

The Fall of the Object to Earth

Object a at the Zenith, *Immonde* and Discontent¹

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Psychoanalysis and science once walked the same path because science supposes there is knowledge in the real (of nature and the universe).² Science supposes that there exists a signifier in the world that has no connection with a subject. This idea is what characterises modern science and especially mathematical physics and sets it apart from the science of ancient times, such as Thales from Miletus, who gave birth to philosophy—which was originally not separated from science—at the start of the sixth century.³ Freudian analysis responds to this with the idea that there are signifiers that exist independently of consciousness, the unconscious subject being an effect of the functioning of these signifiers.

One can see a certain compatibility that exists here between science and psychoanalysis. This prompted Lacan to say that psychoanalysis was not possible before Descartes.⁴ For Descartes, mathematics is essential for science and truth must consent to it. Newton ran with this idea and began to apply it to the cosmos, arriving at the conclusion that there is only an endless universe.⁵ Cosmos suggests a

limited space of potential harmony in which knowledge can become complete. Universe suggests none of that is possible and that now we must contend with a human who is subject to a limitless universe in which knowledge cannot be complete anymore and all wisdom fails.⁶ That is a problem for science. It attempted to resolve it by stating that there is an articulated network of signifiers that functions in that real, independently of the knowledge we have of it.⁷ We should mention that there is, of course, a crucial difference with psychoanalysis in that whereas Descartes excluded the subject with his *Cogito*, thereby opening the way for Newton and science to concentrate on the object, Freud, by contrast, took the subject as his primary focus.

Anyway, science presents itself as a discourse without a subject and behaves as if the real of nature knows, indeed as if this real contains knowledge that had hitherto been unconscious.⁸ This idea became a crucial compass for Freud, and Lacan agreed with him in the classical period of his work. When he wrote that the unconscious is structured like a language, he

1 Talk delivered to the Lacan Circle of Australia on 05/03/2023.

2 J.-A. Miller, 'Elements of Epistemology', in *Lacan and Science*, eds. J. Glynos and Y. Stavrakakis (London: Karnac, 2002), 156-7.

3 B. Russell, *History of Western Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1946), 25.

4 J. Lacan, 'Science and Truth', *Ecrits*, trans. B. Fink (New York: Norton, 2006), 727 & 729.

5 J.-A. Miller, 'The Pass of Psychoanalysis toward Science: The Desire for Knowledge', *The Lacanian Review*, no. 7 (2019), 75.

6 'The Pass of Psychoanalysis', 75.

7 J.-A. Miller, 'Elements', 155.

8 A. Zenoni, 'A Post-Scientific Real', *Psychoanalytical Notebooks*, no. 27 (2013), 82.

implied that there are laws in the real of the unconscious. Thus, one might say that science created the conditions that psychoanalysis appropriated for a reading of the unconscious. Lacan would come to take issue with this position, however. Eventually he would say that there is no knowledge in the real. Much later, he would add that the effects of science will affect this real, as we will see later.

Jacques-Alain Miller recognises a second period in Lacan's thinking in relation to science. It concerns a lecture, *Italian Note*, which was part of a series of seminars Lacan gave in Italy and is brought together in the collection, *Lacan en Italie*.⁹ Here, Lacan refers to those effects of science that produce discontent and anguish. Daniel Roy mentions two of these effects in the argument for the 2023 NLS Congress: science produces *immonde*/filth or waste, and it transforms the object *a* into an object of jouissance or consumption.¹⁰ Science was a crucial point of reference for Lacan for a long time. Even as late as *Position of the Unconscious* he says that, 'For science, the cogito marks ... the break with every assurance conditioned by intuition'.¹¹ Indeed, Lacan was not in favour of intuition. However, we must also say that he always insisted on the difference between the principles of universality of science on the one hand, and the principles of the one-by-one approach and of the singularity of the body of the subject in psychoanalysis, on the other.

Later the compass of science would be replaced by art.¹² In the first lesson of *Seminar XXIV*, Lacan says that science relies on the idea of the model—he refers to Lord Kelvin here, a mathematical physicist who calculated the first laws of thermodynamics—to gain access to the real. We thus resort to the imaginary to form an idea of it. In other words, there is a delusional aspect to science.¹³ Then, in the fourth lesson he

says: 'I try to say that art is beyond the symbolic. Art is a kind of know-how, the symbolic is at the heart of creating. I believe there is more truth in the saying that is art than in any amount of blah-blah.'¹⁴

Art and Psychoanalysis

Art shows us that we don't need to be nostalgic. It exposes a world of crises, upheavals, events, instances.¹⁵ Something here operates beyond representation and thus beyond time. This is reflected in the development of Lacan's work.¹⁶ He started off with an emphasis on temporality following the logic of the instance of seeing, the time for understanding and the moment to conclude, whilst in the latter part of his work he concentrates on space, via topology and the manipulation of surfaces.¹⁷ This emphasis on space is not without a relationship to time, however; in the ultra-short session—which is nothing more than an encounter—time becomes compressed into a series of instances.¹⁸ As such, analysis developed into an event, an event of the body, thereby aiming at the singularity of the body of the analysand.

Art is also resolutely singular whilst nevertheless being of universal value. Art contains something that belongs to the singularity of the artist whilst, of course, being a common object that can function on the market of exchange value. Picasso is known to have once said that he only ever painted one painting.¹⁹ If this were the case, he is saying that every painting that he painted had left him with a residue, something unfinished which he then tried to finish with the next painting and the next one, and so on.²⁰ In other words, Picasso was saying that painting is his *sinthome*; each painting tries to reach the singular core of the real of his life and body.²¹ This is what Lacan refers to as the One of the body. Painting, one might say, was Picasso's attempt to establish a rela-

9 J.-A. Miller, 'The Pass of Psychoanalysis', 76.

10 D. Roy, 'Discontent and Anxiety in the Clinic and in Civilization', Argument for the NLS Congress, 2023.

11 J. Lacan, 'Position of the Unconscious', *Ecrits*, trans. B. Fink (New York: Norton, 2006), 705.

12 J.-A. Miller, 'The Real is Without Law', *Lacanian Ink*, no. 47 (2016), 67.

13 J. Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XXIV, 1976-1977, L'Insu que sait de l'une bevue, s'aile a mourre*, ed. J.-A. Miller, trans. D. Collins, unpublished, lesson of 16/11/1076.

14 L'Insu, lesson of 18/01/1977.

15 R. Loose, 'Art and Psychoanalysis Beyond (Lack-of) Being', *The Lacanian Review*, no. 9 (2020), 225.

16 'Art and Psychoanalysis', 225.

17 J. Demuyne, 'De Esthetiek van het Singuliere, een Commentaar', *Via Lacan*, no. 3 (2018), 172.

18 'De Esthetiek', 172.

19 F.-H. Freda, 'The Artist', congressamp2014.com.

20 R. Loose, 'Art and Psychoanalysis', 226.

21 'Art and Psychoanalysis', 226.

tion between the singular real of his body and the social bond.²² In the process of painting the same painting, by failing to fully realise the picture, Picasso became an artist. I would say that the most interesting modern art invites the viewer to experience the inherent failure of language in the subject and his or her body and that the singularity of this failure can be transmitted such that it has a value beyond its own *ex-sistence* in that it can touch, disturb, and affect other people.²³

Modern art concerns the touching of something real in the human being and that is what it shares with psychoanalysis. Both bring singularities to the fore beyond the field of being (being here in the ontological sense). Both share a sense of failure in that they form an attempt to establish a relationship between the singular real of the body, the One of the body, and the social bond which is an attempt that fails. This is the reason for the artist that he or she remains creative, whilst analysis finds a limit here—an end—with the *sinthome* or the pass. For the artist this creativity cannot be explained and for the analysis the signifier encounters the letter on the rim with the real beyond meaning. This separates art and psychoanalysis from science, which is not based on failure and limit. What art and psychoanalysis have in common is that they reject the attempt to exclude the singular from a standardising and homogenizing modern life.

The Heavenly Object Falls back to Earth

Daniel Roy has written that there are moments and places of anxiety when the speaking being is brought back to his body and fails to inscribe himself in a world that we imagine as a world that would be the same for all animals.²⁴ Suddenly the ability to show oneself with an organised body is under threat for the speaking being in this world, because this world itself has become an *immonde*, a world of filth.²⁵

This point is not simple. Just before this passage Roy mentioned that anxiety emerges in the moments

and places where our body is affected because this body, being organised, must emerge in the real and still maintain its form.²⁶ To maintain the form of one's body is not always evident; for example, it can happen that someone takes certain drugs and suddenly the relation to the body loses its form and suddenly the world becomes weird. (Is it not the case that for a coherent world one needs a coherent body?) Roy also refers to kids who suddenly cannot go to school anymore because school is a different world for them, and these then are moments and places in which the body of the speaking being manifests itself as heterogenous to its environment and to the social group.²⁷ We are not animals who are naturally adapted to the environment. Language affects and parasites our bodies. This body is heterogenous and when something confronts the subject that brings this to the fore (think about driving a car and suddenly having to join a motorway), panic may ensue.

The body can also become heterogenous to its status as consumer and become so overwhelmed by waste that it has no place anymore and disappears into that waste. The world becomes weird—*immonde*—here. Lacan's neologism *immonde* refers to a kind of not-world, a world that is quite different from a utopia.²⁸ It also refers to the rejected object *a*, to filth and to waste. This object *a* is that in which our jouissance is concentrated. In an analysis, this object can fall away from the jouissance of the drive and as such make room for desire. However, there is also a threat that we become overwhelmed by false objects, consumer objects, gadgets available on the free market. I will return to this.

From Heaven to Waste

Back to *immonde*, filth and waste. For this next section I am indebted to a text by Geert Hoorneart called *Act for Climate*.²⁹ Aspects of this text in English appeared recently in a book called *Returning to Lacan's Seminar XVII*.³⁰ I am going to mention a few points from this article, as well as some made by

22 'Art and Psychoanalysis', 226.

23 'Art and Psychoanalysis', 226.

24 D. Roy, 'Discontent and Anxiety'.

25 'Discontent and Anxiety'.

26 'Discontent and Anxiety'.

27 'Discontent and Anxiety'.

28 J. Lacan, 'The Third', trans. P. Dravers, *The Lacanian Review*, no. 7 (2019), 104.

29 G. Hoorneart, 'Act for Climate: Lacan en het Flesje Pellegrino', *Via Lacan*, no. 5 (2020), 131-41.

30 R. Litten and C. Wright (eds.), *Returning to Lacan's Seminar XVII* (New York: Lacanian Press, 2022).

Lacan (published in *Lacan en Italie*).³¹ In one of his Italian talks, Lacan says that we need psychoanalysts more than ever, which is a comment that is worth exploring.³² Hoorneart refers to a theme that runs throughout Lacan's work, namely, heaven.³³ Newton removed God from heaven and replaced him with the numbers and letters of science (mathematical physics) supposing that there is knowledge in the real. He did this by studying the stars, the sun, and the moon. Heaven became the first place for the acquisition of knowledge.³⁴ This, according to Lacan, would have its effects on Earth. Lacan says that we need analysts because we have been invaded by a proliferation of the real as impossible as the real of science multiplies itself with the fabrication of apparatuses that begin to dominate us, and which eventually become impossible to bear.³⁵ These will come to crush and suffocate us; for Lacan, humankind is corroded by the real.³⁶ There are two implicit points here:

1. Anxiety is increased by the products of science and industry
2. Something comes from heaven and has fallen to Earth.

What is it, exactly, that falls from heaven? In *Civilization and its Discontents*, Freud writes that science has to some extent managed to master nature, but it has not made people happier; science affects nature but not the subject.³⁷ There is a disjunction between science and the human psyche. I will also return to this, but first we go back to the origins of modern science.

Lacan learned from Alexandre Koyré that modern science originated from heaven.³⁸ It began with calculating the stars in the sky that always return to the same place. So, the laws of science are based on laws that apply to heaven. Lacan wondered: is it not bizarre that the human being was primarily interested in heaven? He could have shown an interest in Earth

instead.³⁹ By heaven he meant the place where everything returns to its place, and from which the human was able to acquire knowledge. The idea behind this idea of acquiring knowledge from heaven was that the heavenly objects demonstrated a trajectory that was undisturbed, and this allowed for the development of formulas and predictable knowledge that could be written down. The question is: does this apply to humans who stalk the earth? Indeed, stars in the sky never lie and they do not commit errors, but humans do, all the time.

Knowledge is based on an unlimited universe, and when applied to Earth and humans, it encounters limits. For example, as Lacan says, on Earth the sexual relation cannot be logically written, which is why love only ends up in waffle, misunderstanding and nonsense.⁴⁰ There is a limit there for human experience; Earth itself is not unlimited like the universe is, and yet we extract materials from it as if they are unlimited in supply. We also add objects to it. The laws of the universe perform not so well on Earth, and it is this fact that causes anguish and discontent. Can we rely on science? The problem with science is that it is based on an undisturbed repetition in the real which, again, allows it to develop the kind of formulas that require constancy. These laws are impotent with regard to that other real, namely, the real of human experience that causes anxiety, an anxiety which the realistic real of the *immonde*, the world of accumulating objects and gadgets, exacerbates.⁴¹

With this realistic real we have entered the Anthropocene in which Earth has irrevocably changed by the effects of science. In one of his Italian talks, Lacan says that even our scientists have become anxious.⁴² Why does Lacan suggest that analysis is what we need most? My sense is that analysis does not want to adapt the subject to the real in the hope of creating some kind of harmony. This hope fails,

31 J. Lacan, *Lacan en Italie/Lacan en Italia, 1953-1978* (Milan: La Salamandre, 1978).

32 J. Lacan, 'Alla Scuola Freudiana, 1974', in *Lacan en Italie 1953-1978* (Milan: La Salamandre 1978), 100.

33 G. Hoorneart, 'Act for Climate', 131.

34 'Act for Climate', 131

35 J. Lacan 'Alla Scuola Freudiana, 1974', 100

36 'Alla Scuola Freudiana, 1974', 101.

37 S. Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents, Standard Edition*, 21(1930): 87-88.

38 See Lacan's comments on this in 'In Memory of Ernest Jones: On his Theory of Symbolism', *Écrits*, trans. B. Fink (New York: Norton, 2006), espec. fn. 20, p. 596.

39 J. Lacan, 'Alla Scuola Freudiana, 1974', 100.

40 J. Lacan, 'Alla Scuola Freudiana, 1974', 106.

41 D. Roy, 'Discontent and Anxiety'.

42 J. Lacan, 'The Third', 93.

which leads to an endless repetition. This repetition is nothing other than an endless search for truth which never arrives because truth is fictive, and the meaning-producing aspect of the signifier is the only thing that can catch it. The real is outside sense and discourse. There is commensurability between the scientific laws based on the endless universe and language conceived as an endless meaning-producing apparatus, as opposed to language understood as something that contains a hole and thus a limit. The orientation of psychoanalysis concerns a real that forms a limit and that is the singular real of the analysand at the end of analysis when the letter, articulated as littoral between language and real, can border this real. This reduces the pressure for an endless search for meaning.

Objects as Ready-Mades for our Desire for Jouissance

The object *a* is a castrated or extracted object which concentrates, as we said, jouissance—albeit in a limited way. This limitation of jouissance is the cause of desire. Let us now return to Roy's argument from the 2023 NLS congress. Then, he wrote that a new destiny has been added to the fate of the drives through the introduction into the world of fake, 'more-to-be-enjoyed', objects—that is to say, gadgets. We don't know whether these are good or bad but, as Roy says, we can be sure they will become part of our discontent in civilization.⁴³ These objects—computers, video games, smart phones, etc.—become connected to our bodies, forging a new connection between body and language. We must not forget that all these objects are the result of a scientific knowledge grounded in language, of a knowledge in the real, that has clear, even material, effects that accumulate, as we said before, in the world. However, there is also another aspect to our discontent in civilization.

In *The Third*, Lacan wonders whether these gadgets will come to dominate and adds that we will not reach a point in which gadgets are not symptoms.⁴⁴ This is a particularly important remark. My reading is as follows. Lacan implies that gadgets and symptoms overlap but in doing so he also implies a difference. We love gadgets because they provide

satisfaction and they have the capacity to charm us. Their increasing supply on the free market leads to an increase in demand. Do symptoms provide satisfaction? Would symptoms do well on the free market as objects of satisfaction and pleasure? No. They are by no means charming. Symptoms contain jouissance but not pleasure nor satisfaction at the level of conscious experience. In fact, the symptom can be enormously burdensome, and it is for that reason that a patient goes into analysis. In other words, it is the response of the subject to anxiety, which itself is caused by the real. The symptom is a parasite, and when Lacan says that gadgets will function as symptoms, part of his meaning is that gadgets, too, will function as parasites for us.

Gadgets have the power to free a jouissance contained within the Other and it is this freed-up jouissance that causes anxiety. It is a paradox in that we make gadgets for our comfort, yet they cause anxiety because they come to overwhelm us. That is why symptoms and gadgets are, to a certain extent, commensurate with each other. How do we end up responding to this? To calm ourselves down, we usually turn to even more gadgets—a fact that suits the free market very well. Of course, psychoanalysis proposes a different path.

Lacan says to his Italian audience: 'The exploitation of desire is the big invention of the discourse of capitalism. I have to say this is a highly successful trick. That we would arrive at the industrialisation of desire, it cannot be improved on, to calm people down.'⁴⁵ In *The Third* he says: 'We have made some progress ... but what did science give us? It gave us plenty to sink our teeth into in the place of that which is missing in our relationship to knowledge (*connaissance*), which, for most people, comes down to gadgets—television and trips to the moon.'⁴⁶ The fact that we will never master 'all' of knowledge, Lacan implies in this passage, can cause anxiety and discontent. Gadgets tend to plug this hole.

In Seminar XVII, Lacan makes reference to the small objects *a* that are found everywhere; objects that were designed by science. He says: 'think of them as *lathouses*,' and he adds: 'It is certain that, if they exist, anxiety, as it is that what we are dealing with

43 D. Roy, 'Discontent and Anxiety'.

44 J. Lacan, 'The Third', 108.

45 J. Lacan, 'Excursus', in *Lacan en Italie 1953-1978* (Milan: La Salamandre 1978).

46 J. Lacan, 'The Third', 108.

here, is not without object. ... A better approach to the *lathouse* would calm us a little.⁴⁷ We will come back to what it might be that could calm us but first, what is a *lathouse*? It is a neologism that has its roots in ancient philosophy but for Lacan, the term designates objects produced by science and set free on the free market where they can proliferate. With this we have arrived back at a previous point, namely, that we developed modern science based on a lack of limit. This lack of limitation led to an inundation of objects, which in turn had consequences for anxiety, discontent, and the social bond.

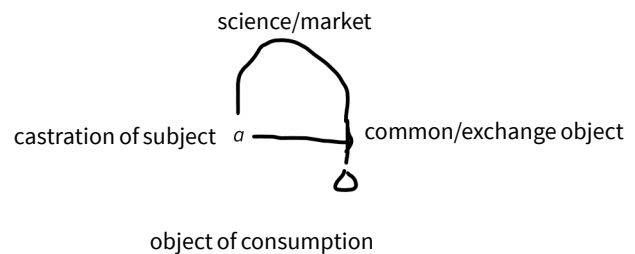
In lesson VII of his seminar X on anxiety, Lacan predicted a kind of loyalty between science and the market. There he spoke about objects of exchange, objects that are fabricated and so can be shared.⁴⁸ He then indicates that there is another object that cannot be exchanged or shared, the object *a*.⁴⁹ Lacan wonders how this localisable object, this object of exchange, can be transformed into a kind of private, incommunicable, object, i.e., the object that is correlative to our fantasy, the object *a*, against which our fantasy protects us, precisely because it is the not-without-an-object of anxiety.⁵⁰

It is at this point that Lacan allows the sociological function of the phallus to head the parade. Why is this un-Lacanian reference to sociology appropriate here? Indeed, Miller uses it as an index to divide the chapter into themes. He uses it, it seems to me, to indicate that for us to remain a civilized society, we must allow ourselves our castration. We must become the bearer of the symbolic phallus in order to be able to participate in the movement of exchange. Simply put, if one is not the bearer of the symbolic phallus—that is to say, not castrated—there is no lack, and thus no desire, for example, to exchange. Then Lacan says something funny which should not distract us from the serious point he is making in this chapter. He indicates that there is another object produced by castration (one that is not the object *a*). Mum says to Little Hans, ‘I’ll snip it off.’ In that event, ‘where will the little *Wiwimacher*, as Little Hans calls it, be? (...) in the

operational field of the common exchangeable object, it would be there in the hands of the one who has cut it off, and that is precisely what would be uncanny about the situation.⁵¹ From this point onwards, this object can be traded with; it has become a common object, one that can acquire the status of belonging to this or that person. There are objects you can share and those you cannot. Those that cannot be shared are, for example, the turd and the nipple.⁵² With this Lacan indicates that these objects that precede the common, socialized, objects are the objects of the drive, in other words, the object *a*. Symbolic castration produces two things:

1. the pre-condition for exchange, i.e., the object as cause of desire;
2. a common object that conditions the possibilities for exchange.

So, there can be no objects of value, exchange, or consumption, without the precondition of the object *a*. We can now pose the following question: how was it possible that the consumable object came to be superimposed on the object *a*? We can represent it like this:



This superimposition happened because of the close collaboration between science and the free market that Miller refers to in *The Real in the 21st Century* where he refers to ‘a great disorder in the real.’⁵³ The implication is that this disorder, generated by the collaboration between science and the market, could have profound consequences for our lives and may well lead to an increase in violence, hatred, and segregation. Master signifiers no longer provide anchoring points and what dominates our

47 J. Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XVII, The Other Side of Psychoanalysis, 1969-1970*, ed. J.-A. Miller, trans. R. Grigg (New York: Norton, 2007), 162-163.

48 J. Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book X, Anxiety, 1962-1963*, ed. J.-A. Miller, trans. A. R. Price (Cambridge: Polity, 2014), 88 & 91.

49 *Anxiety*, p. 91.

50 *Anxiety*, p. 88.

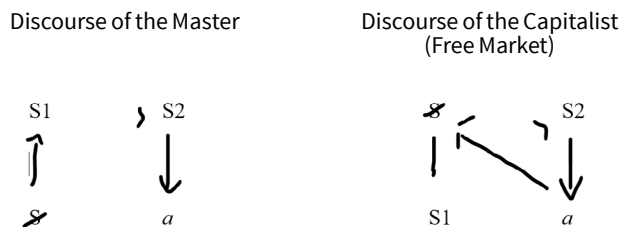
51 *Anxiety*, p. 90.

52 *Anxiety*, p. 91.

53 J.-A. Miller, ‘The Real in the 21st Century’, *Hurly-Burly* no. 9 (2013), 200.

culture is a swarm of master-signifiers in the form of the objects of consumption and charm. This collaboration between science and markets screams for these multiple master-signifiers to become increasingly innovative. Everything now has a solution and if it does not work, the promise is that another one will become available. This structure creates consumers, and it reels them in by making them believe that their division is a consequence of a lack in the world and thus that a free market on which, potentially, everything is available, is the only solution. How does that work?

In 1972, Lacan referred to an inversion of the left antipode in the discourse of the master, which produces the discourse of the capitalist.⁵⁴ We might also call this the discourse of the free market. If you invert the left antipode of the discourse of the master, you can see that it is no longer the master who is in charge, but the subject. Here are the two discourses:



In the discourse of the free market, one is master in one's own home. This master/subject appeals to an S1—not in the place of agent, but in the place of truth. This means that the subject demands a truth in the form of external solutions, S1's (*essaims*), a veritable swarm of Ones (fixes or solutions), of which there are a great many on offer on the free market. From these it is expected that they will produce knowledge, S2. This in turn will set the subject onto the path of jouissance by pushing him or her in the direction of *a*. This push towards the object *a* of jouissance is driven by the 'knowledge' of the market (S2) that promises that jouissance can reach a satisfactory - if not ideal - level. This knowledge works like a treat as it masks the fact that the object *a* is only available for the speaking being in the form of a surplus jouissance (*plus-de-jouir*), i.e., there will always be a remainder *qua* jouissance or satisfaction. The market encourages the *speaking being* to keep pursuing jouissance by flooding this market with objects that pretend that more jouissance is always readily available. This

drive by the market to pursue jouissance overwhelms the subject in a loop that is continuous and will ride roughshod over subjective division, castration and lack. In other words, the promise by the market is that everything is knowable, possible, enjoyable and satisfiable. The subject of this market is fooled into thinking that he or she does not need to be impotent any more in terms of reaching and maintaining an ideal level of jouissance. Trying to reach this ideal level of jouissance concerns the attempt at unifying the ideal (S1), with *a* (as object of jouissance). The unification of the ideal with *a* is what characterises hypnosis (considered from a Lacanian point of view) and encourages the enslavement of the subject.

You can see the impotence regarding this unification attempt in the discourse of the master, which incidentally is also the discourse of the constitution of the subject of the unconscious. This unification is impotent here because the chain of signifiers produces a remainder, *a*, which is impossible to retrieve and thus causes desire. However, the discourse of the free market promises that this retraction has become possible via the relay of the subject because it is, of course, only for—and thus via—the subject that the ideal and jouissance can be united. The unification between the ideal and the object *a* has left no room for desire, the latter having submerged in the promise of jouissance, and it remains at the level of promise because something has its ideal jouissance-value only in the form of a mirage on the horizon. Indeed, as soon as it is in one's reach, it turns out not to be what one thought one wanted. It has lost its magic. The result is that we end up with what ultimately can only become waste. We thus find ourselves in a continuous loop because we do want to be charmed and fulfilled, and we are assured by the market that this is possible, providing, of course, that you pay for it.

With this we are back with the *lathouses*, objects of jouissance. All these objects are standard objects; they are 'ready-mades' for our desire, and they cater for an immediate satisfaction that is never fulfilling. The nature of these objects is such that they do not cause desire, but one enjoys them, at least a little, and one is enjoyed by them, and they exclude the Other. I call this addiction. In pornography, for example, which is often an addiction, science, technology, and the market work together very well to produce a standardised mode of sexual jouissance.

54 J. Lacan, 'Du discours psychanalytique', in *Lacan en Italie 1953-1978* (Milan: La Salamandre 1978)

Our culture encourages us to obfuscate lack by feeding the scopophilic and other drives with images and objects that promise a more-to-be-enjoyed. One analyst who was addicted to porn once said the following: 'you don't quite get what will do it for you with each image, but you keep going because each image suggests that you will get it with the next one.' This goes to the heart of addiction.

What transforms the object *a* into a *lathouse*? First, science tries to master the real by making it visible—disparate examples include fMRI, porn and cultures of transparency and evaluation—but obfuscates that real through an over-production of those jouissance-producing objects and gadgets we cannot get enough of. In addition to this, the market is extraordinarily successful in exploiting the subject who has problems by encouraging *addictifying* answers that are based on the legitimising of a solution for a problem that is situated outside the responsibility of the subject, but which also promises a harmonisation with the real.

Conclusion

We are falling asleep, and we need to wake up. How? We need the desire of the analyst, and this desire is not the desire to bulldoze the real with object like gadgets.⁵⁵ These solutions may be based on real jouissance-effects but they function entirely within the register of the imaginary; they function as a mimicking of the real without ever creating the possibility of a passage to it. We can only change the subject's relation to the real by producing a lasting effect.⁵⁶

The desire of the analyst is not what Lacan refers to as the *sinthomasaquinas* in Seminar XXIII.⁵⁷ One aspect in this play on words is Saint Thomas of Aquinas, a Jesuit, and enormous influence on Joyce, who insisted on clarity and beauty. Clarity and beauty do not help us anymore. The psychoanalytic act aims at the real beyond these, but also beyond meaning and truth. All of these have protected us against the real, but they have lost their traction.

Instead, Lacan proposes the *sint'home rule*.⁵⁸ This is a singular choice by the subject for dealing with the real, related to the legislative power of language.

We cannot do without language nor without the social bond that depends on it. What does the suffering of the subject of modernity teach us? That modern solutions are ravaging the subject, the body, and the social bond. So, what is the desire of the analyst in modern times? To be the kind of saint who does not want to be one. Someone who does not enjoy his or her status, nor the psychoanalytic act, but who is someone who can incarnate the object-waste. Why do we need analysts more than ever? Functioning as a waste-object can induce anxiety and shame, and as such, analysts can arrest an unashamed pursuit of jouissance, thereby re-establishing a bond with the Other and thus creating room for desire.

55 R. Loose, 'The Hijacking of the Symptom and the Addictification of Society', *Subjectivity*, vol. 8, no. 2 (2015), 177.

56 Hijacking, 177.

57 J. Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XXIII, The Sinthome, 1975-1976*, ed. J.-A. Miller, trans. A. R. Price (Cambridge: Polity, 2016), 6.

58 *The Sinthome*, 6.