The contemporary virtual network: wandering Oedipus

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Abstract

This article studies how the psychic scene and the representability mobilized by the Network are similar to those of the dream. Starting from the representability in the Network, it shows how the Network puts in immediate contiguity the most intimate dimension of the psychism with the dimensions of the collective and even of the mass. The representability of the Network puts transitionality at work. This outlines that intersubjective and collective links on the Network are organized according to a main process: topical transfer. Starting from this observation, this article studies the existence of family complexes, primal fantasies and imagos on the Network. This study analyses the Oedipus complex as a meta-complex that organizes the gifts of forbidding among children. By taking into account the myth of Oedipus and the clinical studies related to runaway and wandering amongst deprived children and adolescents, it shows how the Network questions the subjects' bonds with their origins and with identities and identifications of belonging. The questioning of modes of representation and mass effects in the Network leads to light archaic behaviors, that call for a new way of expressing drive renunciations and the gifts of forbidding.

Keywords: The Network and the dream scene, transitionality on the network, topic transfert, identification of belonging, wandering, Oedipus meta-complex, gifts of forbidding

> "Peut-être découvrirons-nous un jour que la même logique est à l'œuvre dans la pensée mythique et dans la pensée scientifique, et que l'homme a toujours pensé aussi bien. Le progrès — si tant est que le terme puisse alors s'appliquer — n'aurait pas eu la conscience pour théâtre, mais le monde, où une humanité douée de facultés constantes se serait trouvée, au cours de sa longue histoire, continuellement aux prises avec de nouveaux objets". (C. Lévi Strauss, 1958) (1)

I have chosen to quote C. Lévi-Strauss in the header because it seems to me to clearly illustrate the problem arising from the link between our idea of the Oedipus complex and the transformations that the practice of the Network brings about in daily life. This will require us to study the Oedipus complex on-line, along with a wide range of family complexes, primal fantasies and imagos. We'll see that these phenomena are strictly linked together through topical transference on the Internet. This will lead us to deepen the specific complexity of the virtual Network in relation to that of the intra-psychic, inter-subjective and societal networks that make up the Oedipus complex and especially the Oedipus myth. On one hand, these remarks come from a

personal use of the Network in the workplace. On the other hand, they come from clinical work and from meetings with adolescents and young adults who are keen on the Network.

The conditions of representability on the Network

We will first look at the conditions of representability. Modern remote communication means have common ground: the absent, the foreigner, the one who is elsewhere, the one who is present psychically but through sole or restricted presentations. The phone network, born at the beginning of the 20th century, can be considered the first rudimentary form of the Network. The link with the person who's not with us is established only through the exclusive support of the voice. While someone listens and answers back, it is possible to give free rein to someone's associations concerning the presence of the other and the scenes and representations related to him or her and even continue certain activities. The existing link between the interlocutors unique, even if it is possible to transmit the telephone to another person who is there and who also wishes to speak to the one or those who are not there. The link has been imagined and symbolically addressed. We'll be focusing essentially on the model of an inter-individual talk.

With contemporary networks, we are witnessing a double change. The advent of video differently actualizes the presence on one hand; on the other hand, the subjects may find themselves with a relatively large number of different interlocutors. If we compare traditional telephone to new media (smartphones, computers…), we may notice significant differences. The arrival of the video technology puts us under the watch of the other(s). We can remember what S. Freud said in *On Beginning of Treatment* (1913), it is difficult to let oneself be carried away by these free associations under the watch of the other. The presence of the video puts the subject on the scene of the other and more than another. The variety of figuration modes (vision, gaze, hearing…) gives the other an actualization and a quasi-presence in a shared scene.

Material objects (i.e. the screen) have a formal efficacy (R. Thom, 1980). This efficacy is linked to the immobile remains deposited in the object through the creator's thought and desire. In this case, the desire of the creator of the object is to multiply the forms of figuration that give the other an actualization that borders on the presence. This desire constitutes an umbilicus of figurations within the objects. The passive behaviour induced by the screen is immediately associated to the reversal of the subjective scenality towards the intra-psychic part linked to the disinvestment of motor skills when falling asleep. Unbeknownst to them, the inventors of the virtual Network have created a scene that is in anamorphosis with the dream scene, the other scene, according to Freud. From this Freudian point of view, I would like to mention C. Lévi-Strauss's thought by proposing the following idea: humans have always

pursued the same dream, that is to overcome their primal inadequacy. In doing so, they have constantly created surprising objects. Humans have constantly oscillated between two surprises: on the one hand, it is a surprise linked to manifestations stranger to the subconscious and at the very heart of the objects they created, and on the other hand, it is a surprise linked to the transformations of their *habitus* and their surroundings at large, triggered by these brand new objects.

If we take into account what we discussed, the importance given to the environment by C. Lévi-Strauss, from a subject's point of view, gives way to a psychic scenality where the subject is constantly forced to find the right balance between what belongs to him and what he is forced to find outside despite his investment of drive energies. That's why I'm talking about scenality. The psychic scenality opened by the remains of the creators' desire and thought concerning the object is like a primal scenality prone to constantly including elements that are at once desired, expected, surprising, but even strange and perhaps disturbed by the environment.

The virtual Network, transitionality, attribution, and belonging

The virtual Network has the peculiarity of immediately correlating the dream scenality and many of its modes of representability, and accessing to a large inter-subjective and collective environment. If we refer to the work of R. Kaës (2002), the dream includes two umbilicus: one originating from the depths of the body experience while the other one depending on the inter-subjective links and originating from the unconscious anchored to a shared collective psychic space. This immediate contiguity precipitates (in a chemical sense) into a subjects' psychic scenality in the manner of the figurations appearing on the screen in two dimensions. This major difference between the screen and the mirror is well linguistically explained: we see an image *on* the screen but we see it *in* the mirror.

The virtual dimension in the mirror can be found in the possibility of a reversal towards familiar objects or people. The reflection in the mirror is immediately associated by contiguity to the person or a familiar object. The image on the screen is an icon presented in the form of an avatar. Avatars are endowed with potentiality that sufficiently embodies the different subjects and with their powers (successful network games or some living dead themes clearly explain this link). The desires of the creators of that technology are deeply different than those who invented the mirror.

The third dimension on the screen is made of social conventions. The perception of a virtual third dimension on the screen implies the belonging to a group that shares the symbolic figuration of perspectives according to the laws of optics. On one hand, this clearly shows the link between a vision rooted in the bodily aspects and the two-dimensional formalization of perspective according to the laws of optics (which is an abstraction linked to the properties of the eye, a bodily object shared by all humans) and, on the other hand, a social convention of representation of a virtual dimension in

a two-dimensional plane. In the Middle Ages, amongst certain civilizations, conventions of shared figurations in a two-dimensional space were not necessarily based on this optical theory.

The trace of the other's desires in the object provide a discreet interpretation addressed to the subject in the Network, but effective. Moreover, it represents a constraint able to trigger violent reactions from the Network participants. This may happen when a website is poorly configured and runs in a loop. The trace of the other's desires has such an attractive and even an addictive potential to give the object some properties recalling a form of animism amongst the Network participants.

In the Network, the influence of the other on the object, in anaclisis on the visual capture of the image and on the capture the other's desire, diffracts on the links with other subjects participating the Network. In the Network this dimension is strongly important in so far as the dream scenality is evoked and the dream is a universal intimacy shared by the whole humanity. The unconscious link to the other's desire in this object conceives it as a drive object, but also as a sign of sense of belonging. According to Rouchy (1992), identification and sense of belonging precede the game of secondary identifications. The treatment of the images according to the rules of perspective between members of the belonging network may be considered as the result of a cultural incorporation. Culture arranges perception so that it can be shared. As a shared drive object, this object is structured around the creator's design very often as an exploitation of the realization of a primal fantasy (i.e. the desire to be where we cannot, the primal scene). The technical object, especially among teenagers, may be the symbol of a group identity. For example, during the first years of the personal computers spread there was the setting up of real communities of belonging between those who 'believed' only in Apple, those who recognized only the PC, and those in favor of the free Linux system.

We are going to focus on the issues of belonging compared to:

- the technical object and the distribution of these issues in the dynamics of desire and drive;

- the modes of representation;

- the issues of singular and collective belonging.

We are now discussing group and subject dynamics.

If we pay attention to that, we are in a transitional relationship with these objects as described by D. W. Winnicott (1951). Concerning these technical objects, since there are no instructions, we will proceed by trial and error by searching for the logic of the object as well as its creator conceived it. If this logic is too enigmatic, we might develop those annoying behaviors listed above or run away in a behavior recalling the

basic fight-or-flight hypothesis by W. R. Bion (1961). If the search for logic is successful we will be able, through the creation of new habits, to create the object again as a personal not-me possession. When instructions do exist, these have a value of interpretation and translation of the creator's desires and logic for users. Readers often encounter several linguistic translation mistakes in the instruction manuals for technical objects: this can be perceived as a lack of consideration given to them and as evidence that translators do not belong to the creator's field.

The similarity between the subject's position in front of the screen and the dream scenality, the contiguity created by the objects between the two umbilicals of the dream, on the one hand, and the intensity of the illusion of the others' quasi-presence on the other hand: all of these aspects oblige the subject to a permanent psychic demarcation effort, between what he retains and what he rejects what is destined for him by the others in the Network, between inside and outside. The subject is facing a condition that implies the two dimensions of the function of the judgement released by Freud (Freud S., 1925): "It must pronounce that a property is or is not to a thing and it must concede or contest the existence of a representation in reality. […] The primal pleasure-ego wants to introject all the good and to throw out all the bad. The bad, the foreigner to the ego, what is outside is for him, first of all, identical."

The using of *social networks* thus causes primal issues, primal and primary processes, as well as we notice them during the early days of our psychoanalytic groups (Duez B., 2002, 2003). This is how we come across topical transference on social networks.

Topical transference as a paradigmatic process in the dream and in groups

In 1985 (Duez B., 1988, 2000, 2006) I found that the psychodrama group I organized in a semi-freedom scenario, in addition to its therapeutic effects on the participants, had psychic function in treating repressed elements in daily life for both participants and the team. At the same time, I was able to observe that in the group intra-psychic therapy psychic functions and dynamics among participants diffracted and then instantiated according to the modes of operation of the second psychic topic. This could be observed during the exchanges, in both psychological functioning of subgroups, and in the participants' spatial positioning and gatherings. Their position was very similar to the drawing of the topological distribution of the instances in the second topic (Freud S., 1933). Psychic functioning of subgroups strongly evoked the related psychic functioning of topical instances as well as the links between instances. The large number of participants eased these observations (Duez B., 1988, 1996; Tr. it. 1998).

We are in presence of a primal form of transference that I have subsequently named topical transference. Topic transference process works according to the diffraction-reversal dyad. Its manifestation is enhanced by the representability requirements of the group psychoanalytical practice. On the other hand, the practice of the talking

cure and the importance given to the speech link, enhances dynamical transference through displacement-condensation.

The two patterns of transference take place in the dream and in groups, often in a form/ground relationship, that is a pattern of transference often used as an immobile background supporting the actualization of the other.

Topical transference in groups occurs through:

- The diffraction of the participants' drive addresses towards the others and towards the group as a psychic object.

- The reversal that the participants or the group unconsciously address to each participant, in the space and in the group psychic apparatus. The reversal is also declined according to different modalities (reversal on the self-person – s – , active-passive reversal, reversal in the opposite).

Topical transference in groups occurs when:

- Topical transference contributes greatly to the representability of the scenality of dreams.

- It widely participates to group dynamics of the dream. Please, do not forget that S. Freud, in a way, is confronted for the first time with the effects of psychic groupality during a dream, the other scene. We rather recall *Irma's injection* but also the dream of the wolves' man, that is a pack of wolves the man abandoned (1918).

- The interaction between the displacement, condensation, diffraction, reversals primal processes constitutes the transformational matrix of the dream.

This explains the D. Anzieu's observation (1975) that "one enters a group as well as a dream".

Concerning the virtual Network, the spreading power of its devices enhances diffraction, while the compression of distances under-determines time and consequently the instant-repetition dyad. That specific time concerns even drives, particularly when the traditional forms of metabolism of meta-frameworks and frameworks are undermined and this shocks both collective and individual habits. Reversals are not triggered by co-present or familiar people, but by some participants on the 'quite known' Network. The institutional and binding dimension of the effects of reversal are considerably weakened by the lack of actual consistency of virtual participants. The deep changes that technical objects can bring to the usual personal links between subjects and groups sometimes call into question the links between intimacy, private sphere, group, collective and society as I proposed above. From this point of view, these objects can make an actual cultural mutation that might question

the processes of linking/delinking between these spaces and eventually frameworks, meta-frames and cultural meta-guarantors. This is the matter addressed about the Oedipus complex.

Family complexes and primal fantasies: the Network matrix?

According to the problems listed above, it seems necessary for me to approach the Oedipus complex in relation to family complexes, mentioned by J. Lacan (Lacan. J., 1938). In his essay, he listed three main complexes organizing the links between the child and his family environment: the weaning complex, the intrusion complex, and the Oedipus complex.

The weaning complex organizes the subject relationship with the imago of the womb. When the womb imago is distributed over the cultural incorporates, this eventually creates the subject's relationship to the maternal imago within the psychic scenality.

The intrusion complex, based on the invasion of the exclusive relationship with the maternal object by a intruder (e.g. youngest brother or sister), leads the subject to discover the other as similar, beyond the intruder, in so far as he shares the same primordial object.

First, D. W. Winnicott (1956) mentions that, from the child's point of view, the child creates the mother: the consequence is that the mother and the potential space related to her are a child's exclusive scenality. Any interference within that scenality is experienced as intrusive. Through the words of the primordial object (usually the mother), the child understands that it cannot annihilate the intruder without risking to lose the love of the primordial object. In doing so, the mother gives the child the forbidding of murder. This gift of forbidding becomes legitimate for the child in so far as the mother gave him the gift of her renunciation of conceiving the child as her object (drive, transitional…) in a bond of exclusivity. The child loses the exclusivity of his link with the primordial object, yet he is open to a belonging to a group of peers. The sharing of this primordial object is the basis of this bond of belonging. In a way, this allows the child to self-acquire the patterns of the sense of belonging and creates the silent preconditions for the secondary identifications distribution.

As for me, I believe that the castration complex is missing, a complex set apart very often and not sufficiently separated from the Oedipus complex. If we replace the Oedipus complex with the castration complex within the Lacanian trilogy, we see the emergence of a pattern that is structured on attribution and belonging. These three complexes constitute the front side of the "having" matter, yet they must not hide the back side of the matter, that are the patterns of belonging: dependence, exclusivity of the link with the object, belonging to a group based on a common index (phallic-castrated). The attribution-belonging matter is appeased by the castration complex process which, on a social level, constitutes a bodily attribute as an index of

belonging to a gender, notably if we approach it to a group of similar people according to the phallic or castrated index. The castration complex allows the subject to take possession of the cultural incorporations that come from the sense of belonging. At first, belonging is structured according to an inherited mode of identity based on the sharing of a common object-attribute. Secondly, this bodily attribute becomes a sign, even a signifier of belonging, but most of all of difference. The attribute becomes a sign of differentiation between two different groups: that phallic and the castrated group.

- The castration complex constitutes a major joint between family complexes, primal fantasies, and the Oedipus complex.

- The castration complex is a matter of attribution, or even conquest, and gender membership.

- The castration fantasy is a self-representation of the bodily index management in the social field that is made by the subject through its parents or its protective figures.

- The subject is self-representing as well as the cultural incorporations structure the relationship with the subject's body in his social surroundings. This is the early imaginary influence of social field on the subject's body.

This is how the issues related to castration represent a link between family complexes, patterns of attribution and belonging to primal fantasies that put on the stage the relationship between existence and the other's Other.

To make this clear, I would like to stress that the key figure primal fantasy scenes are structured around, is this of the other's Other. P. Aulagnier (1975) thinks that the self-generation fantasy frames the primal one. As for me, I think that the link between the primal (as the P. Aulagnier's thought) and the primal fantasies is generated by the violence of the necessary and sufficient (primal) interpretation. At the same time, this interpretation alienates the subject from the adult's speech - mainly the mother's - within his own body and starts to create the cultural incorporations (Rouchy J.C., 1992). In my opinion, the parental primal interpretation opens the scenality to the most archaic of primal fantasies, the primal fantasy of self-generation in presence of the other. The self-generation fantasy in presence of the other works quite decently. It turns into a self-generation fantasy to the detriment of the other when it does not meet at least one other sufficiently present. The primal fantasies then fall into the obscenality and a tragic destiny. The fantasy of self-generation in presence of the other will introduce the scenality where the scenes of primal fantasies are actualized: from the subject's point of view, the three primal fantasies can be listed as follows:

- Seduction: the Other introduces sexuality into the subject scenality.

- Castration: the Other introduces the sex differences into the subject scenality

- Primal scene: I am a witness of the scene where the others have created me in a shared pleasure (enjoyment).

I insist on making the primal scene because aspects clear because it constitutes the complete fantasy scene that precipitates the subject into a family novel and into a singular subjective scenario. Primal fantasies are the scenes where the subjective scenario of the subject's personal fantasies and, of course, the Oedipal drama take place.

The Oedipus complex then seems to be a **meta-complex**. It relates the three complexes to the issue of attribution by enabling the introduction of rivals that one can eventually overcome through the identification with the object of desire. So the subject overcomes then the problem of the intruder that needs to be annihilated. If we compare the Oedipus complex status to the other three complexes on the basis of a structural link created by the castration complex between family complexes and primal fantasies, the Oedipus complex organizes the primal gifts of forbidding and primal renunciations through the gift of forbidding incest. The gift of forbidding incest introduces a temporality that is not composed by a series of instants, simultaneity and contiguity among figurations of the psychic scenality, but by a sign in the subjective, collective and societal history.

The gift of forbidding incest stresses a first initial gift, that is the father or the other parent gives the lover to his child, the object of his desire, his mother. The gift of forbidding incest, legitimized by the primal gift, transforms the unconscious transaction of renunciation of murder into the renunciation of the child's exclusive link to the object. Through this gift, the child is able to give up on the exclusive possession of any psychic object, whatever the object is. Thanks to these gifts of renunciation and forbidding by protective figures (generally the parents), a child can structure the sense of belonging originated from the primal link with the primordial object and processed during the crossing of the intrusion complex through patterns of secondary identifications related to the Other of the Other as rival. The patterns of secondary identifications will discreetly, but efficiently, rely on the issues of attribution structured by the intrusion and castration complexes. In its Other-rival relationship, the subject will oscillate between the rival's attributes the subject wants to possess and some other attributes that he wants to reject. This will trigger the link between the appropriation of sense of belonging and the conquest of attributes inherited by the rival. This set of acquisitions and rejections of cultural incorporations and rival's attributes will create the relationship with the rival through a secondary identification dialectic that gives new consistency to the subject within its subjective scenality.

These gifts of forbidding and renunciation implicitly include the promise to access the generalized exchange as defined by C. Lévi-Strauss. These gifts oscillating between constraint and promise inscribe the child in an environment-shared desire to live, grow and legitimize the promise (related to the Oedipus complex) that in the future he will meet an object of desire that he will be able to share desire and love with.

The Oedipus's myth: from the primal curse to the deprivation of belonging. The fear of being oneself

Like primal fantasies, family complexes work discreetly. They work for the subjective scenality that discreetly walk the subject through his daily life. When the primal fantasy no longer reflects the reality, it is actualized within the reality through terrifying imagos: parents killing each other generating a monster, for example. The myth of Oedipus is a perfect example of such a destiny. Destiny has significant similarities with the teenage runaways and with teenagers raised in foster families or in foster homes who attempt in vain to escape from the curse of their fate.

These subjects are deprived of the poles of drive gravitation (drive aggregates, psychic objects), of the fundamental attributes (cultural incorporations, identity indexes) related to the sense of belonging and structured around the primal imagos that organize their primal subjective scenality. I would like to stress that this can be related to psychopathologic issues, but also to persistent breaking conditions on a social level, that is: prolonged unemployment, burn-out issues concerning one of the parents, brutal disqualifications at work which transform the victims into a domestic tyrant and, more generally, all forms of humiliation experienced by parents and relatives. Adults, children and teenagers sometimes go socially in exile and consider the social field as their own subjective scenality as well as recourse meant to appease or make up for the psychic annihilation he feels. These tragic heroes fall into the field of obscenality, very often into generalized revenge patterns where everyone else is considered as a potential intruder.

Since the beginning, Oedipus was a child deprived of the poles of drive gravitation and fundamental attributes that would have allowed him to take possession of his story and to belong to a community. We should recall Laius' transgression, Jocasta's banishment and revenge, Laius' removal from a simple parent, Laius' revenge and Oedipus' banishment (the removal's relic). Consequent Oedipus' curses were announced by characters as imagos: Pythia, Tiresias ecc. who only reiterated his tragic destiny. When Oedipus came across Laius' chariot, Laius asked him to give way to his superior. Oedipus answered back he didn't recognize any superior, but gods (imagos). When Laius' chariot stepped on Oedipus' toes (actualization of intrusive threat), Oedipus killed the driver in a fit of rage (this is an avatar or, better, an actor of the other's desire of his object/chariot), and he laid into Laius who fell

down and then was torn to pieces by the object out of control, a pure vector the drive motion after the driver disappeared (the destruction of the iconic avatar leads to the other's dissociation, Laius'). Oedipus annihilates the other in the social field, which became his own scenality. The other was unable again to allow him the self-generation in presence of the Other's other. It will be the same as the Sphinx (Jocasta's avatar) and Jocasta, whose suicide corresponds to a self-annihilation of the maternal function reflecting the Oedipus' self-generation impossibility in presence of the Other. Oedipus' blindness with Jocasta's pin constitutes a figuration of the annihilation of his psychic scenality and leads him to an endless exile in the social field.

We find this pattern among young people in distress whose parental figures have been dismissed. They seek out mythical figures in the social field, that get to balance the defections induced into the sense of belonging. If we pay attention to the progress of young people along these patterns, they oscillate between runaways, wanderings, and stop points often distinguished by experiences with a changing intensity. This moment could be triggered by a guru, a pimp, a sectarian group, a criminal gang. Usually, the first encounter reveals links, most often narcissistic and intense, always passionate. Such intense links create a real or fictional 'due' from the subject in distress towards the group or the guru. I insist on the notion of 'due', not 'debt': if it was a debt, it could be paid. A due is unpaiable, because the subject considers it as a persecuting constraint, like a melancholic object persecuting him endlessly. The due substitutes those terrifying imagos. This is even more true since the alienating agent, whether it is a group or an individual, does not want the 'due' to be paid, because dues are essential links to the narcissistic consistency of individuals or groups of predatory.

This power strategy by predatory groups and individuals close the persistent gap related to the primal dislocation of the sense of belonging. Dislocation is very frequent in the early stages of meetings with certain 'predators' in search of wandering subjects. Generally, these meetings end up with the addiction to a predator, a sectarian group, a delinquent clan, or a brutal break-up where the dependent victim, who is involved into an attack-flight relationship with the predator, sometimes commits even a murder. For example, I can mention the terrible sentence of a teenage girl who was seduced and then sadized and prostituted. She caused the death of her tormentor by an act of self-preservation during a struggle. During a session, after the trial and after she was acquitted of assault in self-defense she told me: 'They acquitted me, I should be happy, yet I feel as if my act was stolen from me, because I have never so agreed with me than on that day. I am doomed to be innocent. This shows the persistent curse despite the acquittal. The "sentence to be acquitted" comes to take the place and the persecuting function of the curse and the due. This shows how the curse and "defective" or threatening tutelary images can trigger frightening imagos. They place a story in a tragic destiny, in "due" with death. The deadly power

becomes a third party reference that, eventually, manages the link with anything. That unintentional killing was the result, apart from his refusal to be the object of the torturer's enjoyment, of her unconscious self-generation and self-appropriation at the expense of the intruder. This crime caused her a sense of mortification, annihilation for the intruder. By killing the intruder, she stopped the continuous intrusive threat. It took a long time for the girl to conceive that her act needed to be considered in a necessary conflict. Without the work together with her, it is likely that this state could have turned into a deadly revenge path: any other potentially intruder would have been annihilated in order to maintain a self-appropriation, on the one hand, and to relive the enjoyment instant that accompanies the annihilation of the intruder, on the other hand.

Virtualization and identifications in exile

Very recent statistics from the Observatory on Violence and Crime in France showed that more than 30% of adolescents using frequently social networks had been victims of harassment. Given that feelings of shame are such that most victims don't report any complaint (this is the case of rape victims too), those statistics were certainly underestimated. I heard some victims of actual lynchings on the Network. The recurring themes are:

- Photos or videos sharing related to sexual intimacy. They reduce the other to a sexual object available under the gaze of all network members,

- Disqualifying attacks on the image of the subject's own body. This happens through iconic avatars sometimes, and calls into question the possibility of a subject's sufficient self-belonging to himself, that is his identity in relation to others.

- Disqualifying attacks, generally based on racism, homophobia and anti-semitism, that undermine the subject/avatar's belonging to a community that attempts to disqualify the others. The subject is disqualified on the basis of his social or community belonging and his subject self-appropriation. These are the primary principles of the sense of belonging and of secondary identifications.

Behind these attacks there are the founding forbiddings of murder and incest.

The witnesses of the victims of lynchings on the Network show that we are indeed in presence of a virtual murder that, even if it is virtual, doesn't have less symbolic efficacy, as stressed by the rate of the victims' suicide attempts – this was one of the main reasons for consultation. The victim then tries to destroy the internal persecution even at the price of his own sacrifice. In the suicidal act, the scope of the revenge against the persecutors who are deprived of the object of persecution should

not be underestimated. The diffraction effects of revenge amongst the persecutors who pass the buck when the victim has already committed suicide, show how much these behaviors owe to the process of generalized exchange of damage (Duez B., 1988) and, as a consequence, of generalized revenge where everyone is potentially the murderer of the other.

These lynchings are related to the weakening through the virtual dimension of the dream's body umbilicus. The subject's bodily gravitation fades into virtuality and thus what is attacked, 'is only an avatar, or better an illusion'. The problem is that this avatar, from the victim's point of view, is a signifier of himself on the Network. The attributes of the icon/avatar, sometimes unbeknownst of the subject, contain the subject's belonging indexes to his groups of belonging on the Network and even his belonging (his identity gravity in his relationship with the others). The victims then find themselves in a situation where they feel they have no resources, coping with the mass effects generated by the Network. They perceive they are trapped in a destiny they cannot escape from.

The passions, better, the addictions aroused by the Network seem to me to be linked to the power of seduction and threats originating from the virtualization of the body apparatus of our perceptions and figurations through technical instruments (i.e. comics and films like *Ghost in the shell* and *Iron man*). The characteristic of virtuality is that, by multiplying the possibilities of connection and intervention, put the subject into a dream scenario (more or less a collective one) where the bodily umbilicus would be under-determined in relation to the effects of the unconscious precipitated into the group, collective and psychic apparatus. The Network, from its very origins, includes an unconscious and shared desire to be present where we cannot be because of our bodily limits, that are: the space-time of our creation and the post-mortem space-time. This desire is in all the means our civilizations have then developed. For example, all means of transport, from the ancient chariots to cars and jets, materially exploit the vital principle of transference as an original means of overcoming our native vital insufficiency. In the same way, virtual means of transport (transferences) cause, just like the material ones, accidental victims. Adolescents are the first victims. This reminds us of the gap between virtuality, imaginary potentiality of fantasies and our inadequacy related to the violence of these desires. The inventors' desire of the object, actualized in the new technological potentialities offered by the technical object, leads to the idea of overcoming impossible barriers. The disturbance induced by the virtual scenario between potential, possible and impossible, the represented and the present, will lead to the predominance of the virtual inside the potential, undermining the drive renunciations (Kaës R., 1993), that implicitly organize frameworks and meta-frameworks. The forbidding becomes as impossible as any other that can be potentially subverted, especially when it is considered negatively and not as a gift, a promise for the future.

The Network: a self-representation of contemporary societal issues

The Network opens to wide new possibilities for communication, yet it is a cause of great suffering, mainly in social networks and on the Internet. I tried to show how representability on the Network, that is linked to the technical objects supporting these links on the Network, has an important impact on exchanges in the virtual field. If I mentioned C. Lévi-Strauss, I would say that the new objects created by man are a manipulation of desire. The traces of the other in the object, through the formal efficiency of the object, constitute a violent anonymous interpretation that orders subjects in the Network according to limiting patterns of figuration. The exploitation of these desires improves their attractiveness and ability to seduce, but also the threats faced with the Elsewhere with no witness. Fake news populating social networks are a perfect example of this. Without a witness guaranteeing a certain authenticity, the retroactive action of verification, in an etymological sense of 'making it true', requires an unceasingly renewed quest that recalls the Oedipus' tragic quest. If the thought of the other in the object stays enigmatic, if the others in the Network appear only as dematerialized iconic avatars, then the limits conferred by the prohibitions may be disrupted.

The founding forbiddings are so undermined that the avatars guaranteeing the anonymity of the link with the other seem, from the point of view of each subject participating, in a potential position of imagos. The composition of these iconic avatars is the same as the composition of the primal imagos: composite figures resulted from the primal experiences in connection with tutelary figures (especially parental ones) on one hand, and identities of societal membership and cultural incorporation on the other hand. Oedipus tries to search for a part of the imago remaining current in the social field after the devastation of the tutelary figures through consequent transgressions and curse. Just like Oedipus, some Network participants attempt to test the iconic avatars that populate the Network by ignoring, repressing, denying that the attributes of these iconic avatars are in co-anaclisis with the primal belongings of those who created them.

New objects require appropriation and learning, but the new possibilities they offer leave the subject helpless. I think they leave us helpless because at the basis of these instruments, these Network constructions, there are our most deeply repressed unconscious desires, threats and anxieties. They require that we carry out a psychic work, individually and collectively, related to a new as well as primal representability that summons unbeknownst to anyone. This work about "primal" related to our issues of attribution modifies our relationships of intimacy, autonomy and belonging with the thoughts of those who invented these new objects. This work of "primal" induced by instrumentation offers the most archaic of our desires the opportunity to subvert our censorship and our forbiddings by leaving us alone in presence of a transfigured drive motion. In the case of the Network (and this is a major problem) we are alone faced with our drives in presence of the Network 'friends'. As for the anonymous

interpretation left by the founders to the objects, it is necessary that the subjects, especially adolescents, find at least one interpreter, an authorized tutelary figure who restores the conditions of their creation to these objects, beyond their apparent omnipotence, beyond the desires and fantasies they exploit. They can make the dimension of the gift made by the creator to the collective and societal environment available: for example when, in exchange for the users' acceptance of the interpretation immobilized into the object, the creator makes the interpretation sufficiently available, by transforming it into an instruction contract, as I mentioned above. The interpretation by tutelary figures places subjects as potential actors of the change. They are able to deal with the social environment, collective elaboration of necessary rights and duties so that these new figurations and generalizations of intersubjective, collective and societal exchanges can be developed according to renewed forms of drive renunciations that underlie the narcissistic contracts and founding forbiddings. This is even more urgent as these desires and fantasies, when they do, they spread throughout the society necessarily in the most universal and, consequently, the most primitive unconscious psychic organizers of the link with the Other's Other. These meeting points mainly consist of certain internal groups (Kaës R., 1976, 1993), notably primal fantasies, family complexes, imagos. Their discreet presence at the very heart of the objects (if it's not linked to a new enunciation of fundamental forbiddings, narcissistic contracts and founding drive renunciations), can trigger extremely destructive patterns. At present, we can notice that a certain number of Network providers are getting aware, fifteen years later, of the violence caused by these instruments and are gradually beginning to introduce rules of conduct. The inventor becomes aware of scope of he did with his project unbeknownst to him.

Back to clinic

I will finish my paper by an example that does not belong to the Network clinic cases, yet it seems to me to lead the way to the future. During a family consultation of a reconstituted family, a teenager systematically attacks his mother's companion – his quasi-father – because he considers illegitimate to forbid him to do anything (behind this observation there's the fact that the companion was not the author of the primal gift of the lover as a mother to the child) . After we had worked on this situation together, the quasi-father gave this speech: "You better say most the things you're talking about to your mother and father". The teenager answered: "My father? I never see him, and I don't want to see him, neither does he". The companion answered back: "I'm not sure your father doesn't want to see you anymore, but I'll tell you what: I love your mother and you know I do. It hurts me when I see you are suffering, I try to do what I can and what I think is right for you. I'll tell you what I think is right. I can't always decide for you or for them, but I'll prevent you from doing things that I think might put you in serious danger. Do you know why?". "No, I don't". "Because it is my job as an adult to protect children". At these words the

teenager stops, he is deeply shocked. He seems to be about to cry and then answers, "It's true, you are almost a father to me, but it's hard to admit it". The father's avatar becomes legitimate.

Reconstituted families frequently deal with such situations. During that conversation, we can clearly notice very how the stepfather creates his legitimacy without any deception. In the name of an adult social legitimacy, he establishes a gift of forbidding on the basis of a background of renunciation by playing a role that's not his: that of the father. Renunciation, on one hand, and his remarks about his job as an adult to protect children in a civil society, on the other hand, legitimize him as a tutelary figure for the adolescent.

Adolescents struggling with the necessary recomposition of family ties – taking account of the consequences of daily lifestyles on the relationships of desire and union amongst subjects – find a form of testing, a form of play (with the fire!) through the unstable links created on the Network through the avatar-icons. They unconsciously produce a self-representation of a work of recomposition between more unstable parental figures they must adapt to and they must re-create. This work, starting from multiple imaginary remains linked to the successive attachments and rejections they have had to go through, largely occurs during the play with the avatars in the Network. That's because most of the time they could not come across an interpretation of the quality of that stated by the quasi-father in the example above.

The Network confronts us with as new recomposition as the invention of the printing machine. This invention led to times of terrible disruption linked to a much wider spread of new and unique ideas. Many readers, shocked by the violence that a new idea usually brings into social and personal habits and above all the ruling class, addressed that violence at the expense of any intruder or stranger. In our contemporary world, the recomposition of the modes of exchange and representation of the Network implies the renunciation of disruption caused by the strangeness and power of imaginary virtuality. We'll be able to inscribe ourselves in a new generalized exchange of figurations and new thoughts at the price of this new enunciation and this new deployment of drive renunciations which are necessary to the fundamental forbiddings. On this background of renewed drive renunciations, the subversive part of these new forms of figurations opens us to a renewed creativity that produces new links, new forms of intersubjective and collective relations, but also new objects that are both marvelous and strange.

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Notes
1. "Perhaps one day we shall discover that the same logic is at work in mythical and scientific thought, and that man has always thought in the same way. Progress - if indeed the word still applies - would not have had consciousness as its domain, but the world, where a humanity endowed with unchanging faculties would, in the course of its long history, hav e been continuously grappling with new objects". C. Lévi-Strauss, (1958). *Anthropologie structurale*. Paris: Plon. 254. Published in English as *Structural Anthropology* (1963). New York: Basic Books. Trans.
2. Translation provided by the author of this article.
3. For more details: Duez, B. (2000). Tr. It. 2002 Borla; Duez, B. (2002).