# Psychoanalysis

## K

#### The strike is motivated by a desire for recognition, a desire internalized from the Other that sacrifices true enjoyment in the name of social authority.

McGowan 13 Todd McGowan, 2013, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis,” University of Nebraska Press/Lincoln and London

When subjects enter into society, the social order confronts them with a demand. This demand for the sacrifice of enjoyment offers them social recognition in return. Recognition grounds the subjects’ identities and allows them to experience themselves as valuable. The socially recognized subject has a worth that derives solely from recognition itself. Popular kids may believe that their sense of worth is tied to an activity — playing football, obtaining good grades, being a cheerleader — but in fact it depends on the recognition that an anonymous social authority accords those who engage in these activities. Though we might imagine the football player fully enjoying himself and his popular status, the recognition that comes with this status renders enjoyment impossible insofar as popularity adheres to the social authority’s demand rather than its unarticulated desire.17 The demand that confronts the subject entering the social order is directly articulated at the level of the signifier. Social authority says to the subject, “Act in this way, and you will receive approval (or recognition).” But the demand conceals an unconscious desire that is not articulated on the level of the signifier. What the authority really wants from the subject is not equivalent to what it explicitly demands in signifiers. This desire of social authority or the Other engenders the subject’s own desire: the subject’s desire is a desire to figure out what the Other wants from it — to solve the enigma of the Other’s desire and locate itself within that desire. The subject becomes a desiring subject by paying attention not to what the social authority says (the demand) but to what remains unsaid between the lines (the desire). The path of desire offers the subject the possibility of breaking from its dependence on social authority through the realization that its secret, the enigma of the Other’s desire, does not exist — that the authority doesn’t know what it wants. Such a realization is not easy to achieve, but adopting the attitude of desire at least makes it possible. For the subject who clings to the social authority’s demand, dependence on this authority becomes irremediable and unrealizable. This is the limitation of pseudo-Hegelian political projects oriented around garnering recognition. They necessarily remain within the confines of the order that they challenge, and even success will never provide the satisfaction that the project promises. Full recognition would bring with it not the sense of finally penetrating into the secret enclave of the social authority but instead the disappointment of seeing that this secret does not exist. The widespread acceptance of gay marriage in the United States, for instance, would not provide a heretofore missing satisfaction, because the social authority that would provide the recognition is not a substantial entity fully consistent with itself. Even though institutional authority can grant a marriage certificate to gay couples and the majority of the popula- tion can recognize the validity of the marriage, there is no agency that can authorize such a marriage that is itself authorized. Social authority, in other words, is always unauthorized or groundless, and this is the ultimate reason why the pursuit of recognition leads to frustration. Those who seek social recognition structure their lives around the social authority’s demand, and recognition is the reward that one receives for doing one’s social duty. For instance, in order to gain popularity, one must adhere to the social rules that lead to popularity. This involves wearing the proper clothes, hanging out with the right people, playing the approved sports, and talking in the correct fashion. Too much deviation from the standard dissolves one’s popularity. Even those who disdain popularity most often align themselves with some other source of recognition and thereby invest themselves in another form of it. The outsider who completely rejects the trappings of the popular crowd but slavishly obeys the demands of fellow outsiders remains within the orbit of social recognition. This devotion to social recognition is more apparent, though not more true, among the young; the adult universe employs strictures with a similar severity.18 Fol- lowing the path of desire — going beyond the explicit demand of the social authority — has a cost in terms of social status. Those who restrict themselves to the authority’s demand do not neces- sarily evince more obedience to actual laws than others do. In fact, the social authority’s demand often conflicts with laws because it demands love, not just obedience. Criminals who flaunt the law for the sake of accumulating vast amounts of money are among those most invested in this demand. There is no inherent radicality in criminal behavior, and most criminals tend to be politically conservative.19 The object of the demand is the subject’s complete sacrifice for the sake of the social authority, not simply adherence to a set of laws. By imposing a demand that requires subjects to violate the law, the author- ity creates a bond of guilt among those who follow this demand. For instance, contemporary capitalist society demands the unrestricted accumulation of capital, even if this requires bypassing ethical or legal considerations at some point. Those who adhere to this demand to such an extent that they break the law or act against their own conscience find themselves all the more subjected to the social authority than if the demand didn’t include the dimension of transgression. The guilt that the demand engenders in them seals their allegiance. This is the logic of the hazing ritual, which always necessitates a violation of the law or common morality. The demand aims to redirect subjects away from their own enjoyment and toward social pro- ductivity. This turn is unimaginable without guilt, which is the fundamental social emotion. Subjects who sacrifice enjoyment for the sake of recognition do so with the expectation that this sacrifice will pay off on the other side, that the rewards of recognition will surpass the enjoyment that they have given up. This wager seems to have all the empirical evidence on its side: every day, images of the most recognized subjects enjoying themselves bombard us. We see them driving in the nicest cars, eating in the finest restaurants, wear- ing the most fashionable clothes, and having sex with the most attractive people, among other things. On the other side, we rarely see the enjoyment of those who remain indifferent to the appeal of recognition. By definition, they enjoy in the shadows. What’s more, the apparent misery of those who do not receive recognition is readily visible among the social outcasts we silently pass every day. To all appearances, the sacrifice of enjoyment for the sake of recognition is a bargain, as long as one ends up among the most recognized. The problem with this judgment stems from its emphasis on visibil- ity; it mistakes the display of enjoyment for the real thing. Someone who was authentically enjoying would not need to parade this enjoyment. The authentically enjoying subject does not perform its enjoyment for the Other but remains indifferent to the Other. As Joan Copjec notes, “Jouissance flourishes only there where it is not validated by the Other.”20 Enjoyment consumes the subject and directs all of the subject’s attention away from the Other’s judgment, which is why one cannot perform it and why being a social outcast doesn’t bother the enjoying subject. One immerses oneself completely in enjoyment, and the enjoyment suffices for the subject. In contrast, recognition, though it offers its own form of satisfaction, ulti- mately leaves the subject eager for something else. No matter what level of recognition subjects receive, they always find it insufficient and seek more. Unlike enjoyment, recognition is an infinite struggle.

#### The subject is alienated when it articulates its desires – incomplete signifiers structure the emergence of subjectivity and produce repetitive drives to fill the lack that justify coercive violence. Thus, the ROB is to traverse the fantasy – that means exposing drives.

Matheson 15 Calum Matheson, PhD, 2015, “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive,” University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, [Calum Matheson is author of Desiring the Bomb: Communication, Psychoanalysis, and the Atomic Age (University of Alabama). He is a former high school debater. His research focuses on intersections of rhetoric, media, and theories of psychoanalysis and deconstruction. His current work focuses on right-wing political extremism, conspiracy thinking, and Lacanian concepts of anxiety and psychosis. He has also published work on argument, history of rhetoric, and games. Dr. Matheson is a former debate coach at Harvard University and a current candidate at the Pittsburgh Psychoanalytic Center.], <https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/concern/dissertations/6682x4537>, SJBE

The Real Jacques Lacan’s notion of the Real is notoriously difficult to define. In his book on the subject, Tom Eyers calls it the “most elusive” of Lacan’s concepts, but one that is also one that is “central” and “determining” for psychoanalysis (1). There are common elements of the various definitions. First, an agreement that both the economy of tropes that allows the conditions for meaning to emerge (the Symbolic) and the meanings and values invested in these tropes, including the subject itself (the Imaginary), do not and cannot perfectly capture all of existence or experience. Second, this unassimilable remainder structures the Symbolic and Imaginary, just as they structure each other, and thus all three registers are knitted together as demonstrated in Lacan’s famous “Borromean Knot.” The Real is what escapes mediation, what disrupts language itself. To explain its significance and relationship to desire requires examining its foundational role in the formation of the subject. The Real can be understood as the constitutive lack of the subject, its separation from the rest of existence by the self-definition necessary for it to come into being in the first place. This is made clear in the mirror stage, where the subject moves from a fragmented, disorganized concept of the body to the “finally donned armor of an alienating identity that will mark his [sic] entire mental development with its rigid structure” (Lacan, “Mirror Stage” 78). The formation of a discrete subject (a function in the Imaginary register) is a compromise. Its formation allows for participation in the Symbolic because to participate in that economy of exchange requires a “social I” (Lacan, “Mirror stage,” 79). This participation comes at the cost of alienation because the subject trades in a world of symbols which by their nature stand in for what is not present, and thus inescapably mediate the (Real) world outside of the subject, rather than making it present. This lack built in to the subject is the engine of desire: the subject’s divide from an object is a prerequisite for the desire of such an object, but the condition of mediation makes it impossible to ever incorporate it in a perfectly satisfying way. Thus desire remains unfulfilled and each chase for a symbol leads to another in loop which the very constitution of the subject dictates must be endless. This is the basic operation of the death drive which is not distinct from Eros. Were the impossible to occur and the drive of Eros to be fulfilled, it would be extinguished, as there would be nothing left to desire. Thus all drives aim, in a sense, at their own extinction, and therefore there is in a sense only one—the drive that aims towards the extinction of desire through its complete fulfillment in continuity with the world that was lost when the subject became distinct from it in the mirror stage. Although the death drive might stand in for the singular character of the drive, it should not be understood as a desire for the actual biological death of the subject’s body, or even the desire to inflict death on others. The self-destruction of the death drive is a desire to break the limits of the self as the alienating armor of the subject by experiencing unmediated contact with the Real. Death still defines its operation in other ways. The last portion of Lacan’s “The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis” explains the metaphorical centrality of death as the center of a torus formed by incessant symbolization. The fort-da game is most significant not because it shows that the child wishes to destroy its mother or even inoculate itself against that possibility, but because it assimilates the child into the Symbolic order through the repetition of the signifiers fort and da, which stand in for presence and absence. Death is central to language because the symbol itself invokes the absence and loss of nonexistence since its function is to stand in for something that is gone. Language swirls around this absent center of death, a primordial absence encased in the inner ring of the torus, while the outer surfaces of language hold all else that cannot be symbolized at bay on the outside (Lacan, “Function and Field” 260-264). Paradoxically, death is necessarily evoked by the symbol as that which is absent and also made possible in the first place by that same symbol. The separation of the subject into its alienating identity as a social object makes a meaningful concept of death possible because without it there is no dasein, no individual, no singular human to die. George Bataille explains this with an entomological example. If a scientist picks one fly from a swarm, that fly is subject to death, because its end means the end of the discontinuous being selected by the entomologist. Without differentiation of its members, however, the swarm lives on; the selection of the fly is for the entomologist, not the animal (Bataille, “Hegel, Death and Sacrifice” 14-16). Thus it is with human beings. The subject is founded by a rejection of its sole animal nature by participating in a world of work and accumulation, mediated by language—essentially Lacan’s Symbolic. Thus individuals are made discontinuous with the general economy of matter and energy from which all things are formed by a conceptual separation inextricably bound up in death. Our existences are thus defined by discontinuity from a world of continuity, and for Bataille as for Lacan, our drives are singular in the sense that sex is a coupling that unifies with another and momentarily overcomes discontinuity just as death is the end of the subject’s brief separation from a universe differentiated only by the dismembering violence of our imposition of symbols upon it (Bataille, Erotism 13-17). The experience of death may still be unique because it suggests the absence implied by the sign and because it can be experienced only once by the subject—and for obvious reasons, cannot be symbolized by anyone with first-hand experience. As Freud argues in “Thoughts For The Times On War and Death,” we cannot even hope to imagine our own deaths because to do so demands that we imagine them from some perspective which would be destroyed in the experience itself. Death and the Real are therefore not identical, but are closely linked. The most important characteristic of the Real is not just that it suggests existence beyond language, but that this world-for-itself (to borrow from Eugene Thacker) intrudes on human reality and reveals it to be incomplete. Encompassing Max Picard’s concept of silence, the Real is not the absence of human reality so much as the traumatic revelation that that reality was always incomplete, always feigned in the face of existence so much more than human mediation has already covered. Chris Lundberg uses Lacan’s distinction between reality, being the social world of human construction, and the Real, being the occasional but inevitable failure of that reality, to develop his own distinction between failed unicity and feigned unicity. The Symbolic operates as an economy of interconnected and mutually-referential tropes weaving a kind of fabric that is the precondition for meaning, an environment in which social relationships can be understood in context. When the unified illusion of the social fails, we are compelled to stitch the tears in that fabric to maintain the world that gives us meaning (Lacan in Public 2-3). An account by Bill Laurence, the only journalist allowed to witness the Trinity test, provides evidence for this rupture and repair. While “not a sound could be heard” for the period after the flash and before the thunder, Laurence saw civilization itself collapse in an instant: The big boom came about one hundred seconds after the great flash—the first cry of a newborn world. It brought the silent, motionless silhouettes to life, gave them a voice. A loud cry filled the air. The little groups that had hitherto stood rooted to the earth like desert plants broke into a dance—the rhythm of primitive man dancing at one of his fire festivals at the coming of spring. They clapped their hands as they leaped from the ground…The dance of the primitive man lasted but a few seconds, during which an evolutionary period of about 10,000 years telescoped. Primitive man was metamorphosed into modern man—shaking hands, slapping his fellow on the back, all laughing like happy children. (12)

#### Vote negative to embrace the death drive – produce an injunction in the 1AC’s desire and say ‘No’ to their compulsive fantasy world.

McGowan 13 Todd McGowan, 2013, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis,” University of Nebraska Press/Lincoln and London, SJBE

There is no path leading from the death drive to utopia. The death drive undermines every attempt to construct a utopia; it is the enemy of the good society. It is thus not surprising that political thought from Plato onward has largely ignored this psychic force of repetition and negation. But this does not mean that psychoanalytic thought concerning the death drive has only a negative value for political theorizing. It is possible to conceive of a positive politics of the death drive. The previous chapters have attempted to lay out the political implications of the death drive, and, on this basis, we can sketch what a society founded on a recognition of the death drive might look like. Such a recognition would not involve a radical transformation of society: in one sense, it would leave everything as it is. In contemporary social arrangements, the death drive subverts progress with repetition and leads to the widespread sacrifice of self-interest for the enjoyment of the sacrifice itself. This structure is impervi- ous to change and to all attempts at amelioration. But in another sense, the recognition of the death drive would change everything. Recognizing the centrality of the death drive would not eliminate the proclivity to sacrifice for the sake of enjoyment, but it would change our relationship to this sacrifice. Rather than being done for the sake of an ultimate enjoyment to be achieved in the future, it would be done for its own sake. The fundamental problem with the effort to escape the death drive and pursue the good is that it leaves us unable to locate where our enjoyment lies. By positing a future where we will attain the ultimate enjoyment (either through the purchase of the perfect commodity or through a transcendent romantic union or through the attainment of some heavenly paradise), we replace the partial enjoyment of the death drive with the image of a complete enjoyment to come. There is no question of fully enjoying our submission to the death drive. We will always remain alienated from our mode of enjoying. As Adrian Johnston rightly points out, “Transgressively ‘overcoming’ the impediments of the drives doesn’t enable one to simply enjoy enjoyment.”1 But we can transform our relationship to the impediments that block the full realization of our drive. We can see the impediments as the internal product of the death drive rather than as an external limit. The enjoyment that the death drive provides, in contrast to the form of enjoyment proffered by capitalism, religion, and utopian politics, is at once infinite and limited. This oxymoronic form of enjoyment operates in the way that the concept does in Hegel’s Logic. The concept attains its infinitude not through endless progress toward a point that always remains beyond and out of reach but through including the beyond as a beyond within itself. As Hegel puts it, “The universality of the concept is the achieved beyond, whereas that bad infinity remains afflicted with a beyond which is unattainable but remains a mere progression to infinity.”2 That is to say, the concept transforms an external limit into an internal one and thereby becomes both infinite and limited. The infinitude of the concept is nothing but the concept’s own self-limitation. The enjoyment that the death drive produces also achieves its infinitude through self-limitation. It revolves around a lost object that exists only insofar as it is lost, and it relates to this object as the vehicle for the infinite unfurling of its movement. The lost object operates as the self-limitation of the death drive through which the drive produces an infinite enjoyment. Rather than acting as a mark of the drive’s finitude, the limitation that the lost object introduces provides access to infinity. A society founded on a recognition of the death drive would be one that viewed its limitations as the source of its infinite enjoyment rather than an obstacle to that enjoyment. To take the clearest and most traumatic example in recent history, the recognition of the death drive in 1930s Ger- many would have conceived the figure of the Jew not as the barrier to the ultimate enjoyment that must therefore be eliminated but as the internal limit through which German society attained its enjoyment. As numerous theorists have said, the appeal of Nazism lay in its ability to mobilize the enjoyment of the average German through pointing out a threat to that enjoyment. The average German under Nazism could enjoy the figure of the Jew as it appeared in the form of an obstacle, but it is possible to recognize the obstacle not as an external limit but as an internal one. In this way, the figure of the Jew would become merely a figure for the average German rather than a position embodied by actual Jews. Closer to home, one would recognize the terrorist as a figure representing the internal limit of global capitalist society. Far from serving as an obstacle to the ultimate enjoyment in that society, the terrorist provides a barrier where none otherwise exists and thereby serves as the vehicle through which capitalist society attains its enjoyment. The absence of explicit limita- tions within contemporary global capitalism necessitates such a figure: if terrorists did not exist, global capitalist society would have to invent them. But recognizing the terrorist as the internal limit of global capitalist society would mean the end of terrorism. This recognition would transform the global landscape and deprive would-be terrorists of the libidinal space within which to act. Though some people may continue to blow up buildings, they would cease to be terrorists in the way that we now understand the term. A self-limiting society would still have real battles to fight. There would remain a need for this society to defend itself against external threats and against the cruelty of the natural universe. Perhaps it would require nuclear weapons in space to defend against comets or meteors that would threaten to wipe out human life on the planet. But it would cease positing the ulti- mate enjoyment in vanquishing an external threat or surpassing a natural limit. The external limit would no longer stand in for a repressed internal one. Such a society would instead enjoy its own internal limitations and merely address external limits as they came up. Psychoanalytic theory never preaches, and it cannot help us to construct a better society. But it can help us to subtract the illusion of the good from our own society. By depriving us of this illusion, it has the ability to trans- form our thinking about politics. With the assistance of psychoanalytic thought, we might reconceive politics in a direction completely opposed to that articulated by Aristotle, to which I alluded in the introduction. In the Politics, Aristotle asserts: “Every state is a community of some kind, and every community is established with a view to some good; for everyone always acts in order to obtain that which they think good. But, if all communities aim at some good, the state or political community, which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims at good in a greater degree than any other, and at the highest good.”3 Though later political thinkers have obviously departed from Aristotle concerning the question of the content of the good society, few have thought of politics in terms opposed to the good. This is what psychoanalytic thought introduces. If we act on the basis of enjoyment rather than the good, this does not mean that we can simply construct a society that privileges enjoyment in an overt way. An open society with no restrictions on sexual activity, drug use, food consumption, or play in general would not be a more enjoyable one than our own. That is the sure path to impoverishing our ability to enjoy, as the aftermath of the 1960s has made painfully clear. One must arrive at enjoyment indirectly. A society centered around the death drive would not be a better society, nor would it entail less suffering. Rather than continu- ally sacrificing for the sake of the good, we would sacrifice the good for the sake of enjoyment. A society centered around the death drive would allow us to recognize that we enjoy the lost object only insofar as it remains lost.

#### The repetition of drives makes life the enemy and causes extinction

Themi 08 (Tim, Prof @ Deakin U, “How Lacan’s Ethics Might Improve Our Understanding of Nietzsche’s Critique of Platonism: The Neurosis & Nihilism of a ‘Life’ Against Life,” *Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy* 4.1-2, 2008) SJBE, recut from Harvard BoSu

For to circle in too close to the Thing which is ethically forbidden by our reality principles––yet too the real truth of much desire––does hardly give us pleasure at all but anguish of the heaviest kind. Even if done so only as a thought experiment; as a free-association. So go there we generally don’t, and our ‘realities’ reflect as much. But henceforth when desire builds up, damns and flares return of the Thing: this is how Lacan specifically characterises the move we might make that goes beyond the pleasure principle, whose other name for Freud is ‘death-drive’. There where there is no, not pleasure yet jouissance in the transgression that the Thing would bring, a jouissance of transgression which Lacan suggests is the most direct satisfaction of a drive humanly possible[48]. But it’s also one perhaps unconsciously masochistic, that which Freud writes up as being only preliminarily sadistic, in eventually expressing itself as an “unconscious need for punishment”[49]. And if indeed we are feeling guilty, then we may yet still seek to pay the price. Why? For unknowingly possessing and inadvertently re-accessing this Thing in our real, beyond the pleasure-reality principle, our moral transgressions casting shadow long into the unconscious we know next to nothing about, and refuse even to acknowledge.¶ Could it not be thusly then that our time is behind now a sadomasochistic, wilfully ignorant drive towards death for nigh the entire species? Such punishment would too overly suffice, to be sure, for even a two-millennium length in repression…¶ But with our advancements in technological power outmatching by far any correlative advance in the awareness gained as a whole of our prehistoric Thing within: the great 21st century ecological disaster that too many academics and activists now increasingly predict, seems more than just a little possible. But to this increasingly macabre scenario, we must also add the renewed proliferation of nuclear weapons which occurs, no less, amidst a world where vital resources for energy and democracy are wearing thin[50]. For just such reasons, wilful ignorance of the Thing now bares results which Lacan’s Ethics reveals as far too terrifyingly possible to rationally accept; given that we have the Thing armed to the teeth now from that primitive id-like part of the brain, with no Sovereign Good, and all the way into a nuclear age.¶ CONCLUSION: THE NEUROSIS & NIHILISM OF A ‘LIFE’ AGAINST LIFE.¶ This is why Lacan proposes that his enquiry into ethics must be one to go “more deeply into the notion of the real”(LE:11). Further into what he would rather call the real, given that previous notions of ‘nature’ have been too far ‘different’––from being far too Platonic––than his own; and because it’s the very exclusions in these previous notions which upon return, as return of excess, are yielding our most tragic problems.¶ Today when faced with problems of the magnitude of global warming––a special but by no means solo case of adverse environment change at present due to our physical treatment of the planet––we often think the answer is to be more moral, more good, and we are thankful when exponents of the Good in some way bring attention to the problem. However, the idea of the Good as introduced by Plato, and nigh all of its descendants whether secular, rationalist, religious or not, continue to predicate themselves on a radically false picture of the human-condition: if not still of the entire cosmos––which only then lines itself up aside of an age-old repression, a repression of das Ding, that Freudian Thing in our inner real which, when it returns after being disavowed and denied in the name of the Good too long, is even more devastating.¶ Presently we are accelerating along the path of what Lacan discloses as our civilisation’s “race towards destruction”, a “massive destruction”, “a resurgence of savagery”, snaking the paths traced out before us by the centuries long dominion of Western morality [51]; and the nihilism detected by Nietzsche before the turn of the 20th has never threatened to reach such the grand finale. But what I would have us take from this enquiry here is that this is not because we aren’t in accordance enough with a moral ideal of the Sovereign good, but rather, it’s because we aren’t in accordance enough with a proper understanding of the real. It’s because we still at some level think that being more moral, in accordance with the Good’s inherited repressive structures towards our drives, desire, and truthfulness about the real, is actually the answer to––rather than the source of––our most tragic problems.¶ The goal here is by no means then to encourage all to let their Things run wild––which would probably be nothing short of an instant conflagration––but this is why and precisely why we must desist from deluding ourselves under the tightening grip of a Sovereign Good, for this is precisely the move which cuts the Thing loose after pressing down for far too long, a slippery hand’s palming on the coils of a spring, forever readying the subsequent explosion. For when that which is really real––as opposed to what Christian-Platonism falsely called the ‘real’––is forced from mind, it can’t really disappear because it is real, and it tends to end up only in our gun-sights as an imaginary overlaying of an external other, when the signifier ‘enmity’ appears. The earth itself can even seem like the enemy after while, one which like Plato in his Phaedo, we might think then to escape from “as if from a prison”, and especially from “the bonds of the body”, in the hope that we may live one day without the earthly altogether[52]. Following such negations to their logical conclusion, life itself becomes enemy too, for as being made up of the earthly and organic, life could never be free of what it is in essence. And what is the death-drive Freud tells from the start, if not to return us sundry to that dust-bowl of the inorganic; as per that “second death”[53] fantasm Lacan salvages from the Monstre de Sade, which wills to go beyond the destruction of mere beings, by destroying too the principle from which fresh sets could emerge. Such negative devaluations of our earthly, organic life though are really of our own construction: as de Sade, like any pervert, is only the mirror which shows expressed what Platonic-neurotics are but hide inside––a cess-pit of loathing contempt for life, built up from the unconscious and disowned, distorted and damned up, built up, instinctual-ideational elements of their own subjective psyches, phobically ferocious of that Thingly real lying not so dormant, and readying within…¶ But is it now still possible as Nietzsche teaches to say ‘Yes’ to the real of nature both without and within––to return to it!––even though it is more frightful and we are less guaranteed protection of it than the Platonic history of metaphysicians taught? For with the further disclosures of The Ethics of Psychoanalysis––Lacan’s following up and extension of the meta-ethical implications of Freud: perhaps even Nietzsche, our great intellectual übermensch, may too have bitten off more snake-head than he could chew? From certain moments in Nietzsche’s texts we can perhaps interpret that he may have had this Thing in his sights, but saw nothing much to come of it, so instead, elected to turn away, though not without some perhaps hinted at self-amusement.[54]¶ But with psychoanalysis, rightly or wrongly, such truths are out. It doesn’t seem all positive at first, and perhaps it never entirely will. But we must not let this deeper disclosure desist us now from the core Nietzschean project of locating and overcoming the nihilism which begs us to take cover in idealising fictions, as if life as life is not worth living. Not because nihilism and the annihilation of the species is wrong in the sense of being immoral, but rather because it is bad art, mediocre art, and the ‘knowledge’ claims it trumpets on should only make us flare. If we are at our full intellectual and creative will to power, we can only consider such cultural-civil regressions as we saw on display with that whole propaganda comedy that surrounded the war for more oil in Iraq as infantile; the hapless results of sibling rivalries gone too far astray. But we must also resist being caught up in the imaginary of those who would only re-preach to us now of a return to the Good, who would only redeploy such versions of nihilism’s precursory defensive fictions, the pernicious ones, which would only then re-falsify our data, and leave us disappointed when the truth then re-emerges. Doing more harm than good does Platonism in the end by leaving us untrained for the real, with the habit instead to take some truth as ‘error’, and error as ‘truth’––as ‘real’––to the point even of epistemic dysfunction. Take the grotesque intellectual poverty of that whole Christian middle-ages for example, whence put into relation with the heights of Aristotle and his fellow Greeks, as Augustine and Aquinas amplified some of the worst bits of Platonism, and threw the rest into abyss.¶ The overcoming of the moralising good of Christian-Platonism though does by no means imply then a subsequent affirmation of all that brutal Roman like greed, slavery, decadence, circus-bread corruption and mindless colonial expansion that we’ve heard all about, and are hardly so free of with our corporate today––just ask a Latin-American for instance![55] For it is possible within the perspectives opened up by Nietzsche, Freud, Lacan, as Silvia Ons puts it, to view a social-historical or individual neurosis of any kind: including the expressed acted-out, perverse-sadistic form that escapes when the Good is temporarily loosed of its repressive grip––and say to the would be Platonist: ‘No, not that, that’s not a cure, that’s a mirage; that’s sheer fantasy, resentment, spite; that’s not a cure it will only make things worse; worse in a different way, but worse nonetheless!’¶ By greater mindfulness then, with guided affirmation towards even that fearsome Freudian Thing that The Ethics of Psychoanalysis has us find now in our inner natures: we can eventually again say ‘Yes’-to-life in such the way that it overcomes the nihilism of not caring too much whether we as individuals or species live or die, whether we as culture or civilisation advance or decline. But we can only do this with fullest efficacy by freeing ourselves of all that wasted neurosis sickness that feels it must deny our Thing like aspect of the real: because from all those Christian-Platonic prejudices of the Good, it has been taught that such ‘things’ are too far beneath it. We must continue instead to train ourselves to stare the real directly in the face, without flinching, and that’s all we can do at least to start. For unless we can continue to utilise, sublimate, enjoy and get a positive, well-guided jouissance out of all aspects of life––including that Freudian Ding in our real––then the chances are we’re going to be at least in part, happy enough in no longer living it: offering not even a puff of genuine political praxis! We either face up to the death-drive snaking long beneath the dank, hidden history of the un-real, anti-real Good of Platonism––or let the disowned, un-understood drive resurge of its own volition until it accidentally finishes us!