

# Hermeneutology - II - From the most probable case to psychoanalysis

By Clémence Ortega Douville

We exposed in an article called *The most probable case* what we considered being the most probable scenario for the constitution of the symbolical capacities in the evolution of the human species. As we are talking of the symbolic, we wondered what consequences this theory could have on the practice and theory of psychoanalysis.

There we may redefine the symbolic as : 1) *primitively, the experience that something could hold and stand with or over something else preventing, not provoking or slowing down its fall and collapsing (for example, a rock in balance over another rock) ; 2) the relation made between two separate events made participant of a third one, creating contextual meaning ; 3) thus, the familiarity created between those events ; 4) the fact that I recognise the chain relating them one to another as a separate object appearing beyond those events ; 5) the capacity to recognise the identity of the chain (cf causal-associative chain) before even to consider the events themselves ; 6) at last, the fact that I associate to me the capacity to create familiarity amongst these relations between objects, the capacity to make them a property of me.*

What is important in this redefinition ? First, the inclusion of a sensorimotor origin to the symbolical capacities. I explore the capacity for things to stand in balance by themselves in arbitrary conditions. Here, the important is not that things could stand up in nature like trees, but that things that are usually down on the ground, inert, could also stand up *on something else* if I made them do.

In today's state of culture it is quite natural because we live in an artificial environment where most of the objects surrounding us are standing up over something else. An object left on the ground would be identified as an object misplaced. So the important is to measure that this distinction between objects on the ground and objects *up* had to be made in the first place.

Because here again, it is a matter of delay. If you are putting an object over another object taller, creating more distance from it to the ground, you are again creating a delay. A delay in its falling back down. The very thing the hand paradox and bipedal stand made us enjoy the most, is observing a delay on things usually being another way.

Hence one of the major consequences for psychoanalysis, is that the analysts and analysed, should they be on one side or the other of the bipolarity "doctor-patient", locate themselves *in those laps* of delayed consequences for potential and symbolical acts. If I fear that things would fall and break, shatter on the ground, by fear of realising that I allowed myself to fear my own collapsing, it is most likely that I would have created the means for a delay in this possible collapsing - at least in its clear and unequivocal manifestation to the others and to myself.

So it is important in analysis that we get to observe the same thing, that is not much the object of resistance itself, that might be different both for the patient and the analyst, but that delayed space where precisely room is made for the symbolic. Because we observe that the abstraction of the relation - relation that makes my expectation an *identity* of my relation to reality - between events allows us to create an imaginary delay to their concrete manifestation and consequences.

So manifesting the structure of the symbolical delay of traumatic events we fear is at the core of the work in analysis. Moreover the sensorimotor definition of *trauma*<sup>1</sup> as an anticipation of

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<sup>1</sup> The trauma isn't the shock causing the trauma. It is the memory of the shock, the imprint on the neural system, psyche, the skin, flesh, the body. Trauma is the wound, but not exactly the open and fresh wound. It is already something that happened. Because when you're hurt badly for extreme instance, the brain will shut down the

the result from a chain of events (the rock that I put on a taller rock *is going to fall*), allows us to say that the structure of resistance in analysis is deeply rooted in the certitude *that it will* in fact happen that way. We see the *trauma* as something, whatever scale or degree, that induces significative change in the ontogenic disposition of the individual to life.

*Trauma* can be a *slight trauma*, some event that may not appear like the definition of something traumatic, injuring severely the physical or psychological integrity of the person. But even the biological modification of the organism in its interactions with its environment is part of the whole mass that is the *trauma* (you could even wonder about its similarity with the German word for "dream" that is *Traum*). The impact of the taste of a fruit can be a *trauma*. A great joy can be part of a *trauma*. The imprint of a color can be part of a *trauma*. The *trauma* is progressive and it is what transgresses the actual equilibrium of the subject, that puts it at the stake of what is going to happen next.

It is manifest to the subject that the structure of the trauma is causal, though we know it is associative. So we have the symbolic nature of causality, put over the associative character of its being related to a way of anticipating and delaying the manifestation of the traumatic event. The latter is then seen as a logical consequence of my association with a reality that I anticipate.

It *should* be that way, but I have no guarantee that it would in fact be that way. The rock on

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feeling of pain. It is then the moment after that you are in pain, the scarring over that hurts in the long run.

But look at the etymology : "1690s, "physical wound," medical Latin, from Greek *trauma* "a wound, a hurt; a defeat," from PIE *\*trau-*, extended form of root *\*tere-* (1) "to rub, turn," with derivatives referring to twisting, piercing, etc. Sense of "psychic wound, unpleasant experience which causes abnormal stress" is from 1894." (from Etymonline) It is interesting that it could even mean "defeat", which underlines the retrospective and transgressive nature of the word. Its contextual nature, related to some perspective larger than the instantaneous shock. It is progressive.

The trauma takes place and is maintained over time. In fact, while you are scarring over the wound, your life doesn't cease. There is no trauma if the life of the person doesn't continue, if you aren't feeling the pain or a slighter physiological imprint on your body memory. You can only notice and witness the wound. On the contrary, you are much more committed to the shock, because you can still respond to it at the moment it happens, try to avoid it immediately.

But when you're hurt, when you are wounded, what do you fear the most ? Most of the time, that something would reawaken the pain. When you are on your hospital bed, you are struggling and seeking strategies to prevent the pain from coming back. You are, properly, anticipating that you would feel pain from the trauma again. It is extended and gives as well a certain way to measure the time you would be safe from it. You may even extend and distil the expression of your pain so you would delay your confronting it again.

So in fact, no, you can't anticipate the traumatic event, but the perception and the symbolic quality of the trauma is something that has a vibration, a wavelength. It is like an earthquake, you can't anticipate the event, but you always anticipate the outcome, the extent of the damage, and you're trying to forecast the aftermath.

This is, but of course it can be debated, the structure of trauma. It is something very much personal, you hold on your trauma, because it defines you, you're working over it. Your whole life narrative becomes a scar tissue of it. In fact, you accompany it and you anticipate everything in your life that could bring it back. You can even love and expect a great deal about life because of a trauma.

And also the trauma is always the reactivation of an ancient pain, that would make you fear not only the coming back of the pain, but the destruction of the self. So it gets structural. It is much about the fear of not knowing whether we could stop the sinking of pain or not, how bad it would be.

Trauma has a slope, it is unfathomable and you can't see the bottom of it. So in fact, you anticipate everything out of trauma. The latter then doesn't mean the only technical way by which the wound has been made (either sliced, cut, pierced or crushed). It only means that *it has been done*. And so it has been done, it can happen again. It belongs to the history of the subject. And therefore, the trauma anticipates the outcome of patterned, recognisable events. Otherwise it becomes another wound, another pattern, another trauma.

Think of Twin Peaks, by David Lynch, there is this scene in the season 2 when Maddy is killed and the Giant appears to Agent Dale Cooper on the stage at the bar, to say : "It is happening again... It is happening again." See, trauma, like Twin Peaks's, functions as an echoe of pain.

the stone could fall or stand, but I never know that it would. I can never be sure, and that is in that space for approximation that expectation begins. And in that expectation, the conscious of diverse possibilities. And in those potential outcomes, the hope for the one that would mean that things won't ever fall where I should redo everything all over again.

Work starts here where I have to pick the rock up again and try gravity a second time, and then as many times again until I have succeeded in making this reality that I want to stand.

The fact that I try something doesn't mean that I should succeed, and it can be quite painful to see a rock fall to the ground from a taller rock, fearing the shock. It is like me falling from my own heights without the hands open to create a distance or a delay from the ground. There is a reduction of my perspectives.

If I expect the rock to stand my size over another rock, I focus on the wish that my perspective to this room open for a development of action would stand as well in integrity. Except that if the rock falls and can't stand in balance, this space, room and measure for action annuls, is abolished by gravity.

If things can stand higher from the ground where they use to be, that means a lot of other possibilities than my standing to the ground. Maybe there is something higher, freed from gravity. If things can *stand* without holding grip, like magic, with the only force of my trying to make them do, imagine the possibilities.

I can make things stand and delay the effects gravity has on me and them. Even at an age (should it be the prehistorical Age or the young age) where the concept of gravity is not conscious and formalised as a whole, the statement and consciousness that *things fall* is quite quickly related, as a reference to me playing with the falling objects or to *me* realising that I have a power on them.

In analysis, it leads to a second major consequence : is the common intentional force driven around the common object of delay strong enough to prevent the subject from collapsing ? Which means : if the subject is seized in a context (social, moral, cultural context) where they are themselves put in delay because the context pushes them to be responsible immediately of a certain behaviour, what is the strongest force on them ?

To be more precise, in a society or model of society where the collapsing of collective and intermediary structures (social, economical, ecological, ...) is anticipated and included in the logical causality of its progress, how could the individuals resist this planned collapsing ? And how could psychoanalysis open for other ways and other moral entities to show responsible of (local solidarity, global consciousness of the ecosystems, economical, social and moral resilience, ...) ?

These are large scales that we may assume psychoanalysis only cannot solve, and of course not, it has to connect with the other fields structuring the symbolical meta-form of Culture. By the way, it may seem a bit dated, but Hegel's philosophy of History has interests to be reminded of ; and one is the necessity to observe the symbolical structure of Culture as a whole nurrished and captured by the individuals' relational and imaginary world of perspective, landscape for action.

So what perspective has psychoanalysis to be responsible for ? We say, it has to be responsible for this object : the delay put and hold on what is going to happen to the subject. You would have to suspend time in the subject's expectation so that the structure of this expectation would show and be revealed to the subject themselves.

The resistances and the mechanisms of transfer don't have other purpose than of holding time on the intrication of what the subject holds as a forecast consequence to every action and the fact that they are held themselves by the structures of the social and moral debts on a larger scale. You would work from the particle to the cell, atom and molecule of Culture, that is in crisis : the individual, the family, the closest social surroundings, the larger cultural, social and political network, the geopolitical issues, the biosphere scale.

All that are symbolical imageries standing over our heads and lives. And as well as we fear

their collapsing, we allow them to stand this way. Though we should recognise the ability from the subject to stand these objects, and allow them to get some more clarity on *why they are doing that*.

Then, the first question, what has anthropogenesis theory to do with psychoanalysis ? I would say because as psychoanalysts, we would occupy a first choice place to witness those intrications, and to try to push forward to disentangling them. We too oppose resistance. Because as we should remember, the subject, as well as we, tries to eat, to assimilate reality to their symbolical comprehension and adaptation to what is coming.

When *I* make a rock stand on another rock, I am making the small rock be ; but I am also making the larger rock *bear*. And as the larger rock bears, I am the bearing one. I am holding the co-relation between two willing symbolical entities : the one that bears, and the one that stands.

See, the work is rather unequal. The one is serving the other. the one is making the other stand. There is an inert force that is making a mobile force be *still*. What else makes a mobile force be still by bearing them ? The subject with the symbolic. Metaphor.

Then we, as analysts, should never focus that much on the small rocks that is the standing mobility, that eventually *will* fall, as on the larger one that is keeping quiet and still to make *the other* stand.

Which means, when we are working on the symbolic, we are in fact keeping the attention on the balance put on this structure and its relation to the subject. Yet the symbolic is merely prevented from falling to the ground. The first nature of the symbolic is in its collapsing. We have to hold it with context otherwise it should not exist and be alive.

This context is provided by the subject as a cultural person, who has been raised and brought up by making them as tall as a world of artificially standing objects is. Allow the latter to fall, and you will see the subject naked. We have indeed a subversive work to do. Break the standing objects.

What would you do if you were only left standing without a rock to bear ?