is hungry, it is never because of a need for food. As an entirely "sovereign" God he does not require anything. Yet the monotheistic God continues to ask for sacrifices (and except the one of his son, this excludes all human sacrifices). Even Christianity, which explicitly calls for the ultimate sacrifice (the sacrifice of sacrifice), remains a religion — a culture in which man is asked to send gifts, offerings, and sacrifices to God in order to honor him. Monotheists should be critical about that which people (including themselves) call God. They should not trust the god they spontaneously trust, for only God is God. But this God must nonetheless be trusted, and this trust must be expressed in a religious way: by praying to this God and celebrating him through the offering of gifts and non-human sacrifices. This is the paradox of monotheistic religion: it is a critique of religion that manifests itself as religion.

CRITIQUE OF RELIGION...

Monotheistic religion is only a paradox for those who do not accept the typically *modern* historical, evolutionary approach to this problem. For others, the monotheistic “religious critique of religion” presents a necessary phase within the evolution of western civilization. Is this evolution not undoubtedly moving in the direction of a more and more purified atheism? Either way, western culture — and, *a fortiori*, modern culture — results from a critique of, and a break with, religion. But this break took time to be realized. In the beginning, a critique of religion could only work from the inside, operating within an entirely religious theoretical framework. Unmasking the religious fable with religious concepts, this is what monotheism did. Once monotheism had become the ruling religion, however, its criticism did not end. Thus the apotheosis of Christianity during the High Middle Ages sowed the seed of its own critique (the Reformation), laying the foundation for the Enlightenment critique of religion and paving the way for the a-religious climate of post-French Revolution bourgeois society, which introduced today’s widespread atheism. Atheism is thus not the opposite of Christian monotheism, as Enlightenment reasoning presumed, but its prolongation and even its realization. To realize what monotheism is, one should not only do away with the gods, but with the monotheistic God as well. Ultimately, true monotheism becomes atheism, just as atheism becomes the only true monotheism.

Many modern thinkers have made this claim. Recall Hegel’s assertion that the very kernel of Christianity is nothing else but God’s death, a statement already present in a seventeenth-century Lutheran hymn.¹³ With Christianity, according to Hegel, religion’s truth is both unmasked and saved (*aufgehoben*), and with the Enlightenment’s atheism the same is done to Christianity. In the end, we have the *Aufhebung* of the very difference between religion and its opposite, or what amounts to the same thing, between atheism and its opposite, as it ends in what Hegel calls “absolute knowledge.” Though this idea might be criticized, it expresses our common opinion of religion more accurately than we are willing to admit. Indeed, the difference between religion and its opposite (or between atheism and its opposite) seems to have lost importance. The fact that both religion and atheism have become a matter of personal belief has neutralized their former opposition. Those who are willing to fight for religion or for atheism and want to rearrange the existing world according to either’s respective principles are currently supposed to be “fundamentalists,” a name that commonly implies that they are “wrong.” We suppose they should know that beyond the opposition between religion and atheism there is the knowledge that each is nothing more than a personal belief. Such knowledge operates, consciously or not, as an “absolute” knowledge.

Yet, other explicitly non-absolute philosophies transcend the difference between religion and atheism. Gilles Deleuze, one of the most vehement anti-Hegelian philosophers of recent time,

claims that the most abstract and sophisticated speculations on God advanced by traditional thinkers (Dun Scotus, Spinoza, Leibniz, and others) were, in fact, the most exquisite moments of free thought.¹⁴ God's infinity liberated finite man from his false and oppressive limits. Reflecting on God and even taking Him as reflection's starting point did not obstruct atheist thinking. On the contrary, Deleuze stresses, such reflection stimulated free thought quite wonderfully.¹⁵

Another modern approach to religion and atheism warrants attention: Freudian criticism and its unexpected "christocentrism." Undoubtedly, Freud acknowledges modernity's atheist tradition and explicitly expresses the hope that in the future religion will be left behind,¹⁶ yet this is precisely why he appreciates Christianity. The Christian fable that represses the original trauma underlying religion is so superficial and "thin" that it can easily be read as an *unmasking* story. It is not a coincidence, Freud argues, that in Christianity the "son" has taken over the place of the "father," who occupied the central position in Judaism and most other religions. For the origin of religion is not to be found with the father, but with his sons, and more precisely with their murder of the father. In Freud's modern "scientific" fable of the primal horde, a monstrous father forbade his sons' libidinal satisfaction in order to reserve all of the women for himself. Libido, as the very principle of life, left the sons no other recourse than parricide for the removal of this obstacle. A persistent feeling of guilt forced them to create a new father — first a totem, later a god — whom they could express such remorse. Religion is thus an attempt to repay a debt to those imaginary gods — murdered fathers — in order to relieve (in an equally imaginary way) the unbearable feeling of guilt. In this way, the origin of society coincides with the origin of religion.

Christianity, however, modified the repression of the traumatic guilt that binds society. By sacrificing himself, the Christian "Son of God" confesses — and hardly in secret — to the murder of the father: the only act capable of redeeming man's original sin is suicide or self-sacrifice, to redeem the sin it could only be carried out at the level of murder. This is how, in Christianity, repressed guilt almost becomes conscious. In the celebration of God's son, Christianity is overtly the "religion of the sons," and in this way it almost acknowledges the death (murder) of the father. Christ's sacrifice is the sacrifice of the son and is thus an adequate repetition of the sacrifice/murder of the father — a repetition that is, in fact, a confession. Christianity takes a decisive step toward turning the unconscious into consciousness, which is the very reason for Freud's "christocentrism."

...WITHIN THE LIMITS OF ILLUSION ALONE

In Christianity, the repressed almost becomes conscious. The word to notice here is "almost," indicating a hesitation on Freud's part. On the one hand, he hopes that the hidden consciousness of Christianity will become manifest and will take away not only Christianity's *raison d'être*, but

also the *raison d'être* of all other religions, and more precisely of religion in general. This is the Enlightenment side of Freud's position, explicitly expressed in *The Future of an Illusion*, where we can read his sincere hope that one day we will no longer need such illusions. On the other hand, he realizes that Christianity, like any other religion, is an "illusion," which he defines as an entirely libidinal product. This implies, however, that it is far from certain that we could ever live without illusions. Repression and illusion, although they can be analyzed and unmasked by psychoanalysis, nevertheless remain basic, indispensable structures for the libidinal subject. Let us, then, take a closer look at Freud's theory of illusion.

Freud provides three main reasons for why our ancestors created religious illusions: 1) to banish the terror of nature, for our libidinal constitution has made us maladjusted to nature; 2) to be reconciled with our fate; and 3) to compensate for the frustrations caused by civilization. Religion is a "store of ideas" protecting us "in two directions": "against the dangers of nature and Fate [the tragic conditions of life and death], and against the injuries that threaten [us] from human society itself" (S.E. 21: 18). To address the problems of nature and fate, we no longer need gods or other religious illusions, as we can now make use of science. As Freud continues, however, science itself causes frustration; even civilization in general appeals to frustrating illusions. Although science and civilization shape our wishes and desires, on the most basic libidinal level they simultaneously limit desire, making frustration and discontent unavoidable. As Freud famously elaborates, civilization is never without its "discontent," and for that reason is never without illusions. Civilization will never completely harmonize libidinal wishes with what reality demands, so discontent and illusion will remain two sides of the same unavoidable coin. Of course, in *The Future of an Illusion*, Freud does not explicitly state this. Rather, the strictly "psychological" analysis he sets forth supposes it. As he clearly states, unmasking illusions is not the same as analyzing their content: "To assess the truth-value of religious doctrines does not lie within the scope of the present enquiry. It is enough for us that we have recognized them as being, in their psychological nature, illusions" (S.E. 21: 33).

Even a cursory reading of the final four chapters of *The Future of an Illusion* would clarify how the long review of objections and refutations that Freud lists are not only concerned with the religion he criticizes, but also, and more importantly, with the status of his own critique. Does such psychological analysis *really* unmask people's false belief? More precisely, do people stop believing in God once they understand "rationally" that such belief is an illusion? Freud is very clear on this: psychoanalysis will *never* convert the faithful to atheism.¹⁷ Faith is too much a "psychological" thing, a matter of unconscious wishes and presuppositions. Although psychoanalysis can awaken some of these wishes to consciousness, it cannot make the unconscious *as such* conscious again, since the unconscious is the fundamental structure of consciousness itself.

Does this mean that psychoanalysis provides a new foundation for faith and religion? Freud admits that psychoanalysis will surely be used for this,¹⁸ although he repeats again and again that one should pursue the opposite. Insofar as religion puts forth “prohibitions of thought” it remains our “psychological ideal” to consolidate the “primacy of the intelligence” (S.E. 21: 48). Freud is willing to “moderate [his] zeal and admit the possibility that [he], too, [is] chasing an illusion,”¹⁹ but this does not stop him from expressing his belief in the necessity of rational critique, and thus in criticizing religion. Is Freud’s theory not finally based upon belief — in this case a belief in the value of rational thinking, of intelligence, and a critical attitude? Is his psychoanalytic theory not a version of the Kantian *Vernunftglaube*, a faithful belief in the supremacy of intelligence and rational thought, supposed to be the only way to free us from the chains of the unconscious? Is this not a belief and thus, in the last instance, an illusion? And does this not discredit the entire critique of religion? Does a critique unmasking religion as an illusion make any sense when this unmasking itself relies on an illusion? Is Freud’s religion critique not, in the end, basically a religion?

ENJOYMENT

Although Lacan is unable to resolve this paradoxical problem, he at least pushes the analysis a little further. His conceptual tools enable us to detect a weakness — a certain naïveté even — in Freud’s *Vernunftglaube*, which does not imply, however, that it will be easier to avoid the same *aporia* that Freud encountered. What, according to Lacan, is the weak point in Freud’s theory? As we already know, Freud claims that civilization, although indispensable, necessarily creates frustration and discontent. From a libidinal perspective, civilization is a “law” that restricts unconscious drives and wishes. To assert its authority, this law turns to religion for support; although based upon human rationality, civilization needs the support of an illusion to be respected. Traditionally, religion proved to be strong in this role. This, however, makes civilization and its law dependent on a belief in God, which from a rational viewpoint has an unpredictable status. What was supposed to be the law’s guarantee turns out to be a danger for both the law and civilization more generally. It can only be a step in the right direction, Freud argues, when we will be attached to society’s laws strictly because of their *own* authority, and not because of the illusory authority of some God.²⁰ Modern freedom compels us to speak in our own *human* name. In Freud’s analysis, God’s singular role is to guarantee the human law, giving its prohibitive character extra imaginary strength. To this, Lacan — with Freud — replies that the law is not only negative (that is, prohibitive), but also positive, as it structures desire. By clearly marking its final object, the law gives desire its basic orientation. Despite, or even on account of, its forbidden character, this object keeps desire unfulfilled, and since we *are* unfulfilled desire, this prohibition is constitutive for our very being.

Lacan takes Freud's insight a step further, adding that the forbidden object is also the object of *enjoyment*, for it is prohibition itself that makes enjoyment possible. In *Seminar VII*, he explains that the object of enjoyment is located *outside* the symbolic order, which is to say, outside the domain of the law. It is outside the realm of signifiers where someone, in order to be what he is, must continuously refer to other signifiers, ceaselessly deferring the "object" he is longing for.²¹ Although this object is inaccessible, there is a way for the subject to "enjoy" it. This enjoyment, however, does take a toll: it coincides with a fading of the subject. Enjoyment is only possible when the subject loses the capacity to be present with it. You can long for it, you can remember it, but the moment it occurs, you cannot be with it. This is the crucial point in Lacan's definition of *jouissance*: it is a libidinal satisfaction on the level of the subject, during which the subject fades away, whereby the entire libidinal economy is in the end supported by a fundamental fantasy.

Whereas Freud stresses that the final object of our desire is illegal, Lacan adds that at the same time the law directs our desire toward it, providing this object its constitutive status. Although impossible and phantasmatic, the forbidden object is the ultimate support of our libidinal economy. Even when the subject fades away, as in the case with *jouissance*, this object will function as support.

RELIGION AS SUBLIMATION

Religion has now been placed in a different light. It not only supports the authority of the law, it also supports the human tendency to transgress the law and to enjoy the forbidden object. It does not allow *real* transgression (for *jouissance* is phantasmatic), but it supports the *desire* for transgression. By celebrating what is beyond the limits of the law, it keeps desire desiring. This is what Lacan has in mind when he defines religion as sublimation. In *Seminar VII*, sublimation is defined as the way to raise the object of desire to the level of "*das Ding*," which is, at that time, Lacan's conceptual term for desire's final object.²² In sublimation an arbitrary signifier is singled out from the symbolic order and put in the inaccessible place of desire's final object. All other signifiers are then fashioned in such a way that they continuously circle *around* this object without ever obtaining access to it. By celebrating this object it is in fact *desire* that is celebrated.

In this sense, religion is not simply that which represses desire. It can function as desire's sublimation as well, and in this capacity it can give desire a certain freedom. It is true that religion does not give desire what it ultimately wants, for this is enjoyment, which insofar as it is not a signifier it cannot be given consciously. Religion, however, can affirm that we *long* for enjoyment, thus it appreciates what we really are, since, once again, we *are* desire. Although sublimation is not the ultimate solution for desire, it at least affirms rather than repress desire as the most basic reality of our life.

This Lacanian perspective, however, radically modifies both the notion of religion and the critique of religion, just as it changes the notion of truth and reality. According to Lacan, the truth of psychic and social reality is not to be found in a real that is separate from the fictitious. Reality itself, the reality constituting the world in which we live, is basically a fiction — an infinite set of signifiers whose signification, in having no ground in the real, is entirely an effect of the signifiers. This is what Lacan, referring to a basic notion in Lévi-Strauss, calls a symbolic universe: a world that is materially made of signifiers radically separated from the real. Signification is no longer supposed to refer to the real; it is caused by autonomously operating signifiers.

Where, then, is truth in the Lacanian universe? Contrary to flat postmodernist claims, Lacan retains truth as a wholly valid concept; however, he does not define it as that which makes words or thoughts correspond to real things. Truth, for Lacan, is within the horizon of the *primacy of desire* — a discourse or an attitude is true only insofar as it acknowledges this primacy of desire. More precisely, the question of the true and the untrue indicates only how the subject acknowledges its position within the world of fiction (the symbolic order), how the human being recognizes himself not as his own subject but as the subject of the desire of the Other. This is Lacan's position: his subject is not the Cartesian subject, which functions as the support (the platform, the *hypokeimenon*, the *subjectum*) of his own being. The Lacanian subject, rather, supports a desire for being, a desire that has been copied from the other's desire. Since the libidinal being can only repress its archi-trauma — its lack of being — by alienating itself in the order of signifiers, it realizes itself *as* the subject of signifiers. As Lacan claims, we can only exist as the individuals we think we are insofar as we are represented by signifiers. This makes each of us coincide, at the most basic level of our identity, with what Lacan posits as the subject: that which a signifier represents to another signifier.²³ The subject is the signifier's support; it makes the signifier occur, or take place — it gives “ground.” The subject that I am, however, is not the signifier as such. Rather, in being the effect of the signifier, I am that which exists (and what is hidden) beneath the signifier. Literally, I am its “supposition,” without any real or “ontological” ground. For Lacan, this is how we must define the modern subject: it is literally a fictive “supposition” made by an autonomous *Einbildungskraft*, which is not reducible to our own imagination, but only to the imagination at work in the anonymous, alienating, symbolic order that we occupy. In seeking the point where I can meet my true self (my truth), I will only witness this point escape the materiality of the question. Truth comes to characterize that specific attitude — that “act,” as Lacan ends up claiming — which affirms the point that escapes, thus affirming the desire I am, that I am nothing but desire for being. This moment or act of truth, which is a radically singular moment that cannot be given by another, can be located in the psychoanalytic cure. The social form of such a moment, its cultural celebration, is sublimation.

Where, in this Lacanian approach to truth and the subject, should we locate religion and its critique? Unlike the Enlightenment critique, Lacanian theory does not criticize religion as a fiction, since all of reality, made up of signifiers, is supposed to be fiction. Religion's truth-value is to be found in the way it places the subject in relation to reality, the way it gives freedom to desire. Does religion help us recognize and "cultivate" the desire we are? Does it assist in the recognition of our identity, not as substantial subjects supposed to be our own ground, but as subjects that paradoxically support something of which we are, at the same time, the effect? Such questions are the necessary guides for a critical approach to religion.

We can now understand why Lacanian theory is not without a certain appreciation for religion. In being fundamentally alienated in the symbolic order (the Other), it is not incomprehensible that, in troubled times, people would address themselves to that order *as such* — that is, to an instance to whom they can personally relate. Certainly, they are always lost in the Other, but only in an unconscious way. Being in trouble, they *feel* lost in the Other, and by praying to the Other not to abandon them they more or less express the structural condition that they are in. To pray for the Other to save the single individual that I am reveals that my entire individuality depends upon Him (that is, the symbolic order). Thus, there is a truth in praying, at least a hidden one: it is an act that attempts to deny the fact that the Other I'm addressing *as such* does not exist.²⁴ He is nothing but the endless fiction I am living in (or on account of), and the only true salvation left for me to acknowledge is that I am totally lost in the Other. My only escape from the Other (an escape that I cannot handle or manipulate on my own accord) is a vain *jouissance*. It is not incomprehensible that I would suppose the idea that *jouissance* is the haven that religion believes in. Psychoanalysis, however, is there to deconstruct such an idea so as to gradually unmask and face the fundamental truth that I am unfulfilled desire. It is only because of unfulfilled desire that my enjoyment is possible; only enjoyment gives me the sovereignty I am longing for. As Georges Bataille has said, "sovereignty is NOTHING."²⁵

Here, again, atheism is supposed to be the destination of man's struggle with his gods, that is, with the wishes he has readily accepted as real. This is at least one of the reasons Lacan, not unlike Freud and his "christocentrism," defines "roman religion" (Christianity) as the "true religion."²⁶ This does not contradict his claim that atheism is the most difficult thing there is, and this is precisely where psychoanalysis leads us: the truth of any desire for God is not God, but godless desire. This does not mean, however, that monotheism is free of danger or that it could spontaneously lead to an affirmation of desire's primacy. Monotheism remains a religion — a discourse that permits *someone* to speak in the name of a God — and thus does not so much acknowledge desire (for God) as acknowledge God Himself. To allow someone to speak in His name is to allow the appropriation of God's inaccessible position, as well as His absolute power.

One pretending to fulfill the desire of others, rather than give room to their desire, forces others to accept him or his God as the ultimate answer for their desire — a procedure that in fact denies their desire. While he himself transgresses the limit separating desire from its final object, occupying the locus of *jouissance*, he steals from others both their desire and their *jouissance*, thus constraining everyone to act *as if* his or her desire has been fulfilled.

It is here that we come upon the “perverse core of Christianity.” By criticizing every appropriation of God (desire’s object), Christianity acknowledges the primacy of desire. But in making this claim one can secretly bring about the exact opposite, which is precisely how Christianity, as well as the two other monotheisms, generally operate. Referring to God as the point from which everything can be criticized, Christianity appropriates this point and supposes itself to be immune to all criticism. This is why Christianity, in both its exposed and its hidden forms, can always be criticized. Here we encounter the inner danger of monotheistic criticism: its critical claim can itself turn out to be an instrument that consolidates the repression of desire it seeks to attack. But is this the danger only of monotheistic criticism? Although explicitly intending to avoid it, Lacanian theory seems nevertheless to be affected by such a threat. We must then reflect, one last time, on Lacan’s definition of sublimation and its relation to religion and its critique.

THE MONOTHEISTIC STATUS OF MODERN CRITICISM

According to Lacanian theory, sublimation names modernity’s modified relation to the real. As object of desire, the real is inaccessible, although the human “desiring machine” is entirely oriented toward it. Thus, Lacan argues, the real is linked to the unconscious. Contrary to what the Enlightenment tradition claims, the real does not guarantee any solid, ontological ground for human knowledge: the real, being the ultimate *object* of knowledge, can never be its *subject*, its ground, its *hypokeimenon*. This insight defines the heart of modernity, as Lacan says again and again over the course of his *oeuvre*: the real is not knowledge’s ground, but its unconscious kernel. Knowledge, while being oriented toward this kernel, is concomitantly distanced from it.

This is why Lacan also interprets modern science as sublimation, as it gives freedom to human desire (for knowledge) and allows it to endlessly encircle its final object without ever obtaining it. Modern science “acknowledges” the unconscious (the unknowable real) as the very basis for consciousness and knowledge, but only by paradoxically *denying* it. The unknowable (the unconscious) is *supposed* to be, rather than function as its basis or kernel, something still must be discovered. The moment of knowledge is now deferred to the future: *we will* know what we still do not know. Science thus denies the inner limit upon which its own practice is built; through the denial of the unconscious, or the unknown, as its ground, it denies any break with the real — hence the limitlessness of modern science. Science chases after the real, while the real constantly withdraws, turning this chase into a limitless and vain quest that is only satisfied in

an equally vain *jouissance*. Limitless science is certainly not without danger, evidenced in the many catastrophes it precipitates. The twentieth century's nuclear disasters, for instance, are the result of an immeasurable scientific power that has been unable to face its own limits, the result of a science that, in its *jouissance*, has lost itself. Capable of destroying everything, science blinds itself from the fact that it is blowing away its own subject. In order to achieve such a goal, it seems prepared to destroy mankind itself.

Religion, the second kind of sublimation that Lacan distinguishes, has a more accurate truth-value. At the very least, it does not simply deny the unknowable kernel toward which human desire points. Placing an unknowable God at the locus of this kernel, religion keeps desire consciously unfulfilled and thus ongoing. It operates as a first recognition of the primacy of desire, but remains immature insofar as it lacks the clarity of an artistic sublimation, the third sublimation that Lacan distinguishes. In his eyes, art is supposed to have the highest truth-value. Referring to Greek tragedy, Lacan argues that art is the most explicit presentation of the impossibility of desire gaining access to its final object, and is therefore to be considered the least luring kind of sublimation.

What is the status of Lacan's own theory? Should it also be considered a sublimation that gives room to desire? This is not what Lacan claims. Psychoanalysis is a science, though it is not the kind of science that denies desire (by pretending to know its "nature" or "essence"). Psychoanalysis is, rather, the science of *mapping* desire, of constructing a *topology* of nodal points where one can locate the subject hiding itself in the tricky games of the libidinal economy. Whereas classical science still shares something in common with religion (functioning as a sublimation), psychoanalytic science too rigidly maintains a "structural" way of analyzing desire. It seems, therefore, that Lacanian theory is *not* ending up with religion.

But Lacan admits that things are not so definitive. At a press conference in Rome on 29 October 1974 Lacan announced that he would soon speak about the relation of psychoanalysis to religion, unambiguously asserting that it is either "psychoanalysis *or* religion," literally claiming, "if religion triumphs, psychoanalysis has failed."²⁷ It is clear that, in Lacan's eyes, psychoanalysis should offer an alternative to religion, which brings him very close to Freud's critique. A few moments later, however, when asked how he would explain "the triumph of psychoanalysis over religion," Lacan retracts his statement, claiming that "psychoanalysis will never triumph over religion. Religion is indestructible. Psychoanalysis will never triumph; it will survive or die."²⁸ Contrary to Freud, Lacan seems to admit that religion has a future, or at the very least it will remain the general horizon — even for psychoanalysis.

As Lacan later asserts at the press conference, religion will triumph over more than psychoanalysis. Since modernity has lost its foundation in the real, and now that the real no longer imposes limits to science, *sense* has lost any ontological ground. It is no surprise that in our "scientific

times,” religion continues to play the role of “giving sense,” as this is what religion has traditionally done: in guaranteeing the human being a foundation in the real, it gives him and his life a real sense. The understanding of what “real sense” really is, however, can only come from critical theories like psychoanalysis, which allow one to face the real as that which is beyond reality (that is, beyond the symbolic order). Amongst the “sciences,” only psychoanalysis and certain other critical theories are able to show the real as the sovereign senselessness that our desire is aiming at. Is this not what Lacanian *jouissance* is all about? Perhaps this is the background for the next question at Lacan’s press conference. After being asked, “will psychoanalysis become religion?” Lacan replies, “I hope not, but perhaps it will become a religion, who knows, why not?”²⁹

Lacan knows that if psychoanalysis were to become a religion it then would cease being psychoanalysis. Considering the impossible real as a kind of hidden sense, and pretending to have knowledge of the unconscious, coincides with denying it. For, psychoanalysis is not knowledge of the unconscious, it is a knowledge that knows it begins from, and is based upon, that which is impossible to know. In this respect, psychoanalysis is a symptom of history, or more precisely a symptom of modernity’s discovery of the real as inaccessible and impossible. This is what Lacan all-too-briefly explains in his response to the question at the press conference. Psychoanalysis is indeed only a symptom, as modernity denies this discovery in believing that it will be able to gain full knowledge of the real. That is why the impossible real only appears in the margin of modernity’s ideologies and sciences; the real only appears in *symptoms*, just as symptoms are the only way in which the real comes into our world. From this perspective, psychoanalysis is one of the few sciences or critical theories to take symptoms seriously. It redefines science as that which proceeds from the primacy of the symptom (that is, from the primacy of the abnormal over the normal).

“A symptom taking symptoms seriously”: an accurate description of the paradoxical position that psychoanalysis (and perhaps contemporary criticism, in general) is in. Such a characterization shows, at the same time, the inherent weakness of its critical gesture. For, what is the truth-value of a critique taking symptoms — the real — seriously, if it is itself a symptom? How could this kind of critique have any ground, any support at all? Could it ever be something more than a symptomatic and transient moment that lasts merely as long as the symptom it “affirmatively” criticizes? Lacan frankly acknowledges this:³⁰ as a “science of the real,” psychoanalytic criticism cannot give sense to the symptom it analyzes, although this symptom is the only access we have to the inaccessible real. Psychoanalytic criticism can only decenter the “normal” knowledge of the real, without ever being able to come to a “real” knowledge of the real.

We thus face a weakness similar to the one at work in the heart of monotheistic religion. Insofar as monotheism criticizes human belief in gods or God, but is itself unable to achieve any contact with a real God or with the “real” for which God is a name, it criticizes all supposed knowledge.

But its critique lacks any real support, and has no real alternative to promote. This is, at least, the *aporia* to which monotheism leads us. In the final analysis, this kind of critique only decenters what it criticizes: it deprives knowledge of its supposed center, the locus where it presumes to meet itself, the full (Cartesian) subject of its own knowledge. But monotheistic criticism offers no other alternative than God. The real God, so they claim, is the one who asks only for the belief that no existing idea of God or any idea of a non-existing God is God. This paradox is at the very core of monotheistic criticism and is its weakness insofar as its criticism can easily be transformed into an absolute power. In taking the position of this unknowable God, I could pretend to know and control everything and everyone. Monotheism's radical weakness can turn into a deceptive way to claim an almighty position. This is the perverse core of monotheism, which has become manifest over the course of its history. Perhaps this is why the real — the really critical — monotheism can be found only in the margins, or in the symptoms of its history.

Lacanian criticism explicitly aims to be weaker than monotheism's weakness. Unlike monotheistic criticism, which still hopes that its weak position will turn out to be the strong messianic position that God supports and allows to speak in His almighty name, Lacanian criticism refuses both hope and non-hope. Speaking in the name of this weakness could turn it into a hidden absolute power. If Lacanian criticism can only ever celebrate its own critical gesture, this would serve to emphasize its decentering character. Inheriting the weakness of monotheistic critique, psychoanalysis attempts to be truly weak, for it does not take over the “sublating” moment. Nevertheless it supposes or “hopes” that such weakness is more “real,” more respectful of the impossibility of the real. In this supposition its criticism has not surpassed monotheism, though it resists falling into the typically monotheist traps that we have examined.

Lacanian criticism — indeed, any modern or postmodern criticism — should not confess to be a “proven religion,” like Comte's positivism once did. Nor should it simply act like a critical religion — that is, like monotheism — though it should be aware that it is not simply beyond monotheism. It shares monotheism's weakness. To remain attentive to this weakness, such criticism should continue to reflect on its monotheistic background.



This essay was originally presented as a lecture at “Ending Up With Religion Again? Christianity in Contemporary Political and Psychoanalytical Theory,” conference organized by Heyendaal Instituut K.U.Nijmegen and Jan van Eyck Academie Maastricht, 10 May 2004.

1. Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (hereafter *S.E.*), ed. and trans. James Strachey et al. (London: Hogarth Press, 1953-1974), 21: 32-33. Subsequent references will appear parenthetically within the text.
2. Jacques Lacan to Marc Lacan, 7 April 1953. <http://www.lutecium.org/Jacques_Lacan/transcriptions/scans_lacan/lettre_07_04_53/lettre_jacques_marc_07_04_53.htm> (1 May 2005). [Editor’s translation.]
3. The shift from “positive philosophy” to “positivism” occurred in the revolutionary year of 1848, when Comte published *Discours sur l’ensemble du positivisme* and created his International Positivist Society. See Auguste Comte, *A General View of Positivism*, trans. J.H. Bridges (New York: R. Speller, 1957).
4. Henri Gouhier, *La vie d’Auguste Comte* (Paris: Vrin, 1965), 245.
5. Comte, *The Catechism of Positive Religion*, trans. Richard Congreve (Clifton, N.J.: A.M. Kelley, 1973), 4. [Translation modified.]
6. Patrick Tacussel, “Auguste Comte, l’oeuvre vécue,” in Comte, *Calendrier positiviste, ou système général de commémoration publique*, ed. Tacussel (Paris: Éditions Fata Morgana, 1993), 49.
7. See Lucien Scubla, “Les hommes peuvent-ils se passer de toute religion? Coup d’oeil sur les tribulations du religieux en Occident depuis trois siècles,” *La Revue du MAUSS* 22 (summer 2003): 90-117.
8. See Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, trans. Ray Brassier (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003); Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*, trans. Patricia Dailey (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005); and Slavoj Žižek, *The Fragile Absolute, or, Why is the Christian Legacy worth fighting for?* (London: Verso, 2000).
9. “Do not let the oppressed retreat in disgrace; may the poor and needy praise your name” (Ps. 74: 21). See also Exod. 22: 22; Deut. 10: 18; and Ps. 10: 14.
10. Here the interruption of Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. 22) is often mentioned. For a critique of the idea that monotheism, particularly Christianity, is beyond the logic of human sacrifice see Manuel de Diéguez, *L’idole monothéiste* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1981).
11. Diéguez characterizes Catholicism and the Sacrifice of the Mass as a “a practically tangible system of exchange with divine power,” suggesting that the Christian idea of incarnation re-initiates a kind of life/death traffic. *Ibid.*, 46. [Editor’s translation.]
12. This is, for instance, why Zeus and the other gods could not simply kill the original androgyne humans at the moment they began to attack the gods. As Aristophanes explains in Plato’s *Symposium*, “Doubt reigned in the celestial councils. Should they kill them and annihilate the [androgyne] race with thunderbolts, as they had done the giants, then there would be an end of the sacrifices and worship which men offered to them; but, on the other hand, the gods could not suffer their insolence to be unrestrained.” *The Dialogues of Plato*, vol. 1, trans. Benjamin Jowett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), 521-522.
13. “O great woe! / God himself lies dead”: Hegel cites a hymn written in 1641 by Johannes Rist in *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, vol. 3, ed. Peter C. Hodgson, trans. R.F. Brown, P.C. Hodgson, and J.M. Stewart (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 125. See also Jean Wahl, *Le malheur de la conscience dans la philosophie de Hegel* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1951), 73.
14. Similarly, traditional Christian painting found in the dogmatic idea of God not a restriction, but a real stimulus for free art. “Deleuze suggests...[that] in the hands of great painters like

- El Greco, Tintoretto and Giotto, this [theological] constraint became the condition of a radical emancipation: in painting the divine, one could take literally the idea that God must not be represented, an idea that resulted in an extraordinary liberation of line, colour, form, and movement. With God, painting found a freedom it would not have had otherwise — a properly pictorial atheism.” Daniel W. Smith, “The doctrine of univocity: Deleuze’s ontology of immanence,” in *Deleuze and Religion*, ed. Mary Bryden (New York: Routledge, 2001), 167.
15. See also Jean-Luc Nancy, “The Deconstruction of Christianity,” trans. Simon Sparks, in *Religion and Media*, ed. Hent de Vries and Samuel Weber (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 112-130.
 16. Recall Freud’s plea for non-religious education in *S.E.* 21: 47-48.
 17. “I still maintain that what I have written is quite harmless in one respect. No believer will let himself be led astray from his faith by these or any similar arguments.” *Ibid.*, 47.
 18. “If the application of the psycho-analytic method makes is possible to find a new argument against the truths of religion, *tant pis* for religion; but defenders of religion will by the same right make use of psycho-analysis in order to give full value to the affective significance of religious doctrines.” *Ibid.*, 37.
 19. Freud continues, “Perhaps the effect of the religious prohibition of thought may not be so bad as I suppose; perhaps it will turn out that human nature remains the same even if education is not abused in order to subject people to religion. I do not know and you do not know it either. It is not only the great problems of this life that seem insoluble at the present time; many lesser questions too are difficult to answer.” *Ibid.*, 48.
 20. “But we do not publish this rational explanation of the prohibition against murder. We assert that the prohibition has been issued by God. Thus we take it upon ourselves to guess His intentions, and we find that He, too, is unwilling for men to exterminate one another. In behaving in this way we are investing the cultural prohibition with a quite special solemnity, but at the same time we risk making its observance dependent on belief in God. If we retrace this step...then, it is true, we have renounced the transfiguration of the cultural prohibition, but we have also avoided the risk to it.” *Ibid.*, 40-41.
 21. See Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book VII: The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959-1960*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. Dennis Porter (New York: Norton, 1992), 191-204.
 22. *Ibid.*, 112.
 23. See Lacan, “The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire,” in *Écrits*, trans. Bruce Fink (New York: Norton, 2002), 304.
 24. Or, as Žižek puts it in his analysis of the biblical figure of Job, the Other (in this case, God) is “impotent.” See *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), 125-127.
 25. Georges Bataille, *La souveraineté*, in *Oeuvres complètes VIII* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), 456. [My translation.] On Bataille’s influence on Lacan, see Jean-François de Saunverzac, *Le désir sans foi ni loi: Lecture de Lacan* (Paris: Aubien, 2000), 21-60.
 26. Lacan, “Conférence de presse du docteur Jacques Lacan au Centre culturel français, Rome, le 29 octobre 1974,” *Lettres de l’École freudienne* 16 (1975): 14. (All quotations from this text are the editor’s translation.)
 27. Psychoanalysis and religion “are not very amicable. In sum, it is either the one or the other. If religion triumphs, the most probable outcome, I mean the true religion, for there is only a single true one, if religion triumphs, this will be the sign that psychoanalysis has failed.” *Ibid.*, 7.
 28. *Ibid.*, 13.
 29. *Ibid.*, 14.
 30. “For a brief moment, one could perceive what the intrusion of the real is. The analyst, he tarries there. He is there as a symptom, and he can only endure in the form of a symptom.” *Ibid.*, 15.