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From Da of Dasein and Fort-Da to a of Anxiety

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Abstract

This article will provide interdisciplinary aspect regarding the question of ontology and focus in a new way on the anxiety disorder clinic by studying the works of Heidegger, Freud and Lacan. The hypothesis is based mainly on the object of the anxiety which we will identify as the object a, through the concept of Dasein and Fort-Da game by putting in the central position the word of Da which means being-there in German. The primacy of this research was designed to show, that the anxiety occurs when the ‘object a’ is there, in the positioning of Da, when the lack is lack.

Keywords: Anxiety, Object a, Da, Ontology, Heidegger, Freud, Lacan;

1. Introduction

The concept of anxiety is a modern problem, which is about affection in terms of philosophy and psychoanalysis. In existential philosophy and until Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, anxiety is considered without any object. In this article, we will analyze the performance of anxiety problem which anxiety transcend itself in the direction of the Other in its integrality from the point of come-into-being ontological zero point in Heidegger, Freud and Lacan triangle. That is to say, we will discuss that the existence of Da-Sein as Da, fallen to world; and the barred subject which is in being of fallen to language; they all come across on the same basis, and create an ontological problem parallel to Da in fort-da game for the anxiety disorder clinic. Thus, this analysis will be done in the process of Da-Sein’s and Fort-Da’s Da till Lacan’s the object a, which we will define “object a” as the lost object of which anxiety had produced.

In Being and Time, Heidegger criticizes the transformation of the concept of “being” in Ancient Greece and questions the meaning of “being.” Then, neither as an objective worldly appearance nor as an abstract thought, he developed Dasein concept, based on the ontological, which questions the meaning of its own being instead of “being” and has ontic legitimacy. Heidegger constituted Da-Sein concept, in German; Da: there, here; Sein: to be, to exist and Da-Sein being-in-the-world and as existence of be-ing, Dasein has ontical propriety on the basis of ontology. Heidegger examines the ontologic base of Dasein primarily in its historicity, as done in Hegel’s and his own hermeneutical works. Dasein is always in the world with its being fallen-to-world and it is an effective Being which will itself respond to the question what is Being in the historical structure with its past, everydayness and future. Within the context of historicity, being fallen-in-world of Dasein is its future which includes its past as well and its future is the reality of death. The ontological historicity of Dasein has the characteristics of the past of the

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subject reconstructed during the psychoanalytic analysis. ‘‘History is not the past. History is the past as long as it is historicised in the present… The way of restitution of subject's history takes the form of a search for the restitution of the past.’’ (Lacan, 1975, p.25)

In this case, the structure of Dasein, which shapes its deeds, is the authenticity as the possibility between its birth and death. In this authenticity conceptually, Da of Dasein is in ontological anxiety with the authenticity in itself that is being to death, which is based on affection of being-in-the-world. ‘‘That which anxiety is anxious about is Being-in-the-world itself.’’ (Heidegger, 1962, p.232)

Thus, beyond Dasein’s conscious, anxiety is Dasein itself and anxiety, as Dassein, is an activity and a praxis which may ask questions to being. Therefore, Heidegger attributes an ontological meaning to anxiety as integrity, which is the precursor of all phenomenological existentialist situations.

By analogy with Fort-da game, Desein, in its authenticity as a mortal being, in this context, the uncanny (unheimlich) concept which Freud defines in his work The Uncanny, which Lacan claims to be the best introduction to perceive anxiety. We can better understand the ontological context of anxiety by looking into the relation between this concept and Heidegger's authentic Dasein's death. This concept which Freud defines as the emotion between the disturbing and scary space was translated into English as “uncanny,” however, Heidegger paraphrases the word unheimlich, which is of German origin, as <not-at-home>. ‘‘In anxiety one feels uncanny. Here the peculiar indefiniteness of that, which Dasein finds itself alongside in anxiety, comes proximally to expression: the nothing and nowhere. But here uncanniness also means not-being-at-home . . . Being-in enters into the existential mode of the not-at-home.’’ (Heidegger, 1962, p.232)

We may treat Heidegger’s definition “not-at-home” as a semiotic move. Also, in Freud’s real objective in using the concept unheimlich, we can look for the legacy of the relationship with the subject’s m(other) in the attitude he adopts against the reality of mortality. In being fallen-in-world, in the process of psychoanalytic identification, while entering symbolic order, the m(other) giving the father's name (nom-du-pere) as an object of desire, in opposition to the mortality and uncanniness of the anxiety of castration brought by the law of oedipal complex, we can claim that the child carries a desire to be at home.

However, this house, as Freud states, is the sexual organ of the m(other) which once was home (heim) for the subject. In the context of this house, the presence or absence of the m(other) is what creates traumatic state. However, as we will explain in following parts, what rouses anxiety is the presence of the m(other) rather than her absence. It is impossible that the subconscious thought which includes the return to m(other)’s sexual organ come true.

In the context of m(other)’s presence and absence, Freud grounds the emergence of anxiety with fort-da game. In his later theory of anxiety Freud came up with the idea of anxiety as a signal to the being-lost situation. He observed a little child who envisaged the leave of his m(other) through the words Fort-gone and Da/here, there during the action of reeling off. According to Freud, the game “fort-da” signify the presence and absence of the m(other). The anxiety of leaving the m(other), being and absence are put in a symbolic order of fort da imagery. “...the instinctual renunciation…which he had made in all owing his mother to go away without protesting. He compensated himself for this, as it were, by himself staging the disappearance and return of the objects within his reach.” (Freud, 1959, p.15)

We can consider this reel as a transitional object in Winnicottian terminology, which Lacan disagrees with. Winnicott makes remarks about the presence and absence of the m(other) in terms of the elapsed time. “Mother imagery is alive for x minutes. But if she is away for more than x minutes, the mother imagery breaks up and falls apart. But if mother comes back in x+y minutes, the baby might get out of the problem. The baby does not change in

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† Martin Heidegger, Being and Time, Southampton, Basil Blackwell, 1962, p.232
‡ Ibid. P.233
§ Sigmund Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, New York, Bentam Books, 1959, p.15
x+y minutes. However, x+y+z minutes is enough to cause trauma in the baby. Even if the mother comes back in x+y+z minutes, this cannot repair the traumatic conditions of the baby.” **(Abreveya, 2000, p.64)

The reason why the absence of the m(other) causes trauma is the presence, in other words Da situation, of the m(other) in the very beginning. Lacan explains this situation as follows: “There can be no fort without da, and one might say, without Dasein” †† (Lacan, 1998, p.239) Then, Lacan emphasizes the phenomenological situation of Daseinanalyse and indicates that a Dasein fort is never possible. We can continue this situation, within authentic ontological situation of Dasein’s da, by indicating that da exists without fort.

As a result, for Freud, the object in the game fort-da symbolizes m(other). The process that resulted from the disappearance of m(other) will give birth to the repetition of the anxiety of the lack of m(other). According to Freud, the repetition automatism here is the repetition of the departure of m(other), which was a pleasure for the child. And although Winnicott tries to create an equation about time, there is always a hazard in the presence and absence of m(other). And as Lacan said, what limits hazard in psychoanalysis is repetition. ”The events that happen by hazard are taken qua a process of repetition: something repeats through reality.”‡‡ (Charraud, 1997, p.54) The repetition principle, which Freud believes to be more primitive than the pleasure principle, is eventually a protection against trauma. But right at this point, Lacan disagrees with Freud. Because Lacan agrees that this game represents a repetition but what the child demands is not the comeback of the m(other). Because it’s not m(other) that disappears when the m(other) leaves, but there is something else that becomes missing. We can even go a bit further to say that what the child actually wants is for the m(other) to leave.

As Lacan said: In this case, the reel does not represent the m(other) because it is attached to itself, “This reel is not the mother reduced to a little ball…it is a small part of the subject that detaches itself from him while still remaining his, still retained…To this object we will later give the name it bears in the Lacanian algebra- the petit a.”§§ (Lacan, 1998, p.62)

For Lacan, Freud’s reel in the fort-da game represents the “object a”, as a strikethrough subject of its own lost object with fort and its signifiers in the dual relationship between m(other) and child. ”Precisely this < there >, where there is produced the fall of what is in abeyance on the name of the object a….”*** (Lacan, 1966, unpublished)

In Heidegger’s essentially présocratique ontology and the bilateral relation that Platon calls dyad, in this fort-da game what isn’t there with fort is actually the subject itself. Petit represents the body of the subject as total corps. “Object a, it’s being as it is essentially missing in the text of the world”††† (Lacan, 1962, unpublished) This body has been affected by the language which forms the symbolic order and what the language instills on the body is this affection anxiety.

According to Heidegger language is the house of Being. Lacan’s missing crossed off subject exists in language before being born and falls into language when it comes to this world. The lack of subject is due to the petit objet a, which is a part that fell off it. This will cause the subject to remain incomplete as long as it exists and therefore to be anxious. Petit objet a, which stands outside Lacan’s triple order of symbolic, imaginary and real, emerges as a lost object due to a mistake resulting from the nature of language. Anxiety is not without object, object a is its object: which has no image, no signifier, therefore neither be seen nor be deciphered, which therefore falls within the real that impossible to grasp by imaginary as much as the symbolic, but yet operates as a cause of everything.”‡‡‡ (Soler, 2011, p.18) Petit objet a as the object of anxiety, which Lacan defines as it is not without object, is left outside the order of language that it falls into with the relation that the Subject primarily has with m(other). This is important

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** Elda Abrevaya, Aynadan Ötekine, Çocuk Öznelliklerinin Oluşumu Üzerine Bir Çalışma, İstanbul, Bağlam Yayınları, 2000, p. 64
*** Jacques Lacan, L’Objet de la Psychanalyse, Seminaire XIII, unpublished, session 25/05/1966
because petit objet a as the object of anxiousness causes anxiousness to be a non-deceiving affection. Because according to Lacan, a signifier only exists for another signifier; and the objet a, which is left outside all signifiers prevents the anxiety from applying to any signifier. This is proof that the anxiety that non-deceiving anxiety, the anxiety that Da mode of Being falls into by existing in the world is ontological.

Paradoxically, being (there), in the relation with the Other, causes the produced lost object petit objet a to cause ontological anxiety; and the anxiety in the form of repetition at the fort-da game to produce petit objet a. So anxiety stems from not the loss of an object as Freud states but, to the contrary, from that object being there. Thus the anxiety occurs when the “object a” is there, in the positioning of Da, when the lack is lacking. “When something appears there, it is because, if I may say so, that the lack is lacking... many things can appear which are anomalous, this is not what makes us anxious...if all of a sudden it is not lacking... it is the time that anxiety begins.” §§§ (Lacan, 2004, p.53)

The lack is lacking, if we consider the fort-da game; Lacan grounds in Hegel’s master-slave dialectic, according to the desire theory, for the child in the inter-subject recognition dialectic the m(other) envisages the Major Other, in the Da mode, with the child. That is, as a sign of the child desiring the m(other), the reel as the cause being of the desire (objet a) since the m(other) wasn’t in the fort mode, paradoxically produces anxiety with its existence.

In this case, to close the text, objet a is the object and cause object, within the context of desire, in order to enrich Lacan’s well-known formula desire is the desire of the Other, anxiety as a precursor of desire can be defined as anxiety is the anxiety of the self in the direction of the Other.

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