

Jacques Lacan: A Post Structural Psychoanalyst

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ABSTRACT

The present paper is an attempt to trace the Lacanian concepts. These concepts made Lacan one of the most original thinkers on the intellectual scene of France. His concepts have proven an important influence on contemporary critical theory, cultural theory and film study. Throughout his life, he tried to analyze Freud and doing so invented his own psychoanalytical approach. What Lacan calls this as Return to Freud where he emphasizes renewed attention to the original texts of Freud and radical critique of ego psychoanalysis? As above stated, that Lacan's ideas were centered on Freudian field such as unconscious, Oedipus Complex, fear of castration, ego and the centrality of language in the construction of self. His substantial corpus of writing, speeches and seminars can be read as an attempt to unify and regroup what are the four fundamental objectives of Freud's theoretical writings namely 1. A Theorization of Psychoanalytical Practice as a Curative Procedure; 2. The Generation of a Systematic Meta-Psychology capable of providing the basis for 3. The Formalization of Diagnostic Method of Mental Illness; and 4. The construction of the Self and the Development of the Civilized Human Psyche. While doing so, Lacan brought, however, a keen knowledge of the latest developments in the human sciences, drawing especially on structuralist linguistics of De Saussure, the structural anthropology of Claude Levi-Strauss, topology and game theory. In the sense his work was a mixture of inter-disciplinary philosophies such as linguistics, philosophy, mathematics and etc. Lacanian theories left an enduring influence on literary and cultural theories of the present time.

Keywords: *The Real, The Imaginary, The Symbolic, The Desire, The Mirror, Jouissance, Narcissism.*

Jacques — Marie — Emile Lacan was born in Paris on April 13, 1901. He was the eldest child of Emile and Alfred Lacan. Lacan grew up in a catholic family. He attended prestigious school, the College Stanislas, where he was recognized a very bright pupil. While at school, he was greatly influenced by the work of Spinoza and with his idea of God's existence. After leaving school, Lacan studied medicine and specialized in psychiatry. In his studies he had particular interest in the philosophic work of Karl Jaspers and Martin Heidegger. He also attended the famous seminars on Hegel given by Alexander Kojève. At this time young Lacan came in contact with two influential figures in Surrealist movement. One of them was Salvador Dali, a painter and author and another was Andre Breton, a

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writer. During his medical studies Lacan developed strong links with the Surrealist movement.

Beginning in the 1920's, Lacan undertook analysis with Rudolph Loewenstein, which continued until 1938. In 1931 Lacan received his license as a forensic psychiatrist and in 1932, Lacan completed his doctoral thesis on Paranoid Psychosis and its Relation to the Personality. The thesis was written in a largely anti-psychoanalytic culture. Such culture against psychoanalysis was reigning principle in France during that period. As one critic notes:

The French opposed psychoanalysis from so many directions that it is appropriate to speak of an anti- psychoanalytic, culture.

In 1934, Lacan became member of Societe Psychaanalytique de Paris, where he emphasized the biological and medical aspects of psychoanalysis with Marie Bonaparte, an early disciple of Freud. During this period he came in contact with Georges Bataille and Andre Breton. Afterwards, he married Georges Bataille in 1953 after divorcing his first wife.

Later Lacan was called up to serve in the French Army after the German occupation of France and posted to the Val-de-Grace Military Hospital in Paris. During the Nazi occupation of France, Lacan ended all activities in protest against war. Following the war he rejoined the SPP. After World War II he rose to become a renowned and controversial figure in the International Psychoanalytic Community. But for his unorthodox views on psychoanalysis, he was expelled from the International Psychoanalytic Community. After the war Lacan visited England for a five weeks study trip, meeting English analyst Wilfred Bion's analytic work with groups and this contributed to his own later emphasis on study groups as a structure with which to advance theoretical work in psychoanalysis.

Lacan was very active in the world of Parisian writers, artists and intellectuals. In addition to Andre Breton and Georges Bataille he was also associated with Salvador Dali and Pablo Picasso. Many of his early articles were published in the Surrealist journal *Minotaure* and he was present at the first reading of James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Dylan Evans has speculated that Lacan was Surrealist at heart.

His interest in Surrealism predates his interest in psychoanalysis. Perhaps Lacan never really abandoned his early Surrealist sympathies, its neo-romantic view of madness as 'convulsive beauty', its celebration of irrationality, and its hostility to the scientist who murders nature by dissecting it.

In 1951, Lacan started to hold a weekly seminar at the St. Anne Hospital in Paris, urging what he described as A Return to Freud. Concentrating upon the linguistic nature of psychological symptomatology. The seminars continued for nearly 30 years. Each year he would take a text or concept from Freud and devote the seminar to the study of that text or idea. The contents of these seminars under the general editorship of Jacques Alain-Miller have now reconstructed from notes and transcripts made by his former students. These articles are collected in *Ecrits*, in English, which represent summary or conclusion of the ideas of Lacan.

Lacan's theory, as with that of any innovative thinker was not static but changed and developed throughout his life. The early seminars represent his structuralist phase and much

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of the Lacanian theory draws on his later work from the 1960's and 1970's. Through his seminar series Lacan returned to Freud's re-reading in relation with contemporary philosophy, linguistics, ethnology, biology and topology.

Lacan's major theoretical publication was his piece *On the Mirror Stage as the Formative of the I* in 1936. Later in his life he came under the influence of De Saussure and Levi-Strauss. He was something of a rebel. When his research findings were published in 1959, he was expelled from the International Psychoanalytic Association and he established his own *Ecole Freudienne* in Paris in 1964. The publication of collection of his papers and seminars *Écrits* in 1964 made him one of the most influential philosophers of our time.

Last years of his life were marred by his continuous quarrels with his disciples and friends. In his last days, he became an eccentric in behavior. At last, in September 9, 1981 in Paris he died. Throughout his life he remained one of the most controversial figures in the Parisian intellectuals and also in the world.

1) **Desire:** Lacan is very careful to distinguish between a need and desire. A need such as hunger or thirst can be satisfied. Desire on the other hand refers to something beyond basic human needs, which cannot be satisfied. For Lacan, desire is much broader and more abstract concept than either libido or wish in Freud. He himself in his Seminar XI described desire as follows:

1. *The essence of man.*

Desire is at the very core of our being and as such it has relation to lack; indeed, desire and lack are inextricably tied together. Lacan defines desire as remainder that arises from the subtraction from demand. In this connection he states that:

Thus, desire neither the appetite for satisfaction nor the demand for the love but the difference that results from the subtraction of the first from the second, the phenomenon of their splitting.

Desire and unconscious are founded through the identification of fundamental lack: the lack means the absence of the phallus. Desire therefore is always manifestation of something that is lacking in the subject and the other — the symbolic order. It is through the other that the subject takes its position in the symbolic and the social order. The other confers upon the subject its symbolic effect; as it is through the desire of the other that the subject's own desire is founded. In this regard Fink B. comments in a following way: -

In the child's attempt to grasp what remains essentially indecipherable in the other's desire — what Lacan calls the *x*, the variable or the unknown — the child's own desire is founded; the other's desire begins to function as the cause of the child's desire.

Thus, in this way, the desire is the very important concept in Lacanian psychoanalysis. It is the most original contribution of Lacan that we come to know our being to confronting with other's desire. About the importance of desire Toril Moi augurs that :

The unconscious emerges as the result of the repression of the desire. In one sense unconscious is the desire. Lacan's famous statement 'that the, unconscious is structured like a language' contains an important insight into the nature of desire: for Lacan, desire behaves in precisely same way as language: it moves ceaselessly on from object to object or from signifier to signifier, and will never find full and present satisfaction just as meaning can never be seized as full presence.

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2) **Drive:** The drive is used interchangeably as instinct. It exists between bodily and mental border. It consists of quantity of energy and its psychical representative. Jean Laplanche and Serge Leclair defines Freudian drive as:

A constant force of a biological nature, emanating from organic sources, that always has as its aim, his own satisfaction through the elimination of the state of the tension which operates at the source of the drive itself.

The drive is something that originates within the body and seeks expression in the psyche as representation. Freud concerned with the satisfaction of the drive. For Lacan, the Freudian notion of drive has the single most important contribution of psychoanalysis to the field of human psychology and our understanding of subjectivity. In his early work, Lacan associated the notion of drive to the concept of desire. Thus, the drive shares with the desire of never achieving end. The drive always circles around its object but never achieves satisfaction. The purpose therefore is simply to maintain repetitive compulsive movement, just as the purpose of the desire to another desire. Lacan's concept of drive is different from Freud's notion of drive in two respects. Freud argues that sexuality was composed of series of partial drives, which he defined as the oral, anal and phallic phases. These all three phases become into one drive after the resolution of the Oedipus complex. Unlike Freud, Lacan argues that all drives are partial in the sense that there is never a single integrated harmonious resolution of the drives in the subject. Furthermore, a partial drive doesn't represent a part of one drive.

Lacan developed Freud's theory of drive in another respect. Lacan thought that it is important to retain Freud's dualism, rather than reducing everything to single motivating force, but rejected Freud's notion of two distinct drives namely Eros and Thanatos. For Lacan every drive is sexual in nature and same time every drive is a death drive. There is one important drive according to Lacan - the death drive, and he associates this with the real and jouissance

3) **Oedipus Complex:** Lacan reformulated the central concept of psychoanalysis, the Oedipus Complex. Lacan adopted the orthodox Freudian model of Oedipus Complex, and it was not until 1950's and through the influence of Levi-Strauss that Lacan reformulated his own concept of the Oedipus Complex. For Lacan, the Oedipus Complex is primarily a symbolic structure. In Sean Homers observation Oedipus Complex is for Lacan:

Represent a triangular structure that breaks the binary relationship established between the mother and child in the imaginary, although, as we will see, the imaginary.

Thus, for Lacan, the threat of castration doesn't involve an actual bodily threat but a symbolic process. He also reformulated the role of the father. The role of the father in psychoanalysis depends not upon an actual father but upon a signifier, the paternal metaphor, which substitutes the desire of the mother with symbolic law. Sean Homer rightly observes that:

In our society, the primary structure that defines our symbolic and unconscious relations is the Oedipus Complex.

Therefore, the Oedipus Complex marks the shift from the imaginary to symbolic through the intervention of the name of the father. Moreover, this name of the father is a signifier that breaks the mother/ child couple and introduces the child into the symbolic order of desire and lack. This order is realm of language.

4) The Mirror Stage

Lacan's first important innovation in the field of psychoanalytic criticism was his article — The Mirror Stage as the Formative of the I (1936, 1949). He presented this article at the 14th Congress of the International Psychoanalytical Association, held at Marienbad. Since then, the Mirror Stage remained one of the most influential reference works of Lacan. It played a crucial role in the dissemination of Lacanian ideas in film and cultural studies. Lacan was interrupted and prevented to present this article by Earnest Jones, Congress President. But Lacan once more presented this paper to the 16th International Congress of the IPA in Zurich. This time, he was not interrupted by anyone and the paper was published in the International Journal of Psychoanalysis.

The present paper concerns with the behavior of an infant during the age of 6 and 18 months. At this age an infant became capable of identifying his mirror stage. By the early 50's, he no longer considers the mirror stage as only a movement in the life of an infant. Lacan considered mirror stage as the permanent structure of subjectivity. Lacan writes: The mirror stage is a phenomenon to which I assign a two-fold value. In the first place, it has historical value as it marks a decisive turning point in the mental development of the child. In the second place, it typifies an essential libidinal relationship with the body image.

That means, here, Lacan is concerned with the formation of the ego through the recognition with an image of self. At 6 months age, an infant lacks co-ordination, however, he can identify himself in the mirror (Mirror not in the actual sense but symbolically) before getting his self. At this particular stage an infant has not yet mastered its own body; it doesn't have control over its own movements and it doesn't have a sense of body as a whole. Rather, he experiences that his body is in pieces as fragmented. Because infant cannot see his own bodily parts belong to him. However, an infant can imagine itself as a whole with the confrontation of other because he can see other people.

Further, Lacan argues that, at the same point in this period, an infant will see itself in a mirror. He will look at his own reflection and then he will look at other real person — his mother and then he will look again at mirror image. In this process, an infant move from lack to anticipation, in this action, the mirror and seeing the mirror image and relating with real persons gives an infant the sense that he is also a unitary, integrated being, a whole being.

Torii Moi put the purpose of mirror stage in the following words:

The principal function of mirror stage is endowing the baby with a unitary body image.

The mirror stage of Lacan roughly corresponds to Freud's stage of narcissism:

That is the stage of human development when the subject is in love with the image of themselves and their bodies and which precedes the love of others.

During this period known as 'Mirror Stage', an infant for the first time confronting with its own image and becomes aware that his body has a total form. That means an infant experience his body, over which it doesn't have its full control. While an infant perceives his body into pieces as fragmented and not yet unified, it is the mirror image that provides him with a sense of unification and wholeness. Therefore, mirror stage provides the sense of unification and wholeness in contrast to the fragmentation.

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The important thing at this stage is an infant begins to identify with mirror image. The image is himself. This sense of identification is crucial as an infant get its own image. At the same time, the image is alienating in the sense it becomes confused with the self. That means image comes instead of the self. Therefore, the sense of unified self is acquired at the price of this self-being another, i.e., our mirror stage. Lacan describes it like this: -

The mirror stage is a drama whose internal thrust is precipitated from insufficiency to anticipation and which manufactures for the all subjects, caught up in the lure of spatial identification, the succession of fantasies that extends from a fragmented body image to a form its totality that I shall call orthopedic-and, lastly to the assumption of the armour of an alienating identity, which will mark with its rigid structure an infant entire menial development.

Lacan sees, as this stage is one step where ego emerges. The moment includes alienation and fascination with one's own image. The ego is the result of images. Further Lacan criticizes ego psychology for its concentration on unconscious process and comparison of ego with the self and proposes that the ego is based on wholeness. Therefore, ego functions to maintain this illusion of coherence and unity of self. In other words, function of ego is mis-recognition i.e., refusing to accept the truth of fragmentation and illusion.

Thus, the mirror stage plays such a decisive role that gives the subject an identity confronting with others. It is necessary for the subject to be recognized by another to exist. But our image is also mediated by others. Then the other becomes the guarantor of self, our selves. That means we are dependent on other as the guarantor of our own existence and rival to the same other. Lacan was criticized by many of his contemporary critics. One of them Anthony Eliott argues that:

The very terms of Lacan's mirror stage are all wrong: Mirror reflection, lack and absence are not pre-existing phenomenon but the work of subject and the imaginary.

Being criticized by many critics Lacan's article on mirror stage was very influential and important in literary and cultural studies, paving the way for more widespread acceptance of Lacanian ideas.

5) Three Stages of Psychosexual Development

Jacques Lacan reformulated psychosexual development of an infant into adult. Freud talks about the three stages as oral, anal, phallic as polymorphous perversity. The Oedipus complex and castration complex creates adult beings. But Lacan reformulates them. He has given three concepts namely — need, demand and desire — that roughly correspond to the three stages of psychosexual development in which an adult form — The Real, the Imaginary and Symbolic. More specifically for Lacan, the Symbolic realm is the realm of language. The imaginary is realm of ego, a paralinguistic realm of perception, identification and illusory sense of unity. And last one the real is closely associated with body prior to its symbolization. But the real stage is related with the need. Above outlined three stages of psychosexual development of an infant roughly co-relates with Lacan's model of psyche.

Lacan divided human psyche into three major structures that controls our lives and our desires. The three psycho sexual stages are namely the real, the imaginary and the last as the symbolic. The detailed analyses of these three stages are as follows:

5.1 The Real

This is an earliest phase of an infant's psychosexual development. This phase is dominated by a chaotic mixture of perceptions, feelings and needs. An infant cannot distinguish between himself and his mother's body or even the world around him. According to Lacan this stage of development is opposed to both the imaginary and the symbolic.

When an infant feels hungry, this hunger can come through breast or bottle-feeding, breast and bottle are the objects of hunger. Lacan calls them as imaginary objects, as they are not able to satisfy the infant's demand. The real is the place from which that need originates. And this place of real is pre-symbolic i.e., an infant do not have any way of symbolizing his need.

The real is opposed to both stages of development: imaginary and symbolic because later stages are governed by oppositions i.e., presence/ absence. While Lacan says that: Real is a place "where there is no absence in the real.

Therefore, in this stage an infant remains very closest to the pure materiality of existence or what Lacan calls this moment as 'real.' Further Lacan argues that, an infant's body has no any unique, coherent identity rather it is fragmented into various zones (mouth, anus, penis, vagina) aided by the fact that your mother certainly will pay attention to them. This fragmentation accompanies an identity with those things perceived as satisfying your lack by the object such as mother's breast, voice, and gaze. But these objects could not ultimately fulfill the infant's need.

The concept of real marks that a state which is very close to nature, a state in which there is nothing but need. Sometime Lacan represents this state of nature as a complete or full but that is subsequently lost through the entrance into the language. So in this early stage, there is only need followed by a search for satisfaction or pleasure. Further Lacan argues that, this real stage is impossible we cannot express it in language, because the very entry of language marks our separation from realm into the real. But still real has important place into our lives. Because the real is the rock against which all our fantasies and linguistic structure ultimately fail. Thus, real is that stage which is outside of language resisting symbolization. Finally, the real is the object of anxiety in that it lacks any possible mediation. Lacan himself observes the real as follows

Is the essential object, which is not an object any longer but which something faced with which all world sees and all categories fail, the object of anxiety per excellence.

Lacan's concept of the real is among his most discussed concepts. Sean Homer describes: - The real therefore, is not an object, a thing but something that is repressed and functions unconsciously, intruding into our symbolic reality in the form of need. The real is the kind of ubiquitous undifferentiated mass from which we must distinguish ourselves, through the process of symbolization. It is through the process of canceling out, of symbolizing the real, that social reality is created. In short, the real doesn't exist, as an existence is a product of thought and the real precedes language. The real is that which resists symbolization absolutely.

The term real has been used by Lacan in his first published paper in the 1930's. But throughout his life he reformulated it according to his own needs. In his early texts, it was essentially a philosophical concept designating 'absolute being' or 'being in itself.' Later, from 1964 onwards the real transformed in Lacan's thinking. At this time the meaning for

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Lacan is that which is unsymbolizable. The real is that which is beyond symbolic and the imaginary. Here, Lacan associated the real with the concept trauma. And in his final phase he associated real with the term *jouissance* i.e., enjoyment or involves a combination of pleasure and pain.

Finally, we can say that the real is that which is beyond symbolic and imaginary order. It is the traumatic kernel at the core of subjectivity. The real is thus a dynamic process, which is related with the death drive and *jouissance* as the unspeakable ultimate limit of human existence.

5.2 Imaginary

The imaginary order corresponds to the mirror stage and marks the movement of the subject from primary need to demand. This stage is a central moment in the infant's development. So the imaginary is the field of images and imagination. This stage of imagination happens at the age of 6 to 18 months. At this moment, an infant has no any idea about his own body and also it doesn't have any sense of its body as a whole. Rather an infant sees its body into parts such as hand, leg, finger etc. whatever part he could see. But he doesn't know that the part is his own property. However, an infant can imagine itself as a whole confronting with Other.

This order was outlined by Jacques Lacan in his article entitled "The Mirror Stage". The article was concerned with the formation of ego through the identification with an image of the self. Before conceptualizing the mirror stage Lacan had strong influences of the works of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Henri Wallon and Roger Caillois and eventually the work of philosopher Alexander Kojève.

In the 1930's and 40's Lacan was strongly influenced by the phenomenological ideas. He was especially influenced by Sartre's distinction between subject and ego that paved the way for Lacan's own formulation of the relationship between subject and ego. While the ideas of Heidegger such as existence and nothingness recur throughout his body of work. Thus, he reformulated phenomenological concepts from the realm of consciousness to the unconscious as Jacques-Alain-Miller writes:

It was essential to him that the unconscious not to be taken as in inferiority or container in which some drives are found over on the one side and a few identification over on the other....He took the unconscious not as a container but rather as something existent — outside itself— that is connected to subject who is a lack of being.

Another discipline from which Lacan was indebted his concept of mirror stages or imaginary order is psychology. He was much influenced by the work of a psychologist Henry Wallon on mirroring. Wallon suggested that between the age of 3 to 12 months an infant gradually progresses from primary indifference to the mirror image to an acceptance and mastery over this image as a separate and whole. From Wallon's theory of mirroring Lacan took the importance of the role of the mirroring in the construction of the self.

Another major philosopher Roger Caillois from whose paper "Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia" Lacan took the idea of the fascination and capturing properties of the images. One more philosopher Hegel from whose work of Dialectics, Lacan reformulated his mirror stage concept. Lacan held that it is his dialectics that permeates the imaginary. It was Hegel's great insight contains Lacan to reveal how:

Each human being is in the being of the other.

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According to Thurschwell P. this is a stage of human development: -
When the subject is in love with image of himself
and his own body and which creates the love of others.

Further, the child takes that image in the mirror as the summation of his entire self. This process of mis-recognizing one's self in the image in the mirror creates the ego. In Lacan's term this mis-recognition creates an illusion of wholeness that protects fragmented body. Thus to Lacan this ego or self is always on some level a fantasy i.e. an identification with an external image not With an internal sense of separate whole. Thus, Lacan calls this stage of demand as the mirror stage or the realm of imaginary. The ego or idea of selfhood is created through an imaginary identification with the mirror image. The imaginary is the psychic place or phase where an infant imagines its ideas about self in the mirror. The mirror stage gave its identity in terms of binary oppositions i.e. self/ other. Thus, the very idea ego is both formed by and takes its form from the organizing and constituting property of the image. The ego is the effect of imaginary function. Further Lacan insists that:
The ego is based on an illusory image of wholeness and mastery and it is the function of the ego to maintain this illusion of coherence and mastery.

The importance of this imaginary order as a Lacanian concept, which has wide relevance from cultural theory, and literary perspective as stated by Parkin Gounelas into the following words:

Lacan's conception of imaginary and the formation of the ego has been utilized to give an account of both the construction of identity and subjectivity within texts as well as relationship between characters.

5.3 The Symbolic

M. H. Abrams observes this stage:

The stage which occurs after acquisition of language.

Therefore, the symbolic order has linguistic dimension. The dimension proper of language in the symbolic order is that of the signifier, in which these elements have no positive existence but which are constituted by virtue of their mutual differences. This order occurs from 18 month to 4 year of an infant's age. Lacan sees that, this stage is very important because it enables subject to take its own positions, it make worthy to be able to live in culture.

In the previous order an infant begins to formulate an idea about other and become aware of its own other, its own mirror image, and then an infant begins to enter into symbolic order. There is no solid difference between symbolic and imaginary. These two stages are overlapping. The symbolic realm is a realm of structure of language. We have to enter in this linguistic realm in order to become speaking subject. The foundation of the designation of the 'I' lies in the imaginary projection of the self on to the specular image, the other in the mirror, and having a self is expressed with co-relation with image as I, which is possible only in symbolic order. In this regard Sean Homer observes that: -

It was Levi-Strauss's elementary structure of kinship, as this provides the basis for understanding Lacan's conception of symbolic order and the formation of the unconscious.

That means from the structural anthropology of Levi-Strauss Lacan derives the idea what characterizes the human world is symbolic function — a function that intervenes in all aspects of our lives. Levi-Strauss in his seminal study *The Elementary Structure of Kinship* has analyzed primitive society's marriage and kinship system. By studying these primitive conventions Strauss suggested that :

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What one found in the marriage relations of these societies was nothing less than the basic underlined structure of society itself.

In other words, here, Strauss wants to trace the elementary structure of that society from which all subsequent social relations derive. Further Strauss argued that what is important in marriage process was not the exchange of women i.e., real people — but the way in which these real people were transformed into signs and operated within a system of symbolic exchange. Thus, the exchange of women here operated like a language - a system with its own rules and regulations which couldn't be infringed but at the same time remain unconscious to the individual system users. From above theory of symbolic exchange Lacan drew that there is an unconscious structure that determines people's social positions and regulates their relationship without their being aware of it.

Lacan conceived symbolic order as a totalizing concept in the sense that it marks the limit of the human universe. We are born into language - the language through which the desires of others are articulated and through which we are forced to articulate our own desire. We are locked within what Lacan calls a circuit of discourse. In this context Lacan comments in the following words:

“It is the discourse of the circuit in which I am integrated I am one of its links. It is the discourse of my father, for instance in so far as my father made mistakes which I am condemned to reproduce I am condemned to reproduce them because I am obliged to pick up again the discourse, he bequeathed to me not simply because I am his son but because one cannot stop the chain of discourse, and it is precisely my duty to transmit it in its aberrant form to someone else.”

So as above stated by Lacan, we are born into the realm of language and discourse. The discourse is present before our birth and it will remain also after our death. Therefore, Lacan argues that, what one requires to be fully human as we are subjected to this symbolic order — the order of discourse, language. We cannot escape it, although as a structure it escapes us.

Moreover, the very idea of subject comes into being in the realm of language. In the previous order that is imaginary, the ego is formed with relation to the other. On the contrary in the symbolic order the subject is constituted in the symbolic order and is determined by language. M. H. Abrams observes the notion of subject as follows:

“When it enters the symbolic stage, an infant subject assimilates the inherited system of linguistic differences, hence is constituted by the symbolic.”

But Lacan has outlined another perspective of the symbolic order. The acquisition of language during this order separates an infant from the actual materiality of things or from a connection to the real. Moreover, once you entered into this differential network of language it determines the perception of the world around the subject. By acquiring language in this stage, Lacan calls it as a symbolic order in which the subject were reduced into an empty signifier within the realm of signifiers, within the realm of language.

The imaginary stage projects the idea of self with relation to the other. Rather this other illustrates for the infant, the idea of lack, of laws, of absence. The moment shows that it is not complete in and of itself. It is also the gateway to the symbolic order to language. Moreover, Lacan states that language itself governs on the idea of lack or absence.

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Further Lacan argued that the ideas of other, of lack, of absence, of the identification, of self with other are all worked out on an individual level with each subject. This lack or absence provides the basic structure of symbolic order, of language, which the subject must enter to become an adult. So, in the symbolic there is a structure or structuring principle of otherness, and structuring principle of lack.

Thus, the lack or the other is a structural principle in the symbolic order. This is a stage where everyone tries to do away with, to merge with in order to get rid of separation between self and other. So, this other becomes center in the symbolic order. But this other is also subject to position. So, the position of the other creates and sustains never ending lack, which Lacan termed as desire. Desire is for the other. But the desire cannot be fulfilled; in the sense it is not desire for some object or desire for love or another person's identification of oneself, but desire to be the center of system, the center of symbolic, the center of language itself,

Moreover, the center in Lacanian theory has different connotations. It is the other, it is called phallus or it is as name of the father. To prove this point Lacan borrowed Freud's theory of Oedipus complex. The Freudian version of Oedipus complex is that, where child wants to merge with its mother by having sexual intercourse with her. Here in Freudian model, the lack is represented by the lack of penis. The boy who wants to fill this lack by filling her up with his penis. In Freud's view, what breaks this Oedipus desire of lack is the figure of father, who threatens castration.

But in Lacanian theory the threat of castration is the metaphor for the whole idea of lack as a structural principle. For Lacan, unlike Freud, it is not the real father who threatens castration. Rather because the concept of lack is essential to the concept of language because the concept of lack is also the basic principle of language. Then father functions as the linguistic structure. The father, rather than being a person, becomes a structuring principle of the symbolic order. About the concept of structural principle in symbolic order has been rightly observed by M. H. Abrams in the following words:

The symbolic realm of language, in Lacan's theory is the realm of the law of the father, in which the phallus is the privileged signifier that serves to establish the mode for all other signifiers.

Lacan sees the father's figure as a metaphor or a controlling principle in the symbolic order. In other words, in Lacanian term, to become a speaking being you have to obey the rules of language. Lacan here designates that the structure of language and its rules are basically patriarchal. He calls the rules of the language, the law of the father in order to link the entry into symbolic, the structure of the language.

Thus, this name of the father or rule of the father governs the whole structure — its shape and how all the elements in the system can move and form relationship. This controlling principle is also called as phallus, which limits the play of elements and gives stability to the whole structure. Thus, it is because of the phallus signifier can get some stable meaning. The phallus anchors the chain of signifiers which in the unconscious are just floating and unfixed, always sliding and shifting. Therefore, it is because of the phallus as a center of symbolic order that the term, I designate the idea of the self. But Lacan says that every subject in language is constituted by / as lack or lack. The only reason we have language before us because of lack or absence. In fact, it is necessary for a subject to become part of

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culture as an adult being, he has to become a subject in language; that forces absence, lack and loss.

Finally, we can say that the sense of self and its relation to other sets you up to take up a position in the symbolic order and in the language. Such a position allows you to say I, to be a speaking subject. And the term I have a stable meaning because they are controlled, or anchored by the other / phallus, the name of the father / law. That is the structuring principle of the symbolic order and the center of language.

Thus we sum up to say that Lacan was the most controversial figure in the field of literary and cultural theory. His contribution has been widely accepted in the field of literary and cultural theory. His readings focus on the form and structure of the text rather than on the contents of literary text and psychology of author and character. In this sense he is post-structuralist. He was the first who introduced post-structural theories of De Saussure and Derrida. Lacan also has given new dimensions to the theory of psychoanalysis. In recent times, psychoanalysis has gained resurgence by the theories of Lacan. His most original contribution to the field of psychoanalysis is that he has given psychoanalysis a status of science. He made revolutionary changes in the field of psychoanalysis and also in clinical psychoanalysis.

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Conflict of Interest

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