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## PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLE

### Crypt: About the colonised unconscious

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#### ABSTRACT

Based on the psychoanalytic clinical experience in a *quilombo* in Brazil, we propose the thesis, shared by countercolonial intellectuals, that the unconscious heir to colonisation processes has a specific form of defence: the crypt. As a drive intensity not printed in the mother language of *jouissance*, the crypt remains untranslated *in* the linguistic sign. We explain the impossible translations and their *fueros* based on the theory of S. Freud, J. Lacan, and S. Peirce. Given the forced linguistic migration, the *interpretamen* loses its ability to link the object to the *representamen*, requiring clinical work on the unconscious writing and the memory.

**KEYWORDS:** psychoanalysis; coloniality; crypt; unconscious; memory

We speak the same language because we speak different versions of the same language without a clear centre, without a single determination. A language of many truths. (Translated from Galindo, 2022, p. 209)

This article is situated at the interface between psychoanalysis and studies of coloniality. It intends to contribute, from a psychoanalytic perspective, to the decolonial turn in the field of social sciences, especially regarding the analysis of the colonisation of being. As a gap between the somatic and the psychic, the drive—one of the fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis—disorganised the quarrel between organic evidence and the determination of overculture.

As a gap between representation and existence, the unconscious interposes itself like an interval, ‘marked by a blank or occupied by a lie’ (Lacan, 1953/1998a, p. 260). It is influenced

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by the legacy of the first colonial wave, dating from the period of the Christian *Reconquista* in Europe and the overseas advance in the invasion of the Americas in the 16<sup>th</sup> century—which resonates as alive and current. As a psychoanalyst, I collect the way in which the unconscious, always colonised by the symbolic *Other*, responds to the civilising standoffs of colonial malaise. My theoretical proposition, in this text, as a white woman and university professor in the role of a psychoanalyst, originates from a clinical intervention. I was, along with three other women—all psychoanalysts and black—undertaking the transference work of listening—record—witness—intervention in an urban *quilombo* in the Brazilian city where I live: the capital of the state of Minas Gerais.

Usually known as *Maroon Communities*, in Brazil the *quilombo* keeps the cultural heritage of spaces that resisted the slavery of black people coming from the African continent during the colonial period. We opted for adopting the original term, since it has no translation. It derives from the work *Kilombo*, from the *Mbundu* language of the *Bantu* language family, with the likely meaning of ‘society of young African warriors’.

The clinical listening started with a resident from this *quilombo*, a spokeswoman bringing a demand of psychic suffering from another woman, also black. The demand was formulated, from the outset, from a collective mode of nonindividualised belonging. A woman suffered psychically in this *quilombo*. Another woman delivered her demand for analysis. It was formulated through the negative route of transference: ‘I do not believe in psychology’. It is important to say that this *quilombo* is inserted in an urban and Western context with which it shares language, rationality, and aesthetic; nonetheless, it safeguards its own religion and some traditional cultural dimensions of Afrodiasporic origin. In this sense, psychology and psychoanalysis are usual practices accessed by this demographic, especially through public healthcare, offered free of charge by the Brazilian state’s mental health aid network.

It is not without effects to have a white body in this racialised clinical scene. It is no coincidence that there is a confrontation with the heritage of the slave period, in the form of a *quilombo*, in the Brazilian state that carried out the third extractive colonial cycle of the Portuguese Empire—the cycle of gold. This cycle is responsible for the expansion of the Portuguese language with the *Banta* influence of *quibumbo*, the presence of the *Gbe* and the *Yoruba* in the country, and the more than 400 indigenous languages that existed throughout Brazil. It left its ecological, political, economic, and subjective illnesses as a trace in the ore-filled mountains.

When a psychoanalyst moves from the protected scene of the analytical *setting* of the office, she loses on her way out her supposedly neutral and universal point of view, which is in fact accommodated to the geopolitical, historical, racial, gender, and class horizon of the frame. The territory, as an unconscious plane in the act of speech, structured by the language, and also a field of *lalangue* of *jouissance*, modulates the semantic dimension and the misunderstanding to radicalise the foreignness of what exceeds the structure of language.

*Lalangue* is another neologism created by Jacques Lacan which concerns the mother language and the child's phonetic relation, referred less to the signifier and structured language, and more to the body and *jouissance*.

The act of listening to the unconscious—always an event of the body as an act of the *parlêtre*. *Parlêtre* is also a Lacanian neologism, which means the subject, carried out by the act of speech and his body of *jouissance*—in a postcolonised territory has a property that I discovered in my practice and share in this article. Given the forced linguistic migration (Galindo, 2022; Melman, 2000), the devastating occupation of the colonies, the decimation of indigenous villages of original peoples, and the abusive use of the enslaved body, the Real of the colonial trauma of colonisation produces a specific language effect: the crypt. This is what I write about here.

### **NOT BEING ABLE TO SAY IT IN THE LANGUAGE**

In inaugurating clinical work in this context, I witnessed a peculiar way in which the structure of language articulates itself from the unconscious plane as disaster, tremor, defence, as marked by colonial history, a spectre. There is a specific mode not yet theorised by psychoanalysis, precisely because it was obscured by the Eurocentric discourse and made invisible by the colonial discourse (Guerra, 2022). It concerns the meeting point between drive and representation, blunted in the linguistic sign as an excess that could not gain a psychic impression, given the forced linguistic migration dated from the colonisation period—which returns fixed in the insignias related to it, producing meaning in a nondialectical short circuit. The absence of the original inscription of transatlantic trauma, in the *lalangue* of *jouissance*, maintains a structural fissure in the linguistic sign, whose drive intensity is, in turn, encrypted by the foreign language that fixes, freezes, and prevents the drive slip that would produce its possibilities of meaning.

There is a corruption at the sign level, taken from Peirce's semiotics—whose incidence on Lacanian thought was responsible for an openness to the Real in his theory, with effects on psychoanalytic clinical practice. This sign adulteration that I witnessed is due to a specific mode of relationship between the three terms of the Peircean sign: object (an idea associated with the *representamen*), *representamen* (index image of the physical object), and *interpretamen* (mediator of the relationship between object and *representamen*) (Peirce, 2005). We have identified a suspension or a corruption in the binding capacity between the object and the index (*representamen*) at the connective level of interpretation (*interpretamen*).

There is an impossibility of making the connection between the idea and the index image of the object, given the imposition of another radically unknown foreign language in which to write experience in the field of the symbolic Other. In this way, experience is reduced to the

index, which, short-circuited in its possibility of being represented, remains frozen in the signified (*signifié*) attributed to it by the coloniser's language. Thus, it retains all the death drive charge as living and current intensity, not dampened or historicised by language, in the form of articulated signifiers (*signifiant*). These indexes thus become firm orders and nondialectisable images (Lacan, 2018).

This finding is shared by two decolonial intellectuals: Sílvia Cusicanqui (2021) and Rita Segato (2021). The use of the decolonial term here is aligned with the critique of the imperial constitution of geopolitics of power, aimed at the epistemic movement against coloniality, as a possibility of sustaining the radical difference of alterity. Cusicanqui (2021), an Aymara indigenous intellectual and countercolonial sociologist, testifies to this sign corruption by verifying that words, in postcolonised countries, lose their capacity for representation, for connection between the public and the private, emerging in violent uprisings as a burst of drive when reached or mobilised. 'In colonialism, there is a very peculiar function for words: they do not designate reality, but rather conceal it.... Thus, words became a fictional record, full of euphemisms that hide reality instead of designating it' (Cusicanqui, 2021, p. 29). We see that truth for psychoanalysis has a fictional structure, its imbrication being what constitutes psychic reality. What opposes fiction, what opposes the writing of history in the world of representation, is drive immobility, which indicates the presence of the *Thing (das Ding)* in the Real without representation. However, let us understand Cusicanqui's observation which greatly interests us.

As a sociologist, she recovers the dimension of public discourses as ways of not saying, supported by hierarchical beliefs and naturalised inequalities, incubated in common sense. From time to time, they are laid bare in explosive forms of racial, ethnic, and gender conflict.

I believe that these hidden, buried forms of the cultural conflicts that we carry and cannot rationalise or even talk about are naked there. It costs us to speak, to connect our public language with the private language. It costs us to say what we think and to become aware of this drive background, of unconscious conflicts and shame. (Translated from Cusicanqui, 2021, p. 30)

For this reason, she finds and dedicates herself to a sociology of images, seeking in drawings rather than in historical texts and documents the elements of colonial domination and its reverberations. The transit between image and word is part of the methodology and pedagogy she adopts when bridging the gap between standard-cultured Castilian and colloquial modes of speech, as well as between lived experience and visual experience, especially among indigenous migrant students of *Aymara* or *Qhichwa* origin. In addition, for her, images allow us to break the block of the official versions of the senses not censored by the official language.

She brings as an example, the letter addressed to the King of Spain by Waman Poma de Ayala, written between 1612 and 1615, with more than 1000 pages and 300 drawings made

in ink, full of original ethnic terms and oral idioms, songs and *jayllis* (victory chants). It is in the drawings, more than in the text, that the cataclysmic feeling referring to the mass subordination imposed by colonisation and the pre-Hispanic indigenous society is revealed. She calls this proposal a visual or iconographic theorisation of the colonial system or situation and prefers a cinematographic reading of the works to a semiotic one.

An incisive example of the visual analysis shows an image in which an indigenous adult is disproportionately portrayed, shrunken, in the face of a Spanish coloniser. Since Spanish terms such as *oppression* or *exploitation* do not exist in the *Aymara* or *Qhichwa* languages, the word *jisk'chaña* sums them up in an association between humiliation and the condition of servitude. 'Humiliation and disorder go hand in hand' (translated from Cusicanqui, 2021, p. 39) in the *Reverse World* drawn in the work. 'The narrow view of academic criticism, obedient to the notion of "historical truth", overlooked the interpretive value of the image' (Cusicanqui, 2021, p. 45).

The images preserve, for the sociologist, the power of the world's *poiesis* that is kept in the walk and in the *kipus* (mnemotechnical recording system of the ancient Andean peoples). 'Indigenous alterity can be seen as a new universality, which opposes the chaos and colonial destruction of the world and life' (translated from Cusicanqui, 2021, p. 48). Although, for psychoanalysis, the real—and not the imaginary—is the point that articulates what does not give in, let us keep, for now, from the author's sociological theory: (1) the impossibility of association between the image and the word, (2) the reduction of the power of truth to the image, and (3) the drive irruption when one bumps into what they are burying.

The assertion of this mode of obstacle to drive writing gains volume when, in her anthropological studies on the Black Oedipus, Rita Segato (2021) also verifies an encrypted sign dimension referring to racism—which gains a specific form in Brazil. 'As a cognitive and affective operation of purge, exclusion and violence are not exercised on another people, but they emanate from a structure housed inside the subject, planted at the very origin of this structure's emergence trajectory' (translated from p. 243). Analysing the Brazilian postcolonial context, Segato (2021) dedicates a thorough reflection on the unconscious ways of defending colonial violence and its reverberations, in the analysis of the figure of the black woman in Brazil.

The author works on the duality of Brazilian motherhood: on the one hand, the legal and biological figure of the white mother; on the other, the *de facto* mother—the black mother. The author compares the double maternal inscription, in the Brazilian anthropological context, to two figures from religions of African origin in the 'mythological description of the pantheon of deities' (Segato, 2021, p. 221). She likens *Iemanjá* to the legitimate mother, equivalent to the white, legal, cold, hierarchical, distant, and indifferent mother. Meanwhile, *Oxum*, mother of creation, of adoption, whose true affection is mixed with the symbolism of

the sea, treacherous and false, is associated with the historical tradition of the Atlantic and of slavery.

The ambivalence of affections and the erasure of the history of slavery through the exercise of the dual maternal function in Brazil—mother and nanny—is the effect of an operation of *foreclosure* of the black mother by the official white discourse of academia and science until then, updated in the images of the paintings of babies with their wet nurses in the colonial and imperial period. Foreclosure is a juridical figure that implies the loss of the deadline to request a right, as if the criminal situation, by not being reported or legally registered, lost its value of legal effect and existence. Transposed into psychoanalysis, it implies the nonsymbolic inscription of an experience, which, due to the absence of representation, returns its effect on the Real register.

Segato (2021) reads the defence that takes the baby as being the country Brazil and the black mother Africa, in an allusion to the detachment in which the mother, the darkness of the skin, and the original Africa are simultaneously sacrificed. ‘The non-white mother is uprooted and her possibility of inscription—which still remains coded and *encrypted*, as always happens in the psyche—is hidden by smuggling, in her place, another scene that definitively blocks the possibility of rescue’ (translated from Segato, 2021, p. 229; emphasis added).

Once again, we have a block, a scene that sutures the possibility of rescuing the experience. Segato names this casing as a *crypt* with which, like Cusicanqui, she is confronted in her encounter with a story whose pages have been torn out. Although all histories are always written second-hand in the treatment of the death drive, both authors point out a specific blocking operation with the language heir to processes of colonisation and linguistic migration. This obstacle has to do with the way in which imperial languages imposed themselves on the native languages in the colonies and in which language was established in colonised nations. For psychoanalysis, this will be a drive effect, a *jouissance* one.

New languages were born, and others have changed since bygone historical times (Galindo, 2022; Nascimento, 2019). However, according to intense disagreements and discussions in the area of historical linguistics, nothing was as devastating as colonial violence in the creation of new languages. In general, the transformation and birth of new languages were phenomena arising from the arrival of peoples who mixed with a substrate, or even eliminated it, while imposing a new variety, adopting what was there or generating a kind of fusion between languages. In Brazil, the country heir to Portuguese colonisation, the complex constitution of language holds indigenous influences and Afro-grammatical structures arising from enslavement, whose evolution, differentiation, fragmentation, and suppression composed an intricate mosaic with lost origins and ties built by rape, invasion, dispossession, and all kinds of colonising violence.

If Tupi and Macro-jê languages are the largest families of original peoples, and the Bantu, Gbe, and Yoruba languages are those of African origin with the highest incidence in the formation of the Portuguese language in Brazil, we can understand why, for example, we shortened the plurals (they came in the prefix and not in the suffix with an 's') (Galindo, 2022) or the exchange of the 'l' for the 'r' of the Yoruba matrix (Gonzalez, 2020). 'Our Portuguese seems to have been structurally altered by these speakers of African languages' (Galindo, 2022, p. 186). However, what interests us here is what a mother language—*lalangue*—keeps from the sound as an equivocation that resonates as an effect of *jouissance* of the body. How does a language affect the *jouissance*? The effects of the linguicide—of the suppression of language, culture, family, economy, physical, and symbolic territory of belonging—displaced, with enslavement, the colonised body from its possibility of rewriting. It fissured the linguistic sign, without recomposition.

Wiltord (2019) proposes a thesis for the *creole* language, the product of French colonisation in the Antilles, based on a disbelief in symbolic authority. For her, the structure of the articulated *creole* utterances in French is inaudible to those who speak them, in an unconscious denial that focuses on the division of the subject by language. Otherness is founded as authority, producing a degradation of symbolic authority and a superegoic injunction for denial, manifested by distrust of the coloniser's language, a refusal to subjectively engage in dialogue and a use of allusions, periphrases, and subtext in the substitution of words to name objects.

In summary, it is the '*colonial perversion of the symbolic dimension of language*, in relation to the *jouissance* of the body carried by the spoken creole language' (Wiltord, 2019, p. 151). One of the effects of this colonial perversion is the obstacle to the loss of *jouissance* necessary for the emergence of desire and the prevalence not of the repressed symbolic trait as a condition for fantasy to create the envelope around this void, but of the look as a virulent drive object, in which it finds the 'pregnancy of an imagined sexual interpretation of the *real* that has not received oedipal treatment' (p. 152) as in believing in demons. However, in addition to Oedipus and Symbolic, the author highlights *lalangue* as the one that collects the effects of *jouissance* of the body in the equivocation of a spoken language.

Structured language, for Lacan, is what one tries to know about *lalangue*, and with *lalangue* being the deposit of *jouissance* transmitted by the act of speech, equivocation has more to do with this *jouissance* and its unconscious experience than with etymology or grammar. Therefore, Wiltord (2019) proposes the invention of the *creole* language as a treatment of the traumatic reality of colonisation in the Antilles, through the intruding signifiers it introduces not as representatives of the subject, but rather as *ballast of the deposit of colonial jouissance*. Once again, we are facing signifiers that do not represent, but rather carry *jouissance* for their drive remains.

Again, a decolonial author opens the way for us to think of colonisation as producing an unconscious effect more devastating than those already known—such as repression—witnessing the real impossibility of linguistic reach of the symbolic. All this results, in my view, from an adulteration at the level of the sign of *jouissance*, as we will see later.

This is, unlike Freud's classical theory of trauma, a radical suppression of the possibility of assigning meaning to a traumatic experience, whose atrocious colonial *jouissance* brings no possibility of satisfaction (death drive) and remains brutalised and blunted by the imposed foreign language. Unlike the sexual trauma analysed by Freud (1895), there is no hyperlibidinised first scene, which does not find sexual translation (time 2 in Freud) and which, revived in a second updated scene, could finally be translated, associated with its sexual dimension. This is not a current situation (1) hypercathected by the old situation (2). On the contrary, what the children of colonial rape show us is the almost impossible effort to invent resources for the meaning of colonial trauma, for the drive articulation of the deadly *jouissance* of colonisation—which returns updated in meaningless frozen insignia, deposited as a spectrum on bodies whose colour or ethnicity indicate the remains of colonisation. We are facing a current situation (scene 2) influenced by another frozen language and removed from its power of signification (scene 1), a crypt.

How could there be no unconscious incidences of colonisation, if the unconscious is structured exactly like a language and its structure is what attempts to constitute a *savoir* about the mother *lalangue* of *jouissance*? How could there be no effects of *jouissance* if the violent imposition of foreign languages on original languages and the annihilation of the humanity of different African peoples and ethnicities are the constitutive basis of modernity? It is no coincidence that the mask of slave Anastacia as a colonial remnant is repeatedly displayed. Imperial brutality has also affected our land, Pindorama, since colonial times, and the iterative return of the inassimilable *jouissance* of its violence, thus encrypted by the sign, must be formalised to be read and treated decolonially by the psychoanalytic field.

## **A THEORY OF THE CRYPT: ABRAHAM AND TOROK'S MOURNING ILLNESS**

A theory of the crypt was developed by Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok (1995) in order to explain a pathology of mourning (Antunes, 2003; Moreno-Cárdenas, 2023). They start from the analysis of both the dimension and the destiny of the unrepresentable nucleus of its structure, source of the possibility or impossibility of the emergence of the word, and representation of the lived experience. The loss of the mourner would produce a libidinal excess that, experienced as an orgasmic irruption, would engender the affection of shame, which, later, would gain the wrapping of secrecy, as an unconfessable crime.

The relationship with the lost object, through shame and secrecy, would thus lead to the constitutive base of the crypt. It would be articulated to a primary affection of the baby with



the mother, based on the notion of inheriting the pain of separation from the mother, from which words are also born. What is buried with the crypt would be the ambivalence, seduction, or lack of the lost object, perpetuated by the fantasy of incorporation. The theory, based on the psychoanalysis of object relations, understands the mother–infant relationship as a dual unit.

In this process, the authors differentiate incorporation from introjection. Incorporation without translation would be lived in the act and moved by shame in relation to the secret, due to a difficulty in introjecting the lost object. Therefore, incorporation, for the authors, would be a problem at the level of introjection and would differ from it in the mourning process. One of the consequences of this difficulty would in fact be the endocryptic identification as an effect of the traumatic dimension of this pathological grief. The identification of the lost object would occur by incorporating traces of the ghost, of the life of a person-tomb. Additionally, it would be linked to secrets of ancestors that one carries unknowingly; an unfathomable double that is important to highlight, as it implies a transgenerational dimension of the transmission of something that is impossible to pronounce.

A saying buried in one of the parents becomes for the child a dead person without a grave. This ghost then returns from the unconscious and comes to haunt, inducing phobias, madness, obsessions. Its effect can even cross generations and determine the fate of a race. (Translated from Abraham and Torok, 1974, cited by Antunes, 2003, p. 64)

The crypt would lie between the dynamic Unconscious and the Ego of introjection as a kind of ‘artificial unconscious, installed within the Ego’ (translated from Abraham and Torok, 1995, p. 239). Like a wall, the crypt, this kind of tomb, would make the unconscious more impervious to the outside world, less filterable. The crypt would come from this rift and would be structurally distinct from that operated by repression in neurosis. It does not slip, either metonymically or metaphorically, through the chain of signifiers. Neurotic repression would be distinguished from the conservative repression of the crypt. Its consequence, the freezing of the encrypted, would also differ from the neurotic symptom.

In Freudian neurosis theory, repression separates idea and affect, sending the ideational content—source of conflict—to the unconscious system (*Ucs*), keeping affect free in the psychic apparatus. Affect links itself to new substitutive representations in relation to the originally repressed one, since they are less intensely distressing and passable through the libidinal sieve of the cathexes of the preconscious–conscious system (*Pcs–Cs*). In conversion hysteria, the new libidinal investment occurs through the cathexis of a metaphorical substitute of somatic or motor bodily nature, which, by condensation, attracts the entire cathexis to itself.

‘In conversion hysteria, the process of repression is completed by the formation of the symptom, and it does not need, as in anguish hysteria [phobia], to continue until a second

phase' (translated from Freud, 1915a, p. 180). In anguish hysteria, repression succeeds in removing and replacing the idea, but fails to spare the displeasure. Therefore, it undertakes a new attempt to escape, a second phase in which the phobia itself and its necessary avoidances are formed, aimed at preventing the release of anguish and displeasure.

Finally, in the case of obsessional neurosis, the rejected idea is replaced by 'a substitute by displacement' (Freud, 1915a, p. 181) through the cathexis of new representations, small and indifferent, and fails to avoid displeasure. Thus, the repression of the native idea from the Pcs–Cs system is obstinately maintained, as it causes abstention from action, a motor entrapment of the impulse by the idea. 'The work of repression in obsessional neurosis continues in a sterile and endless struggle' (Freud, 1915a, p. 181), and at times moves from obsessive ideas to compulsive acts and from these to rituals.

In the case of the crypt, the defence is more radical and finds no correspondence in language—neither by metonymic slippage, nor by metaphorical condensation—through substitutive signifier rearrangements of the original conflict. It is linked to an unrepresentable core that keeps a dimension of impossibility to speak. It is related to the unconfessable elements of desire, linked to the lost object, which cannot even be pronounced due to the shame they provoke. It is as if, in the face of desire—thus made equivalent to a crime by the authors—a rift of the ego appeared at the very moment of desire's realisation, which, illegitimate, unconfessable, and unnameable, encrypts itself, not becoming translatable.

We highlight from this aspect of the differentiation between the theory of Freudian neurosis and the theory of the crypt by Abraham and Torok (1995) both the transgenerational aspect they assign to the word-tomb, its dimension of interruption of drive movement at the point of its connection with the word, and the formation of the crypt itself. The defensive immobilising effect of the crypt thus opposes the unconscious defence engendered by repression, governed by the libidinal logic of pleasure–unpleasure.

It is worth remembering that Freud adds to his theory of the pleasure principle, postponed by the principle of reality, a new drive dualism with the introduction of the notion of death drive. This always remains without the possibility of connection with representation, in tension with the life drive—pathways that never found 'any possibility of pleasure and that never, even long ago, brought satisfaction, even to impulsive drives that have since been repressed' (translated from Freud, 1920, p. 34). This impossibility to represent will be of great relevance to our proposition. It is responsible for the movement from compulsion to repetition.

The encrypted, thus, refers to content that cannot be displayed in the form of words, remaining unspeakable inside the crypt, as 'words buried alive' (translated from Abraham and Torok, 1995, p. 240). The fact, in itself, remains in a hidden existence attested by a manifest absence at the level of communication, because it is libidinally disaffected, buried in a lost unconscious zone.

This process would be linked to something that the couple calls 'antimetaphor', in which the incorporation process produces a 'demetaphorisation', taken literally, because the mouth cannot enunciate certain phrases that become the thing itself. This theory, too, is linked to the theory of mourning, because behind the fantasy of incorporation that sustains the crypt, there is an unavoidable mourning, preceded by a state of shame-laden self. (Translated from Moreno-Cárdenas, 2023, p. 135)

The defence of the crypt would produce the repetitive return to that point of impossibility, in a fantasy of hibernation. In addition, cryptonyms, a kind of unpronounceable words with multiple meanings, would hide by allusion a foreign and hidden meaning. Thus, the subject cannot manifest itself in relation to its loss, whose impossibility of communication and meaning installs, within the mourning process, a 'secret tomb' (Abraham & Torok, 1995). This would also be the phantasmatic dimension of the unconfessable fantasy of incorporating the object.

In addition, supported by the dual mother–infant relationship, the pair explains the point at which the word does not reach the thing. In this relationship, the 'de-maternalisation' would imply a transmission of the psychic apparatus from the mother to the baby in one of two aspects: word or representation. Words, in a Freudian sense, are taken as a mnemonic trace or acoustic representation (representations of the thing in the *Ucs* system) that, associated with the representations of the word, enter the *Pcs-Cs* system. They can thus be taken as an act of speech or as a phantasmatic embodiment. Hence the insurmountable words linked to transgenerational secrecy forge an obstacle to translation, becoming a pathological ghost, distinct from a structuring ghost. The gaps of the unspeakable would return in the next generation as voids, hauntings, unassimilable ruptures, or ghosts to be dealt with.

## **UNCONSCIOUS WRITING AND DRIVE JOUISSANCE**

The theoretical proposal of Abraham and Torok (1995) brings clinical elements of a very rich approach to the unconscious process of mourning, a true finding. The mode of defence that they verify in the freezing of the crypt—which I understand to happen at the level of the sign—prevents the movement of signification and, therefore, stops the drive circuit, being described very precisely in the mourning illness.

The transgenerational hypothesis as a transmission of what is not in the symbolic, but still exists and produces subjective effects from the real, to put it in a Lacanian manner, is orienting. The relationship between affection, representation, and their not exactly predictable destinies—but made possible since Freud—inaugurate an inspiring theoretical condition about the unspeakable or unrepresentable, in the face of which we return to Lacan. The impossible, for Lacan, has a double dimension: the insufficiency of the system of

representation in reaching the totality of the thing, and the logical emptiness of the very structure of language as a condition of the system of representation.

However, in the theoretical foundation of Abraham and Torok, there is a relationship of homology between the object of reality and the object inscribed as representation. This relationship gives rise to a covering that hides exactly the hiatus through which the detention of the drive takes place. It is precisely because there is the image and the word, interpreted in their relationship in the sign, that it gains the value of representation. Thus, even if we can decant the phantasmagorical real from the impossible to represent in the crypt and its transgenerational envelope as a tomb, a step beyond—and in a certain way, distinct from—this path needs to be taken when we resume our clinical testimony of the colonial past.

It is worth retaking the lived experience of the clinical practice with the unconscious updated in the *quilombola* reality at this point, as a presentified past of colonisation transmitted by its remains, according to Moreno-Cárdenas' (2023) thesis. Let's resume the clinical scene. Melissa is a cisgender, bisexual, black, and *quilombola* adult woman, an abusive user of alcohol and other drugs, a mother, and about 35 years old. She is restless, having difficulty sleeping, tormenting the urban *quilombo* where she resides. The *quilombola* architecture is very peculiar: the houses have little space between them, with a logic in which the smell of a relative's kitchen announces whether food is ready in their house. The noise of the domestic routine shows that there is no depression among the residents. The codes of belonging and of communication are very characteristic of a *quilombola* way of life, for example.

The demand for analytical listening for Melissa is stated by another resident, daughter of the current matriarch of the *quilombo*. The *quilombola* hierarchy goes through the centrality of the female figure. The matriarch, however, is currently a recluse, suffering from a kidney disease. She never appears publicly, despite her photos being shown and her story being constantly retold. As we ask for the origins of Melissa's suffering, a much broader demand for clinical listening emerges. Out of the approximately 35 residents, two-thirds are in mental distress, and some are medicated: anxiety, depression, bulimia, alcoholism, panic disorder. Diagnoses by the *DSM* proliferate.

Where do these pains come from? The collective clinical narrative dates from two years earlier, when the residents of this *quilombo* were legally threatened with eviction, and the ownership of their lands was put in court by real estate and financial interests of wealthy heirs, of a financial and class condition superior to that of the *quilombolas*. The violence in the execution of the lawsuit, carried out with five large vehicles under police command, lasted for a year of moral harassment with constant and persistent surveillance by the police on the dead-end street where the *quilombo* is located. The violent scene is updated, repeated, and frozen, until then without a translation, an immemorial past of expropriation of their own land, moulded by the exploitative colonisation that characterised the occupation of Brazil.

This is when her family, living in four lots with about eleven houses and families of varied composition, in a neighbourhood that became charming in the city due to gentrification processes in the region, discovers its roots in slavery. By seeking their documents of possession and ownership of the land, they recover their history, tied to colonisation processes. The black and formerly enslaved couple, composed of the matriarch from five generations before, had acquired this territory—at the time far from the large city centre, a farm—to reside with their families. They maintained the same traditions of *quilombola* parties to the present day, which guaranteed them the constitutional right to be recognised as a *quilombo* and to guarantee ownership of the land. A new name emerges where before there was not even a trace of this history: ‘we are *quilombolas*’.

However, a remnant of untranslated *jouissance* remained there in the symptoms, that residents lived in unique ways and in the image of slumification and poverty, in the social rest that they embodied. Melissa seemed to us to embody the corrupted index of a discontinuity that it is impossible to attribute meaning to. We proposed, alongside classical individual clinical listening on demand, the methodology of psychoanalytic conversations (Miller, 2013).

The psychoanalytic conversation is a methodology developed by the Freudian Field (Miller, 2013). The method is understood as having a clinical foundation. It consists of collectivised free association, realised around a constitutional standoff, having in the surprise element the incidence of the act of speech. Its effects are singularly gathered by the participants, one by one.

Through the work of free collectivised association together with the residents of the adult generation, the third generation of the *quilombo* began to recount their trajectory and that of their ancestors. The malaise manifested—which we can coin as colonial—in the reported symptoms was dated from the scene of law enforcement through the police approach, which always returned, without slipping. The complaint against Melissa also remained and grew, as if eliminating her would solve the suffering of each *quilombola*.

It was after a clinical hospitalisation of Melissa, on her return, that she was able, as an index of malaise, to produce a discursive effect by moving her position. She received a diagnosis of *schizophrenia* in this hospitalisation, a diagnostic name that produces a meaning by identification with two deceased aunts, through which a secret is revealed. Upon returning to the *quilombo*, she brings the history of the ancestors in a conversation. The matriarch of the first generation of the *quilombo*, when she died, had left her symbolic legacy as an ex-slave woman to her eldest daughter. The new matriarch, at the time, was recognised by all. As an authority, she drew the *quilombo*’s destiny, distributed its lands and its affections in a personalised way, generating affective differences, always inequitable in the epic drama of a family. When she died, she left behind two sisters diagnosed with *schizophrenia*, who were unable to continue the role of matriarch—which was contingently occupied by one of her granddaughters, part of the third generation.

Melissa says that they were all afraid that she would now, as is said in Brazil, 'kill her grandmother in disgust'—the current and sick matriarch who never appeared—just as her mother had been held responsible for the death of the former matriarch, legitimate heir to the *quilombola* power, due to her *difficult* teenage behaviour. Her mother had been a very *rebellious* teenager, also a drug user, and carried the index of *quilombola* malaise, transferred to Melissa. The residents of the *quilombo* resented Dodora, Melissa's mother, as if she were the incarnate evil which would have killed the matriarch in disgust. They blamed themselves for not having saved her from death, even though they knew of her incurable illness. This was the thread that Melissa was able to rescue after returning from her hospitalisation. She, *schizophrenic* like her great-aunts and *difficult* like her mother, also a user of alcohol and other drugs, carried the weight of a grief, an unelaborated loss.

There are, however, two levels of unconscious defence here. In one of them, the signifier *schizophrenia*, which is metaphorically condensed in the work of mourning the matriarch, undoes a symbolic dimension blocked in Melissa's body, in a symbolic and generational thread with Dodora, her mother, and her great-aunts. *Difficult* and *schizophrenic* were, in this plane, nominations of symbolic passage, a signifier operation that mobilises the drive circuit by association. However, this signifier chain does not displace the real dimension of the colonial past, updated in the threat of losing the original lands and crystallised in indelible images embedded in the urban *quilombo*, even if this threat reaches the *quilombo's* heart.

In this second and simultaneous plane, the slavery past of the elder woman, the original owner of the lands, returns in a new context, that of the legal standoff, and with a new name, *quilombo*. It carries with it a hiatus, an interval in which the drive decants what is impossible to write, encrypted, as an index of colonial malaise. Black and *quilombola* female Melissa mobilises the sign that, in this plot, drags the entire Brazilian people. As an index within a corrupted sign, it does not produce a symbolic association, as a signifier, with the colonial past of the country and this people. On the contrary, it returns to the real of the index images frozen over the prejudice against the *quilombo*, encrypted by the *gaze* object thus sutured.

What we witnessed in the psychoanalytic conversations was a breaking of a jar that spilled the drive intensity contained therein, as Cusicanqui (2021) had pointed out about the uprisings. Screaming, crying, fighting, and a deadly and disorderly drive dimension become the centre of the scene which words do not contain. The treatment of this present past of colonisation, as proposed by Moreno-Cárdenas' (2023) thesis, does not exactly imply weaving a border, but writing a new text, where before there was nothing to read and to associate. In the clinic, a rewriting of the present with an unprecedented signifier, *quilombola*, made possible a new version of history that, in turn, founded another subjective condition, and consequently a political and social one.

A condemned, proscribed, inhuman, unpronounceable and unmentionable past: the past of enslavement returns as a spectre. Its index: the black colour of the skin. Its symptom:

suffering in singular manifestations. Its silence: the ancestral pain that cannot be translated. Its means of *jouissance*: racism. Its crypt: the lost thread of history. Here we have the other level of the unrepresentable that refers neither to the unreachable dimension of the word in representing the thing, nor to the logical dimension of the impossible of the very structure of language, but to the crypt as a phantasmagorical inheritance of the colonised unconscious.

How does one explain this element? How is its impossibility of translation articulated, and how is it related to drive detention? It is not about the absence of signifier connection or of repression of a country's history, of denial or rebuttal. This psychic operation focuses on a traumatic impossible, which gains, in the countries heir to colonisation processes, as Cusicanqui (2021) and Segato (2021) found, a special mode of unconscious agency.

### **MEMORY, CONSCIOUSNESS, AND IMPOSSIBLE WRITINGS**

Recovering briefly the way Abraham and Torok (1995) define the crypt, they theorise it as a contingency, a deviation, a singular exceptionality. It is, for them, the pathology of a mourning that encounters obstacles in its elaboration work. An orgasmic excitement would be its signal. Shame, its motivation. The secret of a criminal desire, its core. The risk of its unbearable revelation, the threat to defend it against. The crypt, finally, its defence.

The pair also notices an element absent from the scene, as a transgenerational heritage, which resists and insists on returning as a ghost or demon, as Wiltord (2019) observes. That which never gained inscription, an unheard desire, insists, even if it is not written and named. How? Would this not be a structural and indelible element in every transmission? Would what is encrypted not simply have to do with the Lacanian real that is impossible to write, but that still produces effects of *jouissance*? Would it not then simply be a common universal? Would colonial modernity, as a discourse, imprint its specificity on this unconscious defence structure? Would this be the structuring matrix of our time and our geopolitics?

Lacan says that, in the post-war context, he received three doctors from Togo—a small country located in the west of the African continent, still colonised in the 1940s–1950s—for care in Paris, which was then the capital of the colonial empire. At the time, he was surprised by the encounter with a colonised unconscious. 'It was the unconscious that they had *sold* them at the same time as the *laws of colonisation*, an exotic, regressive form of the master's discourse, in the face of capitalism, which is called imperialism' (translated from Lacan, 1992, p. 85, emphasis added).

There were not even 'traces' of the tribal uses and beliefs of their Togolese origins. Lacan was then confronted with 'things that they had *not* forgotten' (translated from Lacan, 1992, p. 85, emphasis added) and that they knew from an ethnographic or journalistic point of view. 'Their unconscious ones functioned according to the good rules of Oedipus' (translated from

Lacan, 1992, p. 85). Why does Lacan highlight this observation with astonishment? What would he be seeing there, even without unravelling it? Could we bring his testimony—one of the rare testimonies of his clinical practice—closer to what Cusicanqui and Segato also verify?

A second passage by Lacan about his own clinical practice involving some distinct ethnicity, religiosity, or culture, is a commentary on caring for a Muslim man with symptoms involving his hands. In a distinct direction from the interpretation usually attributed, in his time, to child masturbation, Lacan undertakes a discussion about the superego and its function in the symbolic construction of the symptom in the history of the subject and in relation to the history of their culture:

This symbolic world is not limited to the subject, because it takes place in a language that is the common language, the *universal* symbolic system, insofar as it establishes its *empire* over a certain community to which the subject belongs. (Translated from Lacan, 1986, p. 227, emphasis added).

Let us keep, from this case, the universal located by language as an empire.

Lacan discusses the analysand's aversion to the Quran. In his dramatic family history, this man spent his childhood hearing the story that his father lost his job and, equated to a thief, had to have his hand cut off by Islamic law. This statement becomes precisely 'isolated' (Lacan, 1986, p. 228) from the rest of the law in a privileged way. Due to the conflict it installs, and because it is symbolically subtracted, it returns in a substitutive and symptomatic way. The individual history of a subject of the unconscious is thus written in relation to the cultural history of their people from the remains, holes, and fracture points that the superego embodies.

A discordant statement, ignored in the law, promoted to the foreground by a traumatic event, which reduces the law to a point whose character is inadmissible, non-integrable—this is what this repetitive, blind instance is, which we usually define by the term superego. (Translated from Lacan, 1986, p. 229)

There is, however, a subtle difference between Lacan's two accounts. In the first, it is an unconscious colonised by the empire, whose foreign language forges a discourse that is sold and written against the grain as an unconscious law for everyone. In the second, the subject is immersed in a symbolic system that already operates as *universal* for him, insofar as it establishes its *empire over a certain community to which the subject belongs*. Sharing the same language, he finds himself immersed in a particularised universal, although devoted to a specific religious culture within it. The issue of language migration, especially when violently forced, is central to this difference. '[Linguistic] processes almost never eliminate something without leaving a mark: a survival' (Galindo, 2022, p. 127).

Freudian metapsychology explains these survivals of a previous inscription system present in a current one through a complex plot of relationship between the drive circuit, which always seeks satisfaction (Freud, 1915b), and the system of writing and representation of the



psychic apparatus. This plot requires an understanding of the functioning of the unconscious 'as a censored chapter' (Lacan, 1953/1998a, p. 260) for the sexualised body of a subject who seeks paths to drive satisfaction.

It is important to remember that the subject of the unconscious is the effect of a slip of language between two signifiers. In other words, the signifier (S2) that emerges to signify a first signifier (S1), produces as an effect the subject divided by this articulation that never reaches them. It is erased (*aphanisis*) by language and leaves a meaningless remainder (object *a*). The body, always *extimate* to this system, configures 'the field in which A is inscribed, this place that is the great Other' (translated from Lacan, 2008, p. 301) and that remains as radical alterity.

Therefore, the way in which the drive (as intensity) is captured by language and becomes linked to thought and action implies this peculiar system of representation that animates the sexual body of the speaker (Freud, 1915b; Lacan, 1959–1960/1991). In dealing with a phenomenon of language such as the crypt, therefore, we are simultaneously verifying a bodily event, but not in its empirical or symbolic sense. It does not happen without the external world (*Umwelt*) and its historical and geopolitical determinants, but these are found in a peculiar topology, 'since the subject is, if we may say so, in an internal exclusion to its object' (Lacan, 1965–1966/1998b, p. 875).

Let us take, then, the dimension of the impossible inherent to every function of speech. We can think of the radically unrepresentable—in Freud, *das Ding*—as that which will never be apprehended by the system of representation. It does not imply what has been repressed as written and erased from the preconscious-conscious system (*Pcs-Cs*), but as that which will never gain representation. When something is affirmed in the field of representation, it creates a void, expelled, which always remains as an intensity, a drive source. This original void, an autoerotic sexual source, reveals 'the nodal point through which the unconscious drive is linked to sexual reality' (Lacan, 1964/1998c, p. 146).

The unconscious system (*Ucs*) contains the representation of the thing (*Sachvorstellung*) which, hypercathected by the representation of the word (*Wortvorstellung*), becomes part of *the Pcs-Cs* system when it becomes the representation of the object. What is expelled, or not written in this pairing, remains outside the field of meaning, remains real. 'Sach and Wort are therefore closely linked, they form a pair. *Das Ding* is something else' (translated from Lacan, 1959–1960/1991, p. 61). How is this writing forged? What does it discard? What survives? With Freud (1895), we learn that the experience of the world gains representation and existence in the psychic apparatus from losses (of satisfaction) in the processes of its inscription. The forms of unconscious inscription are three: imprinting (*Wz*), transcription (*Ub*), retranscription (*Vb-Bews*). At the level of psychic writing, with each new record:

Subsequent transcription inhibits the previous one and removes the arousal process. When a subsequent transcription is missing, arousal is managed according to the psychological laws in

force in the previous period and depending on the pathways opened at that time. Thus, an anachronism persists: in a given region the 'fueros' still exist; we are in the presence of 'survivals'. (Translated from Freud, 1895, p. 326)

**Figure 1. Letter 52 (Freud, 1896, p. 325)**

W	Wz	Ub	Vb	Bews
<i>Wahrnehmungen</i> (perceptions)	<i>Wahrnehmungszeichen</i> (register of perception)	<i>Unbewusstsein</i> (traces of the unconscious)	<i>Vorbewusstsein</i> (preconsciousness)	<i>Bewusstsein</i> (consciousness)
	first record	second record	third record	

We then have (1) pure perceptual intensity (*W*), (2) the unconscious trait (*Wz*) without linkage (which we can associate with the *letter* of *jouissance* in Lacan, functioning by simultaneity), (3) the unconscious trait (*Ub*) as conceptual memories (which we can already approximate to the signifier, in its phonematic value in Lacan or as a sound image in Freud), (4) the preconscious representation (or the word) (*Vb*), and (5) the structured language of consciousness (which produces meaning and signification) (*Bews*). The connection of the word representation that engenders the object representation occurs through the sound image of the word and the visual representations of the object. 'The representation of the word is indicated as a closed complex of representations, whereas the representation of the object is indicated as an open complex' (Freud, 1915c, p. 244). Hence the symbolic capacity of the apparatus, in which memory and perception-consciousness are excluded.

This is the path of ordering the drive by language, which is originally experienced in the mother language, *lalangue*, as *jouissance*. *Lalangue* serves for something other than communication: it implies the mode of occupation of the mother language, while language is what one tries to know concerning *lalangue*. If language is made of this mother language as a lucubration of *savoir*, the unconscious, in its real dimension, is a type of know-how with *lalangue* (Lacan, 1972–1973/1982). Therefore, reality is always approached with the devices of *jouissance*, articulated by language. All structured *savoir* makes the real incomplete and creates a frame of the world.

If the language of *jouissance* is always the mother tongue as Other, what would be the effects of the imposed interference of another language, when foreign, with its own sounds and rhythms, on the body and experience in colonial processes? Would its effects cease with time, or would they be transmitted or still repeated in an updated form? We address these different questions by listening to a subject or reading a social phenomenon in countries heir to colonisation processes. If we take the unconscious in its transferential, epistemic aspect, we will be closer to what is articulated as language. If we take the unconscious in its real aspect, we will be further from this language structure and closer to the language of *jouissance*.

Thus, passing on this rest not inscribed in history, which is a function of the analyst's desire (Lacan, 2005), and implies, at the level of culture, its historicised writing. The insistence with which something is repeated, since it is not remembered, is a psychic event coextensive with the functioning of the drive (Lacan, 1959–1960/1991), both with regard to what is recorded and to what is rejected or denied, erased, rebutted, or destroyed. How, finally, does the crypt fit into this logic?

### THE CRYPT IN A LACANIAN AND DECOLONIAL PERSPECTIVE

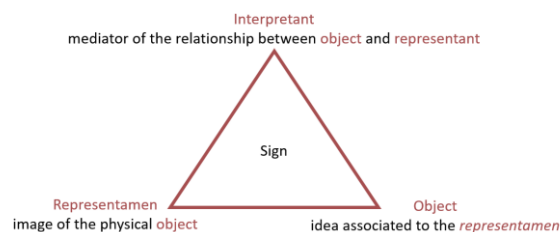
Let us restate the difference between the defence of repression, as in the case of Lacan's Muslim analysand or the slip through the *schizophrenia* signifier in the *quilombo*, and the crypt, as something that cannot be passed onto the record of memory writing and insists, as in the case of the colonised analysers of Togo or of the dimension of the transmission of the remains of enslavement in the case of the *quilombo*. In repression, the defence operation happens by signifier substitution, by the way in which representations of the word will rearrange with the representations of the thing or unconscious traits, in the composition of the representation of the object in the return of the repressed. The quantitative aspect of the libidinal surplus originally present in the conflict that causes the repression is decisive (Freud, 1915a). The essence of repression, in neurosis, consists of removing this certain quantitatively uncomfortable content from the *Pcs-Cs* (preconscious-conscious), keeping it at a distance.

The crypt effect of colonisation structures, differently, a mode of defence that generates an inertia of the drive arousal from an obstacle within the sign itself, producing its suspension through an element that fixes the representation of the thing, where the emptiness of the object would allow its interpretant connection. There is a detention of its possibility of effectiveness within the very sign. This structural, unconscious, and colonial dimension of the crypt, not only contingent on a pathological mourning, differs from the Freudian unconscious modes of defence (denial, repression, refusal, and rejection) systematised by Lacan throughout his work. It derives from a psychoanalytic reading in a decolonial ellipse of clinical phenomena (Guerra, 2021).

Another important reference to the psychoanalytic discussion of the phantasmagoric past and its incidence in the present and the future, constructed in a decolonial and psychosocial perspective, can be found in *Hauntings: Psychoanalysis and Ghostly Transmissions* (Frosh, 2018). The work utilises the idea of *haunting* to explore psychoanalytically the way in which identities, beliefs, intimate relationships, and hatreds are transmitted throughout generations and between people. He touches on the secrets we inherit, the attraction of the past, and the way in which emotions, thoughts, and impulses coming from others enter us as a kind of immaterial—though real—communication.

In Lacan, it comes from the adoption of Peirce's sign theory from the 1960s onwards. Just as he does in relation to Saussure's theory of the linguistic sign, Lacan also adopts the logical model of the Peircean—more so than the realistic—sign in his own way, shaping it to his theory of the unconscious, formulated from the category of the real and the *object a*, his inventions. For Peirce (1932; 2005), a sign, or *representamen*, is something that occupies the place of something (object) for someone, under some relationship or under some title. The created sign is the *interpretamen* of the first sign and occupies the place of the object (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Peirce's linguistic sign**



The object is thought of in a double strand. The dynamic object is the one that exists in reality and the immediate object the one represented by the *representamen*. This index links itself to the object in a causal relationship, based on the ground of this relationship, with the (*vague*) indeterminacy on the side of the *interpretant*, not of the *representamen–object* relationship. Peircian realism, therefore, is linked to an empiricist theory of representation, which sees reality as a model for determining the function of the sign (Cardoso, 2012), being thus naturalised and based on the presupposition of prior sensible knowledge of it.

Lacan introduces the Peircian sign definitively into another realism. He presents it for the first time in class on January 13, 1960, in his seminar on ethics. The sign is presented as that which returns, externalised drive affectation expelled as it first was, as a logical and constant remain, therefore denaturalised, whose positivity marks the limit of language, its indeterminacy, for the conception of the function of reality (Lacan, 1959–1960/1991). The sign in Lacan points out the inconsistency in the very registration of the symbolic. 'This is not a limitation of language understood as an instrument of mediation, but of the ontologically contradictory nature of the very determination of the real' (translated from Cardoso, 2012, p. 175).

The sign designates the very presence of structural indeterminacy, breaking the Peircian causality between *representamen* and object. For Lacan (1971–1972), there is no other *representamen* than the object *a*, a limit internal to the symbolic, an inconsistency internal to the universe of language. The dynamic object is taken in Peirce as *das Ding* and in Lacan as a regulatory idea, presupposed as a condition of possibility of the symbolic itself—the effect of

the object *a* as *representamen* and not its cause (Cardoso, 2012, p. 176). The real as *reference* and object *a* as *representamen* thus introduce the concept of sign in Lacanian realism.

‘The sign is the symbolic One that marks the presence of the unrepresentable within the representation, not as a qualitatively sensitive form itself, but as a demand for the symbolisation or capture of *jouissance*’ (Cardoso, 2012, p. 177). Here, the crypt can finally be understood as an obstacle to symbolisation by the violent interposition of another foreign mother tongue of *jouissance*. It disarticulates the possibility of some impression of the lived being written in the translation apparatus, reducing the experience to the reiterated return to the real (dynamic object in Peirce or reference in Lacan). This is because the *representamen*, as an object *a*, the logical condition of signification, is sutured by this other language, as an interpretation that deactivates the sign capacity of representation that would link it to the object, producing the slip of signification and of drive. Its drive effect iteratively returns on the body as dissociation and fixity, and its remains are not collected by fantasy, but hover as hauntings not integrable by the system.

Thus, the linguistic migration forced and violently imposed by the colonial processes of enslavement produces a sign corruption. However, it holds and forges a cryptic structure that contains the original mother tongue of *jouissance*, stopping its alive and mobile drive intensity from moving for interpretation, detaining it inside the sign crypt itself, surrounded by the shell of imperial language, and producing its effects on the body. There would be no first impression of the drive, due to this forced external migration.

Hence why, when the crypt is touched, its deadly drive return is always so exacerbated and delocalised. The casing of the imperial language distorts what is experienced and stagnates, burying it alive, the very experience of *jouissance*, imprisoned as an index under its domain. Thus, its return effects gain singular dramas as bodily events and related phantasmagoria, on the one hand, and freeze in *jouissance* indexes on the images that evoke its mark, on the other.

This is what Lacan verifies in his patients from Togo, Cusicanqui (2021) in what remains buried in postcolonial life, and Segato (2020) in the oedipal crypt of the Brazilian maternal duality. It is what Fanon had also already verified as a theoretical inadequacy of the classic conceptual schemes of psychoanalysis for the colonised. With the Antillean Black colonised person, there is a myth to be faced, which is awakened by the racialised gaze of the white on the weight of their melanin. He conceives racism on at least three levels: phenotypic, linguistic, and introjective. ‘The Antillean [if he goes to Europe] must then choose between his family and European society’ (translated from Fanon, 2018, p. 133). This drama, lived in daylight, repeated, does not have time to be ‘unconscientised’ (Fanon, 2008). Or, as Lacan had formulated: ‘Their unconscious was not that of their childhood memories—this was palpable—but their childhood was retroactively lived in our family categories’ (Lacan, 1992, p. 85).

The issue is not exactly a lack of time to unconscientise the traumatic experience of colonial devastation, but the structural signic impossibility of structure, at the level of body and language, to write the deadly drive, arising from the imposition of imperialist *jouissance* in its linguistic-political-drive capture. Its return as a memory (Moreno-Cárdenas, 2023) would be, at the same time, an effect of and openness to the psychoanalyst's clinical work.

## **FINALLY, TO NOT BACK DOWN IN THE FACE OF POLITICS**

Let us return to the clinical scene of the *quilombo*. Starting from the *schizophrenia* diagnosis, the patient could work the signifier, the *jouissance*, and the crypt in at least three dimensions. Firstly, she unidentifies herself from her mother, who had received the same diagnosis—with both being seen as the 'rebels' of the *quilombo*. Along this line, the identification with her mother's 'rebelliousness' names a way to enjoy the alcohol abuse in the singular plane of a body which enjoys. Both this identification and the *jouissance* correlated to it collapse.

Secondly, she is diagnosed, as her grandmother and great-aunt before her, as 'schizophrenic'. This diagnosis, which she associates with her ancestors, breaks a transgenerational pact of silence over these women, through which the lines of affection and jealousy, of resentment and anger, emerge abruptly. Through its being named by classical psychiatry, the signifier 'schizophrenia' allows, in a metonymic slip, the transgenerational work of mourning and of writing a new symbolic belonging.

However, it is in the third axis of symptomatic overdetermination that the crypt manifests itself. As an index of colonial *malaise*, this woman enunciates with her symptoms the incidence of neocolonial violence. These *quilombolas* were legally threatened to lose their lands, being invaded by the police to be evicted from their properties. The violent scene of five police vehicles, cornering the residents and attempting to expel them from their properties, updates, repeats, and freezes an immemorial past—until then without translation—modelled after the exploitation colonialism which characterised the occupation of Brazilian lands. This is a frozen and updated traumatic scene that could finally gain drive movement.

The living of *jouissance*, blocked by the colonial crypt, is an effect of imperialism, as a colonial discourse that sells and founds the signic dam based on a supposed universal and univocal history—S1 of the colonial master's discourse (Guerra, 2022)—which wishes to domesticate and normalise the body of *jouissance* in the neocolonial fabric. However, it is always left to the subject, like Melissa, to consent or not to consent, to violate the code and crack, break, shatter the crypt. To write other names from their remains, to invent new arrangements for the social bond.

From the perspective of psychoanalytic listening, taking into account the always colonised dimension of the unconscious avoids its reification, as well as the entification of the Other, and also sets in motion its double effect—subjective and political—on track for continuation. The clinical value of the crypt, notably the incidence of the drive dimension in the political phenomenon, as that which does not give way, reintroduces the body and the subject excluded by modern rationality. The psychoanalyst, thus engaged, is not outside the structure, but must position themselves to operate from it without suturing its opening conditions.

Its intense drive effect can then gain movement in the body and language. ‘The psychoanalyst corrects the *hybris* with a certainty: that none of his peers will dive into this opening and, therefore, that he himself will know how to remain on the edge’ (translated from Lacan, 1967/2003, p. 348). A delicate and determined analytical position to sustain the fissures where truculence and brutality have become a colonising way of suturing the body of *jouissance*.

For a psychoanalyst aware of the effects of colonialism, it is no longer possible to align with the violent processes of neocolonisation or to cover the circuit of *jouissance* in clinical practice with the same veil of colonising imperialist obscenity related to it. Not retreating from politics may be, today, a sign indicating the path for the psychoanalyst.

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