

National College of Art & Design Fine Art, Sculpture

**Repetition in the Work of Gregor Schneider:
A Psychoanalytic Reading**

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I declare that this thesis is all my own work and that all sources have been fully acknowledged.

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Introduction

This thesis is a psychoanalytic reading of two works by Gregor Schneider as exemplar of a subject's psychological behaviour. The theories of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan will be employed to evaluate two works by Schneider: *Die Familie Schneider* (2004) and *Haus UR* (1985-present). Both theorists detail a dynamic between the unconscious psychical structuration of the subject and compulsive repetition. These two thematics are carried forth in this research to enquire into the two works by Schneider. This thesis is over arched by the concept of sublimation¹; the diversion of the psyches internalised desires into socially acceptable behaviour such as artistic practice.

This thesis stems from an ongoing psychoanalytic influence in my own art practice. This work uses an absurdist repetitive narration to express a subject's psychological behaviour. This influence is therefore grounded in an aesthetic contextualisation of the repetitive functions of the unconscious which will be examined as the Freudian and Lacanian death drive illustrated in Schneider's work.

In preface to this analysis, it is crucial to affirm that this thesis does not accede to the cliché of the "crazy artist" in any form. The use of an artist for this inquiry rather than any other profession is purely due to my own artistic educational influence. Gregor Schneider was chosen specifically due to his repetition in both works *Die Familie Schneider* and *Haus UR*.

¹ Sublimation is further outlined on page 5 of this Introduction.

Repetition has been extensively investigated in psychoanalytic theory. This began with Freud coining the term ‘repetition compulsion’ in 1914’s ‘Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through’. He states that a subject does not remember the trauma that initially caused his anxiety and repeats the event unconsciously; ‘We must be prepared to find, therefore, that the patient yields to the compulsion to repeat, which now replaces the impulsion to remember’ (Freud, 1958, p.151). Repetition exists post-Freud now in the majority of psychoanalytic investigations. Most significantly Lacan has demonstrated a ‘return to Freud’ (Homer, 2005, p.111).

Both theorists employ rigorous investigation of the act of repetition through the unconscious. However, Lacan asserted that Freudian theory was not a ‘perfect edifice but a work in progress’ (Bailly, 2009, p.1). Freud’s work is widely contested in psychoanalysis mainly due to his move from clinical research as a means to ground his claims into a more speculative line of thought, specifically in ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’ (1920). Lacan himself has worked through and beyond the Freudian model and this development of theory will be addressed throughout this thesis.

Repetition compulsion will be examined through the German contemporary artist Gregor Schneider. This analysis will be limited in the use of only two works in a substantial practice by Schneider. However, as stated previously, these particular art works have been chosen due to their demonstration of repetition. *Die Familie Schneider* exposes meticulous identical repetition known as ‘doubling’ by the artist. While *Haus UR*, Schneider’s seminal work, exerts a fluctuation of repetition.

Haus UR is formally the artist's family home, originating his inherent use the home as a theme in his practice. Schneider continually refers back to it, rebuilding the interior, re-appropriating physical sections within a gallery context and publishing photographs. Schneider's practice is therefore a returning riff on the home². It is therefore likely to draw on a discussion of the uncanny³⁴. However this thesis will not deal with the works in question with regard to their evident uncanny nature. The primary concern of this thesis is to illustrate *Die Famile Schneider* and *Haus UR* as physical expressions of psychological behaviour. This is comparable to how the analyst reads the analysed's behaviour within a direct narrative analysis.

In sublimation, Freud states, that the socially unacceptable desires of the subject are 'diverted to higher, asexual aims – by being "sublimated"' (Freud, 1995, p.198). These asexual aims are 'our cultural achievements' and refer to academia such as art and religion (Freud, 1995, p.198). The redirection refers to a desexualising of the subjects instincts 'in which the drive is hindered from forming sexual object cathexes that might be dangerous (with a parent, for instance), and is reoriented to a non-sexual goal' (Faulkner, 2005, p.163)⁵. This non sexual goal will be examined as Schneider's art practice. Lacan notes:

Freud points out that once the artist has carried out an operation on the level of sublimation, he finds himself to be the beneficiary of his operation insofar as it is acclaimed after the fact; it brings in its wake in the form of glory, honor, and even money, those fantasmic satisfactions that were at

² Schneider has also engaged politically with his work. His proposal of *Cube* (2005), inspired by the Kaaba in Mecca, Islam's most holy site, for the 2005 Venice Biennale. The work was rejected however due to its political nature.

³ The uncanny is the effect of something or somewhere being strange or mysterious, especially in an unsettling way (Oxford University Press, 2014)

⁴ Notably, 'The role of the multiple within the uncanny experience with regard to the work of Gregor Schneider' by Rebecca O'Dwyer, 2008.

⁵ Cathexis is the 'concentration of mental energy on one particular person, idea, or object (especially to an unhealthy degree)' (Oxford University Press, 2014).

the origin of the instinct, with the result that the latter finds itself satisfied by means of sublimation (1992, pp. 144-145).

Freud therefore acknowledges an art practice as a socially acceptable means of extinguishing the possible release of unsavoury behaviour. However, Lacan revised Freud's articulation of sublimation asserting that full sublimation was not possible in the subject and adapted it to his theories of fantasy, *jouissance* and the death drive⁶. These will be examined further in Chapter Two.

Chapter One of this thesis will identify Sigmund Freud's 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' as an illustration of the mental disorder neurosis. This will be examined using *Die Famile Schneider's* identical repetition as a symptom of the disorder in conjunction with the Freudian concepts of repetition compulsion and the death drive.

Chapter Two will begin with an introduction to the three register theory by Lacan. Concepts of the death drive, *jouissance*, *das ding* and the *objet petit a* will then be employed to examine *Haus UR's* repetition as symptomatic of the mental disorder psychosis. A subject not suffering psychosis will be referred to in this thesis as non-psychotic/non-psychosis.

Chapter Three acts as the finalising argument of this thesis. The Lacanian graph of sexuation will be used to determine both *Die Famile Schneider* and *Haus UR* as exemplar of Lacan's neurotic masculine or feminine subject. These two non-biological roles are appointed by the enjoyment or *jouissance(s)* that the subject experiences. *Die Famile Schneider* will be examined as a result of phallic *jouissance*, and both works as Other *jouissance*.

⁶ Lacan's revisions of Freudian sublimation are further outlined in Chapter Two Page 21.

Thence, repetition will be addressed in Schneider *Die Famile Schneider* and *Haus UR*, respective of the theories of Freud and Lacan. I will begin the approaching analysis with Chapter One:

Chapter One:

Is Gregor Schneider a Neurotic? Repetition and Neurosis in *Die Famile Schneider*

This analysis considers the act of repetition within Gregor Schneider's *Die Famille Schneider* (2004) as symptomatic of the mental disorder neurosis from the perspective of Sigmund Freud's 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' (1920). Crucial is Freud's analysis of the neurotic as a subject experiencing something painful in the past and being compelled to repeat these unpleasurable encounters in the future. *Die Famile Schneider* will act as a prism through which to evaluate this compulsion and the force that propels it; the death drive. *Die Famile Schneider* is then further examined as a neurotic symptom through which direct and indirect mastery is attempted and Freud's affiliations of the neurotic to masochism.

There has been some confusion with the terms instinct and drive as Freud uses both terms to distinguish the same thing in his writing. In German *Instinkt* translates as instinct and *Trieb* is drive. For this thesis I have chosen to use drive, as this has been used much more frequently than instinct in psychoanalytic theory post Freud.

1.1 The Freudian Neurotic

According to Freud, the conclusive symptom of neurosis is an omnipresent feeling of anxiety without any identifiable origin. This occurs in neurotics through various

different physical and psychological activities⁷. In ‘The Defence of Neurosis’ (1896) Freud states that the main differences of neuroses manifest ‘in the way in which the repressed ideas return’ to the sufferer (1980, p.92). It was twenty four years before Freud identified the return of the repressed more explicitly in ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’ in 1920. This text deals with the existence of two inherent drives, *Eros*, the life drive, and *Thanatos*, the death drive. Up until 1920, Freud asserted the existence of only *Eros*. This is the positive drive of sexual instinct towards self-preservation that is in direct alliance with the Pleasure Principle. *Thanatos* opposes the life drive and is a drive *beyond* the pleasure principle’s self-preservation. Freud identifies the death drive with this self-destruction and death because it compels the subject to towards death. He uses neurosis as the main purveyor of the death drive: ‘the aim of all life is death and, looking backwards, that” inanimate things existed before living ones’ (1920, p.32).

Freud coins the term ‘compulsion to repeat’ to describe the neurotic who ‘is obliged to repeat the repressed material as a contemporary experience instead of (...) remembering it as something belonging to the past’ (1920, p12). Because of their affiliation with the death drive, the neurotic seeks pleasure in repetition with a purpose to ‘maintain its own repetitive compulsive movement’ (Homer, 2005, p. 76). Freud argues that this is in direct contradiction to the pleasure principle because the neurotic repeats *repressed* experiences which are unpleasurable and painful. The question that the neurotic raises for Freud is: Why repeat an unpleasant experience? This why is answerable in the force of the death drive that seeks the reoccurrence of

⁷ These activities exist within the different forms of neurosis which include Obsessive-Compulsive disorder; ritualized or repetitive behaviours, Post Traumatic Stress disorder; flashbacks, nightmares and emotional problems, and Dissociative disorder whereby a person becomes distinct from themselves or their identity and suffers personality change, confusion and physical sickness (Barnhill, 2011)

unpleasure in the subject due its self-destructive nature. Freud demonstrates the existence of the death drive in multiple ways in ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’. In order to analyse *Die Famile Schneider’s* repetition as a neurotic symptom the following section considers Freud’s account of the child’s game of *Ford!// Da!* whereby his grandson repeats the throwing of a spool to assert mastery over it.

1.2 *Die Famile Schneider* as Compulsive Repetition and *Fort!// Da!*

Die Famile Schneider (2004) spans two adjacent terrace houses situated at 14 and 16 Walden St., London E1, which were once used as homes. These buildings are architectural identical twins, both outside and inside. In every element of the houses epitaph there is an exact replica next door.



Figure 1. Exterior, 14 Walden St.
Die Famile Schneider (2004)



Figure 2. Exterior of 16 Walden St.
Die Famile Schneider (2004)

Die Famile Schneider's repetitions constructed by Schneider are rigorously commensurate right down to the people inside; an identical twin washes dishes in each kitchen, another masturbates in each shower upstairs and a child hides under a black bin bag in both bedrooms. On visiting *Die Famile Schneider* writer Andrew O' Hagan notes the following:

Stepping into the second house brought on the perplexing realisation that it was an exact double of the first. The entrance hall and the stairs have the same brown carpet, the same wallpaper, the same yellowy light. You heard the same sound from the kitchen and the bathroom upstairs, smelt the same fetid atmosphere, saw for the second time the same sparse furnishings, cracks and stains, the same middle aged woman washing dishes in the kitchen and the same naked man in the bathroom and the same small figure with legs protruding from under the black garbage bag in the corner of the cream bedroom that you had just seen in the other house. (2004, p.154)

It is assumed any kind of artistic production is controlled and created by the artist themselves. However, the repetition in *Die Famile Schneider*, due its meticulous doubling, appears as compulsive and autonomous. This duplication is examined as involuntary, an 'automatic, mechanical process(es)' dictating the subjects behaviour (Freud, 1920, p.145).

In 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' Freud addresses repetition compulsion in the game of *Fort!/Da!*. Here Freud analyses his young grandson's game of throwing the end of a spool over his cot and pulling it back, and the child's continuous repetition of this action. Freud metaphorizes the spool for the child's mother. The throwing of the spool is indicative of the moment the child realises the mother has other loves, namingly the father. He argues that the repetition of this obviously unpleasurable event of recognition is an act of attempted mastery by the child over this experience:

In the case of children's play we seem to see that children repeat unpleasurable experiences for the additional reason that they can master powerful impressions far more thoroughly by being active than they could by merely experiencing passivity. Each fresh repetition seems to strengthen the mastery they are in search of (Freud, 1920, p.29).

The attempt is a grasp over this loss of the mother's absolute love. Freud defines the moment the child's vocalises 'o-o-o-o' when throwing the spool as '*Fort!*', meaning gone (1920, p.9). Here mastery is evident as the child takes control of the spool and declares its absencing activity as if he has the power of the opposite to occur:

Throwing away the object so that it was 'gone' might satisfy an impulse of the child's, which was suppressed in his actual life, to revenge himself on his mother for going away from him (Freud, 1920, p.9).

By playing this game, the child is asserting a dominant role as contrary to what it possessed in the unpleasant situation of losing the mother. He may choose when he has the spool, metaphorically the mother, and when he doesn't need it casts it off. But the child always returns to the spool as the child never wishes to leave the mother entirely. Freud relates this repetition to the Oedipus complex which he distinguishes quite bluntly as the point when a child wishes to have sexual relations with the mother and kill the father⁸. This primitive craving is quickly repressed within the child through castration anxiety, frankly meaning the fear of the cutting off of one's penis. However these cravings may return as an unpleasurable experience. During the oedipal stage the child therefore resents the fact that the mother loves the father. In the game of *Fort!// Da!* the child cannot possibly have felt his mother's departure as something agreeable or even indifferent yet still repeats it. Therefore the child is experiencing a beyond of pleasure through repetition. By re-

⁸ Freud named the Oedipus complex after the ancient Greek dramatist Sophocles' rendition of the Oedipus myth in *Oedipus the King* (429 BC) in which King Oedipus is destined by fate to kill his father and marries his mother.

experiencing this traumatic memory, Freud's grandson adheres to the compulsion to repeat by the force of the death drive's self-destructive nature.

Like the child of *Fort!/ Da!*, Schneider is repeating *Die Famile Schneider*. The following section argues *Die Famile Schneider* as a compulsive act aligned with Freud's compulsion to repeat the repressed. *Die Famile Schneider* is examined as the desire to return to:

... an *old* state of things, an initial state from which the living entity has at one time or other departed and to which it is striving to return by the circuitous paths along which its development leads (Freud, 1920, p.32).

This wish of an earlier state is asserted as the mother's womb because it is there that a child has the full solitary affection from her. Schneider's act of repetition is examined as assertion of mastery over the 'the loss of love and failure' of the mothers lack of her absolute love to the child and the child's own inability to stay completely attached, as it were in the womb (Freud, 1920, p.603).

1.3 Mastery of mother, father and child in *Die Famile Schneider*

On entering *Die Famile Schneider* the audience encounter an identical twin woman standing at the kitchen sink. She washes dishes, sobbing profusely with her back turned to the viewer. I identify this woman as 'mother' and put forward two elements for analysis: The mother doing household chores and the mother crying.



Figure 3. Woman in kitchen of 14 Walden St.
Die Famile Schneider (2004)



Figure 4. Women in kitchen of 16 Walden St.
Die Famile Schneider (2004)

She scrubs the porcelain dishes continuously. This repetitive cleaning of delicate objects is symbolic of a dutied affection by the mother towards her child both outside and inside the womb. However the mother cries as she carries out her chores. Her action is committal as the tears run down her face serve as guilt. This guilt is revenge for both giving birth; the child's exist from the womb, and for loving the father. Therefore dominance is attempted over the mother and her affections. Like the child's game of *Fort!/ Da!*, the once indisputable love the mother had only for her child is now attempting to be controlled or mastered.

Upstairs in the bathrooms of *Die Famile Schneider* the viewer is confronted with an identical twin man weeping and masturbating in the shower. Similarly to the woman in the kitchen, I metaphorize this man as 'father' and examined is be both the father's action of masturbation and crying.



Figure 5. Man in bathrooms of 14 Walden St.
Die Famile Schneider (2004)



Figure 6. Man in Bathroom of 16 Walden St.
Die Famile Schneider (2004)

Masturbation is an act chiefly done in private and the shower is essentially a private space. In *Die Famile Schneider* this solitary sexual act by the father indicates a lack of sexual intercourse with the mother. This situation expresses a subjects wish to extract the father from the mother, both mentally and physically. Therefore this is considered an enactment of oedipal fantasies. With the audience confronting this principally intimate situation, the father is condemned for his sexual act. Akin to the mother in the kitchen, the father cries as he masturbates. Again this is an enactment of guilt onto the father's conscience as revenge for his sexual relations with the mother.

By repetition of the situation next door mastery is asserted over both the father's sexual relations and the mother's love, controlling them as the child desires a totally monogamous relationship with his mother.

Schneider's audience lastly encounter life in *Die Familie Schneider* in a bedroom upstairs. Between the room's wall and bed lay a child with its upper torso hidden under a black bin bag. Slow breath permeates the bags shape as the child appears calm. However his location, the corner of the room, and his prop, the bag, indicate a disciplinary engagement.



Figure 7. Child in bedroom of 14 Walden St. *Die Familie Schneider* (2004)



Figure 8. Child in bedroom of 16. Walden St. *Die Familie Schneider* (2004)

This situation mirrors that of the “bad corner” or the “bad hat” in childhood education punishment⁹. The child is being penalised for his location of the parent's room, understood as so by the double bed. This situation refers to the cautioning of a child's oedipal fantasies. The attempt at mastery here is not the same as in the use of the mother and father. By repetition of the unpleasurable event of castration, rather than condemning the parents for previous acts, there is a much more direct attempt at

⁹ In some educational punishment the child that negates the teachers rules must stand in a specific corner of the room, this corner is known as the bad corner and the event a timeout. Similarly, although no longer common, a child that breaks the rules may be told to wear the ‘bad hat’ in class as an embarrassing punishment (Plan-international.org, 2014).

mastery at work. Fulfilling the neurotic's compulsion to repeat repressed infantile memories and succumbing to the self-destructive nature of the death drive.

Freud also establishes evidence of an attempt of mastery by the neurotic in dreams:

‘The fulfilment of wishes is, as we know, brought about in a hallucinatory manner by dreams, and under the dominance of the pleasure principle this has become their function’ (Freud, 1920, p.26).

In the normal occurrence of dreams how we satisfy our desires exists in accordance with the pleasure principle's self-preservatory nature. However, the re-occurrence of traumatic experiences in dreams by the neurotic re-inflicts the repressed trauma through repetition. Schneider's repetition of mother, father and child are all evidence of an attempt to master the repressed.

This mastery is therefore endeavoured in two ways; directly and indirectly. In the case of Freud's grandson mastery is directly asserted as the child repeats the primary repressed traumatic encounter of the mother leaving. Repetition of the child in punishment is also direct mastery as the unpleasurable experience of castration is repeated. Freud states that the return of the repressed within dreams exists inherently previous to a pleasure principle's existence. These dreams are the neurotic wishing to master the reasoning for their repression, as does Schneider's child. Freud argues that dreams:

... afford us a view of a function of the mental apparatus which, though it does not contradict the pleasure principle, is nevertheless independent of it and seems to be more primitive than the purpose of gaining pleasure and avoiding unpleasure (1920, p.609).

In repetition of the situations of the mother and father dominance is taken over the parents post-traumatic event; revenge on the mother for not loving the child solely

and the father for wishing to engage in sexual relations with the mother. This kind of neurotic mastery is indirect as it is not the repetition of a traumatic event but instead an ideal situation for the subject as a result of the trauma. *Die Famile Schneider* therefore illustrates a subject 'unable to discharge a tension that continues to build with each repetition of the dream, the symptom' (Faulkner, 2005, p.159). A neurotic dominance is pursued over repressed experience within *Die Famile Schneider* by repeating the individuals of the first house within the next.

1.4 Neurosis and Masochism in *Die Famile Schneider*

In 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' Freud states that the neurotic has a 'sense of inferiority' (1920, p.14). This sense is exemplified with neurotics prohibited early sexual activity. As a result the child develops 'a permanent injury to self-regard in the form of a narcissistic scar' (Freud, 1920, p.14).

Curator and writer Hans Ulrich Loock has said of Schneider as never making anything new by only repeats things there already: He 'only repeats what he found there in the first place, he actually doesn't want to make anything, to invent anything' (Loock, 2000, p.12). Schneider himself exerts this inferiority with 'I can't do anything else'¹⁰ as he is known to express (Schneider, 2005, p.12). This negation and limitation to his own creativity, by only repeating, and to his ability to have a different profession, conforms to the Freudian model of the neurotic. Evident through his repetition, there is a 'sense of inferiority' in an inability to make anything new (Freud, 1920, p.14).

¹⁰ Quote found in the description of book *Gregor Schneider: Dead House UR* (2000) 'When questioned about his motivations, he would defiantly proclaim, "I can't do anything else"' (Loock, 2005, p.12).

Similarly, the repeated return to and of the home in the artist's practice illustrates an anxiety that halts the addressing of anything new. Schneider repeats the home, The home is repeated specifically in *Die Famile Schneider* as if the artist *really* can't do anything else or create anything new. This is evident of a subject's compulsion to repeat due to the neurotic 'sense of inferiority' and this, according to Freud, is due to the limits on the 'child's sexual researches': the prohibition of oedipal fantasies; 'hence such later complaints as "I can't accomplish anything; I can't succeed in anything"' (Freud, 1920, p.15).

Die Famile Schneider also expresses 'loss and love of failure' of the neurotic (Freud, 1920, p.14). This occurs through the lack of success of being able to deal with something other than the home that the subject neurotically *enjoys*. In 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' the neurotic's inferiority is associated with masochism and narcissism. Freud asserted in 'Instincts and their Vicissitudes' (1915) of masochism as 'a reversal of sadism: "The active aim (to torture [...]) is replaced by the passive aim (to be tortured [...])"' (Faulkner, 2009, p. 159). However he then reversed this in 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' stating that 'masochism is not derived from sadism, but is instead a regression to an earlier state, the danger of which sadism had served to forestall' (Faulkner, 2009, p.160). Therefore, as the masochistic subject wishes to be tortured, this is asserted by the death drives 'circuitous path to death' (Faulkner, 2009, p.159).

Freud's association of the masochist to the neurotic is then evident with their relationship to the death drive. Rather than acknowledge a traumatic experience as

something former, the neurotic wishes to modernise the encounter through the act of repetition. Both neurotics and masochists find ‘the notion of a specific pleasure that consists in the sensation of injury – of disintegration and pain’ (Faulkner, 2009, p.159).

In *Die Famile Schneider*, Schneider identifies himself as both the torturer and tortured. He is torturer of both the mother through crying in the kitchen and the father through crying and embarrassment in the bathroom. With the child in the bedroom, the subject is both torturer and tortured through the re-experiencing of punishment. *Die Famile Schneider* therefore illustrates masochistic tendencies of the neurotic. To achieve pleasure ‘the masochist must identify with his torturer, such that he derives his pleasure through this identification, as a distant perpetrator of cruelty rather than its recipient’ (Faulkner, 2005, p.159).

The Freudian neurotic experiences a traumatic event, usually from infancy, as if a contemporary encounter through the compulsion to repeat. *Die Famile Schneider* asserts this through its doubling of one house within the next. The work is therefore exemplar of a subject pursuing mastery over the father, mother and his own anxieties (in the child) through masochistic infliction. In doing so the work represents a symptom of neurosis, encapsulating a Freudian neurotic subject. *Die Famile Schneider* is therefore a dais in which to understand identical repetition as a symptom of neurosis.

Chapter Two

Is Gregor Schneider A Psychotic? Repetition as Non-Psychosis in *Haus UR*

The act of repetition within Gregor Schneider's *Haus UR* (1985-present) is analysed through an engagement with the psychical register of the Real. The Real is one of Jacques Lacan's three psychical registers of the unconscious and exists outside of 'social reality' (Homer, 2005, p.5). Full engagement with this register results in the mental disorder psychosis. I argue that *Haus UR* can be considered as a practice of repetition that provide a means by which to avoid the Real and the resulting psychosis.

As per the Introduction of this thesis, Freud believes that total sublimation is possible in the form of a subject's engagement in academia. Total dismissal of even a residue of the drive is impossible in Lacanian theory. As Lacan asserts that a subject's drive is not redirected fully and is in fact demonstrated in the subject that is within social reality. This residue is the Real and is examined within Schneider's work. Through an introduction to the 'three register theory', the following section outlines the three Lacanian sections of the unconscious – the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary. Subsequently, Lacan's revision of the Freudian death drive and his theorisation of *das ding* and the *objet petit a* are examined with repetition in *Haus UR* as a means of keeping the Real at bay.

Lacan first identified three psychical registers in which to structure the unconscious. Psychoanalyst Lionel Bailly defines them as 'a framework for the understanding of

the normal functioning of human mind, and also of all human institutions and creations' (2009, p. 89). Lacan developed the register theory as a new way of understanding discourses or 'a way of thinking about discourses that is slightly different from that provided in "the four discourses"¹¹' (Fink, 1995, p. 142).

Lacan's register theory may be examined chronologically within his career in the order of the Imaginary, constituting his writings between the 1930 and 40's, the Symbolic of the 1950's and the Real between 1960's and 70's. However as Lacanian philosopher Adrian Johnston states:

Such a neat and clean periodization should be taken with several grains of salt, since intricate continuities and discontinuities not conforming to this early-middle-late schema are to be found across the entire lengthy span of Lacan's teachings (2013).

2.1 The Three Lacanian Registers: The Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real

The three registers are an interdependent trilogy. Lacan introduces the 'Borromean knot'¹² as an analogy for the relationship between the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary registers. This arrangement heralds all psychological phenomena. Each register has a main, solitary section of the ring and also two sub sections between themselves and the next register. Minor separation or unravelling of these interlocking rings has consequences for all three registers. The unravelling of the knot is specified by Lacan as psychosis. Unlike neurosis, this disorder does not exist

¹¹ These "four discourses" of psychoanalysis are developed by Lacan in 1969 as a way of formalising psychoanalysis. These are made up of: the Discourses of the Master, the Discourse of the University, the Discourse of the Hysteric and the Discourse of the Analyst.

¹² The Borromean Knot is so called as it is 'named after an Italian noble family – Borromean – who used the formula of interlocking rings in their coat of arms as a symbol of strength in unity' (Bailly, 2009, p.89).

within the boundaries of ‘social reality’ of the Symbolic order but is full engagement with the Real.

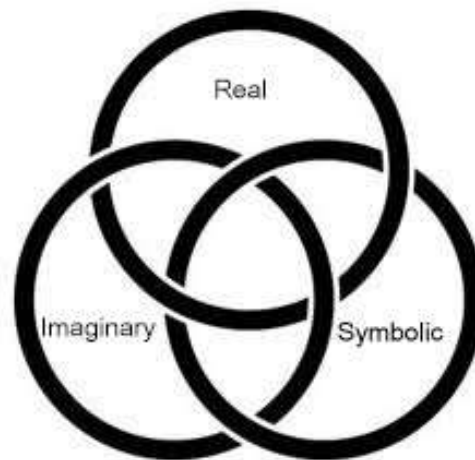


Figure 9. Lacanian Borromean Knot

A reality is used to define the state of things that actually exist. However in Lacanian theory reality consists of what we imagine exists or our perception of real life. It is ‘what people experience as non-psychoanalytic quotidian reality’ (Johnston, 2013). This experience occurs within the Imaginary register. Lacan’s use of the word ‘imaginary’ is a designation that this register is an illusionary or fictional structure arranged by the subject and therefore a fantasy. It makes up our imaginative perceptions; what we imagine others to be, what we imagine we are and the communication of these perceptions by the subject.

The Imaginary register is ‘shaped and steered’ by the Symbolic, creating a structure for the subject to perceive the world (Johnston, 2013). The Symbolic does this regarding customs, institutions, laws of societies and cultures. This register exists together with language, and therefore signifiers, stemming from Lacan’s Structuralist and Post-Structuralist views. Structuralism’s defining rhetoric is that all behaviour emits from central structures (e.g. the state, the economy) which are separate to the

abstract (e.g. love, imagination). Linguistics is privileged as a structure that makes meaning. Lacan famously stated in his Seminar III *Les Psychoses* of 1955 that ‘the unconscious is structured like a language’ (Bailly, 2009, p.41). This was heavily influenced by the Structuralist theory of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. Saussure identified language as made up of a linguistic ‘sign’ with each sign having two sides; a ‘signifier’ and a ‘signified’. The signifier is a symbol of a word and comparable to a word’s phonetic. The signified is what we imagine the signifier (the symbol) to be. For example, a domesticated canine is a dog. Here the domesticated canine is the signifier and the dog is the signified. Thence the Symbolic register is formed and navigated by language, not as merely a speech act but a set of decipherable symbols. Lacan departed from Structuralism¹³ and employed the Post-Structuralist view that language is initiated in social relations between people. This is a discourse. Therefore according to Post-structuralism, language is not a structure; it is created by our abstract experiences and within the unconscious as chains of signifiers.

Our entry into the Symbolic register happens through our admission into language as children and plays a fundamental role throughout our lifetime. This entry is referred to as a submission to castration in Lacanian thought whereby the subject must *give up* in order to enter it. Castration is a Freudian term whereby the question of sexual difference revolved around the ‘castration complex’, whether or not someone ‘has’ or ‘does not have a penis’ (Homer, 2005, p.95). However this explanation has been expanded in Lacanian theory whereby the penis is now the symbolic phallus and

¹³ In departing from Structuralism Lacan follows the view that there is no distinction between the structure and the abstract - this is Post-Structuralism.

what we give up is *jouissance* or enjoyment¹⁴. Castration is therefore ‘insoluble by any reduction to biological givens’ and will be examined further in this Chapter (Lacan, 1977, p.282).

Before castration we are in the ‘primordial real’. This is pre-language and as a result problematic in explanation. Adrian Johnston defines this difficulty as a ‘barrier’ (2013). He states that it is self-evident in an elucidation of itself, with the barrier being an obstacle against the Imaginary and Symbolic reality. The Real is that which is foreign to both the Imaginary and the Symbolic registers as it thwarts everything that is understandable and purposeful in reality. It is a ‘vis-à-vis reality’ (Johnston, 2013). This register cannot exist within language as it is not a ‘thing; it is not a material object in the world or the human body or even reality’ (Homer, 2005, p.5). Lacan defines the Real as a creeping force within the unconscious;

The Real expects nothing, especially not of the Subject, as it expects nothing of speech. But it is there, identical to its own existence, a noise in which one can hear everything, ready to submerge with its splinters what the reality principle has built under the name of the external world (Lacan in Bailly, 2009, p.97).

Therefore the Real has an opposing nature to our Symbolic and Imaginary reality as they are both implicated by language and accordingly is in constant tension with

¹⁴ Enjoyment is the direct translation of *jouissance* from French to English however this translation is problematic as it does not fully encompass what *jouissance* fully refers to.

them. This tension is associated predominantly with trauma¹⁵ in Lacanian psychoanalysis.

Trauma most commonly occurs through the subject's earliest encounter with sexuality and is then experienced later in life due to the 'psychological scar in the subject's unconscious' (Homer, 2005, p.83). It is not essentially an event experienced but it is rather the unconscious' failure to comprehend what is taking place. It is the 'confrontation between external stimulus and the subject's inability to understand and master these excitations' (Homer, 2005, p.83). Homer notes that for Freud all trauma exists in this miscomprehension of an event. Lacan adds that trauma always remains unsymbolisable, as a 'permanent dislocation at the very heart of the subject' (Homer, 2005, p. 84). Psychotic trauma is examined through a subject's relationship to the three registers in the following section.

2.2 Psychosis and Non-Psychosis

Before the child enters social reality it has full engagement with the Real, acting only through instinct without the structure of the Symbolic register. Psychotic trauma or psychosis occurs when a child fails to 'assimilate a "primordial" signifier' and cannot enter the Symbolic as a result (Fink, 1995, p.55). Primordial signification is established through what Lacan calls the 'paternal metaphor' or 'paternal function' and is associated with the father in Freud's Oedipus complex as 'a third term—often perceived [by the child mostly] as foreign and even undesirable' (Fink 1995, p.55). The function of the paternal metaphor is to break *das ding*, 'an initial child-mother

¹⁵ Trauma is 'any kind of cut or wound' however throughout this thesis trauma refers explicitly to psychological trauma, the damage done to the psyche as a result of a disturbing social and/or physical event, e.g. war, rape etc. (Homer, 2005, p.83).

unity (as a logical, i.e. structural, moment, if not a temporal one)' (Fink, 1995, p.55). This unity or core¹⁶ is no longer accessible on the child's entry to the Symbolic register as it must give up the unity with the mother in order to enter this register. *Das ding* therefore only exists within a pre-language state of primordial Real where it is closest to the mother. This is the child's first, full engagement with the Real register before it's submission to language.

Although the Real register circles within the subjects unconscious throughout its lifetime the subject not suffering psychosis never fully engages with it again. The paternal metaphor creates a gap between the child and mother and therefore defuses these initial, strongest desires of the child within the Real; 'neutralizes the Other's [Real] desire' (Fink, 1995, p.83).

The non-psychotic subject is defined as a castrated subject. Lacanian castration is a symbolic loss, or *lack* of an illusionary object that takes the form of an imaginary phallus and occurs in our compliance into language and our submission into the Law (the Law here referring to societal laws governed by the Symbolic register).

Therefore *das ding* does not exist as itself unity post-castration due to the paternal metaphor. It now occurs as a desire of its mother. However desire cannot be satisfied in the Symbolic order as 'desire is always the desire for something that is missing and thus involves a constant search for the missing object' (Homer, 2005, p. 87). *Das ding* now becomes this desire, as the imaginary phallus or missing object known as the *objet petit a* or *objet a*. It represents the Others lack, 'not in the sense of a specific object that is lacking but as lack itself' (Homer, 2005, p. 87). The Other here being the mother or 'm(O)ther'. The *objet a* is therefore a non-existent object and

¹⁶ Borrowing the term core from Homer in defining *das ding*; 'there is always a core of the real missing from the Symbolic' (2005, p.84)

only occurs through the desire for it within the Symbolic register. It is ‘the constant sense we have as subjects that something is lacking or missing from our lives’ (Homer, 2005, p.87). The subject is in constant pursuit of something they will inevitably never find. This pursuit of the *objet a* is governed by the death drive as it ‘circles around its object but never achieves the satisfaction of reaching it’ (Homer, 2005, p.76). The purpose of the drive is simply to maintain its own repetitive compulsive movement just as the purpose of desire is to desire’ (Homer, 2005, p.76). A psychotic subject would therefore not recognise an *objet a* as it has not moved from the Real into the Symbolic’. Because this subject still holds on to the child-mother unity that is *das ding* and would have nothing to repetitively chase after, to keep in search of.

Psychotic trauma is a direct engagement with the Real register as it is unable to incorporate the primordial signifier, that which signals the subject’s entrance into language; the Symbolic register. Due to this the psychotic subject cannot comprehend an existence in social reality. The non-psychotic subject however does assimilate the primordial signifier. Their *das ding* changes into the *objet a* in the Symbolic. The following section will provide an extended analysis of these concepts with regard to the art work *Haus UR* by Schneider. This application is specifically in relation to Schneider’s variable repetition within and of *Haus UR*.

2.3 Non-Psychosis in *Haus UR*

Like that of *Die Famile Schneider*, *Haus UR*’s repetition appears compulsive in nature. However *Die Famile Schneider* is made up of identical doubles while *Haus UR* portrays a more varying, chaotic repetition.



Figure 10. Exterior of *Haus UR* (1985-present), Rheydt, Germany

Haus UR is sited in what was previously Schneider's childhood home in Rheydt, Germany. The outside of the building looks like that of any ordinary German home. However on the inside Schneider has been reconstructing and reorganising the house's architectural units since 1985. Schneider has subverted the function of the home, as a place of safety and welcome, into a dense labyrinth. Rooms such as a kitchen, bedrooms and corridors exist but with unusual structural elaborations. For example, the coffee room is on a 180° revolving platform. Viewers leave unaware the room has turned as they entering a corridor identical to the one they were in previous. Some rooms are built within other much larger rooms while others are totally sound proof. *Die Familie Schneider* is therefore forcing a sense of instability and lack of control on his audience by leaving them in a state of confusion as they make their way around the work.



Figure 11. Coffee Room in *Haus UR* (1985-present)

Haus UR appears an endless construction for Schneider, as he writes:

Wall before wall, wall before wall, wall behind wall, passage in the room, room in the room, passage in the room, wall before wall, blue paper areas on the wall, room in the room, room in the room, red stone behind the room, lead in the floor, light around the room, wall before wall, shape in the wall, cube in the wall, black stone in the wall, moveable ceiling below the ceiling, passage in the room, wall before wall (1994, p.15).

As per Chapter One, the concept of the drive originates with Freud. Lacan is extremely influenced by this Freudian conception however there are important distinctions to be made between the two theorists. While Freud distinguished two drives, *Eros* and *Thantos*, Lacan asserts only one; *Thantos*, the death drive. For Lacan, this drive ‘always searches around its object but never achieves the satisfaction of reaching it’ (Homer, 2005, p.76). As Bailly notes of Lacan’s death drive: It ‘could manifest as pleasure seeking to begin with, but distinguishes itself in the way that a person who seeks the pleasure of a glass of wine is distinct from the person who seeks oblivion in a bottle of hard liquor’ (2009, p.102).

Haus UR illustrates the repetitive goal of the Lacanian death drive in the way Schneider consistently returns to his family home as a subject for his practice. Since

1985 Schneider continues to revert back to *Haus UR* just as the drives only purpose is to circle the unattainable *objet a*. Schneider repeatedly removes interior sections of the building and re-exhibits them in galleries and museums elsewhere. Most significantly as *Totes Haus UR* (2001), the artist transferred 24 original rooms from Rheydt, Germany to Venice for the 49th *Venice Biennale*. These rooms consisted of bedrooms, a kitchen, hallways, and empty under developed bunker like spaces. Moving these sections of the family home around exudes the residue in Lacanian sublimation. The *objet a* that the subject searches for, as each section is readdressed in difference locations, it acts as the little bit of the sexual cathexis that was not redirected in sublimation. The *objet a* now represents the Real in social reality as this unattainable satisfaction in the reappropriating of *Haus UR*.



Figure 12. Kitchen of Totes Haus UR (2001)

Figure 13. Stairwell of Totes Haus UR (2001)

Schneider also displays and publishes photographic work of the interior of both *Haus UR* and *Die Familie Schneider* in books. Most notably Paul Simmel's *Gregor*

Schneider (2003) published by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, alongside the exhibition *Gregor Schneider: dead house u r*. This exhibition travelled to Barbara Gladstone Gallery, New York and consisted of the same relocated parts of *Haus UR*.



Figures 14, 15. Scanned photographs of *Haus UR* (1985-present) in *Gregor Schneider* (2003)

The compulsive nature of these transferences of the work is akin to the death drive continuously achieves its goal of repetitively circling the *objet a*. The work is continually repeated, appearing to be driven by the insatiable strive for the satisfaction of desire. Schneider will never not repeat and reorganise *Haus UR* and this is in parallel of a search for the unobtainable object that is the *objet a*.

In the re-appropriation of the work's sub-sections Schneider is separating one part of his family home with another. Lacan terms this as a separation of one into two; das

ding, the unity with the mother, into the *objet a*, child and its desire of the mother; as alienation. Alienation designates the subject's first step on entry into the Symbolic register. The child must give up its misrecognition of itself as part of the m(O)ther. Therefore it must realise it is a separate entity in doing so begins to control itself. Lacan refers to this realisation as The Mirror Stage;

During the mirror stage, then, the child for the first time becomes aware, through seeing its image in the mirror, that his/her body has a total form. The infant can also govern the movements of this image through the movements of its own body and thus experience pleasure. This is a sense of completeness and mastery (Homer, 2005, p.25).

The death drive is evident in repetitively governing the movements of *Haus UR* through Schneider's re-appropriation of sections beyond Rheydt, Germany. As he does this the newly instated works illustrate the second stage of Symbolic identification called separation. This takes place when the subject can express the query of who they are with regard to the desire of the mother. The newly instated subsections are recognisable as the mother has other desires than the child and can thus differentiate itself from the desire of the mOther. This desire 'always exceeds or escapes the subject' because the child can never again have the unity of *das ding* in the Symbolic register (Homer, 2005, p.85). The work exhibited as new consequently represents an attempt at grasping the *objet a*. As Fink in Homer states:

There nevertheless remains something that the subject can recover and thus sustain "him or herself in being, as a being of desire" or a desiring subject. That remainder is the *objet petit a*, the object-cause of desire (2005, p.73).

The relocation of sections of *Haus UR* is thus the repetitive chasing of the *objet a* propelled by the death drive's subjective repetition. The movement of subsections of

Haus UR is the subject search for desire of the mother which once only encompassed the child. *Haus UR* is therefore a pursuit in Schneider's work that equates the human strive for *more*. As Homer states; there is always something more we desire' and therefore we will always search for it (2005, p.87).

This disordered material and object production may be comparable to the chaos of the psychotic subject as unable to exist within the social norm and is therefore chaotic. Also, the confusing of the viewer within *Haus UR* may represent a subject in full engagement with the Real as existing in tension with the Imaginary and Symbolic register. However, a psychotic subject does not search as it already has what it needs in the form of *das ding*¹⁷. The re-use of sub-sections of *Haus UR* elsewhere is evidence of a Symbolic *bound* subject in the constant pursuit of the *objet a*. Schneider's continuous use of *Haus UR* serves as evidence of the circulating nature of the death drive as it ceases to achieve anything but its own circular functioning 'like a kind of engine, their [its] satisfaction lies merely in the functions they [it] propel[s]' (Bailly, 2009, p.102).

In summary, *Haus UR* demonstrates that at one time, the subject inhabited the Real in its primordial form. Entry into the Symbolic reduced the subject's connection with it explicitly. In Chapter One I inferred *Die Familie Schneider* as a symptom of neurosis due to the compulsion to repeat the repressed traumatic experiences. *Haus UR* further supports this claim as it illustrates an insatiable attempt to return to the original home, the setting of these traumatic experiences. This is the search of the *objet a* in the Symbolic register thus the subject is not psychotic. *Haus UR* represents a castrated subject under the repetitive goal of the death drive.

¹⁷ Das ding, to reiterate, is the child mother unity that the child has within the primordial real. This does not exist post-castration as itself but instead as the *objet a*.

Fink writes that Lacanian castration ‘has to do with the fact that, at a certain point, we are required to give up some *jouissance*’ (1995, p.99). This certain point is entry into the symbolic order via the acquisition of language. Lacanian castration is a symbolic process involving a ‘renunciation of *jouissance*’ and the recognition of that *lack* through two different types of sexualities of subjects; Masculine and Feminine (Fink, 1995, p.99). These subjects are ‘the manner in which we must pursue *jouissance* through language and therefore encounter a priori restrictions or limitations to *jouissance*’ (Bryant, 2011, p.254). It is with this conjecture that I will examine both *Die Familie Schneider* and *Haus UR* in the succeeding Chapter Three.

Chapter Three:

Is Schneider a Masculine or Feminine Subject? Phallic and Other *Jouissance* in *Die Famile Schneider* and *Haus UR*

This chapter provides the finalising construction of an examination of repetition in both Gregor Schneider's *Die Famile Schneider* (2004) and *Haus UR* (1985-present) as exemplar of a subject's psychological behaviour. This is interpreted using the Lacanian graph of sexuation as a prism through which to consider an engagement with phallic and Other *jouissance* in the works. Lionel Bailly determines *jouissance* as 'the enjoyment produced by the functions connected with a [death] drive' (2009, p.102). Because of this association *jouissance*, as Sean Homer states, 'expresses that paradoxical situation where patients appear to enjoy their own illness or symptom'¹⁸ (2005, p.89).

Lacanian castration is a symbolic process involving a 'renunciation of *jouissance*' and the recognition of the lack through two different types of sexuations of subjects; Masculine and Feminine (Fink, 1995, p.99). These subjects are 'the manner in which we must pursue *jouissance* through language and therefore encounter a priori restrictions or limitations to *jouissance*' (Bryant, 2011, p.254). Due to the masculine and feminine subject's relationship to the Symbolic order in Lacan's graph, Fink states that:

His [Lacan's] formulas of sexuation thus only concern speaking subjects, and, I would suggest, only neurotic subjects: the men and women defined in these formulas are neurotic, clinically speaking; neurotic men differ from neurotic women in the way in which they are alienated by/within the symbolic order (1995, p.106).

¹⁸ To note, philosopher Slavoj Žižek titled his 2001 book on Lacanian theory 'Enjoy your Symptom!'

Therefore, as per Chapter One with *Die Famile Schneider* as exemplar of neurosis and the ruling out of psychosis in *Haus UR* in Chapter Two, both works refer to behaviour of the neurotic. Thence these works are favourable objects in and investigation through Lacan's feminine and masculine subjects. It is with the above assertion that this chapter explores phallic and Other *jouissance* referred to particular sexualities of Lacan's graph, the masculine pertaining to phallic *jouissance* and feminine to both phallic and Other *jouissance*. The following section first examines *jouissance* in relation to castration, and in more detail, the Real register.

3.1 The Real and *Jouissance*

Lacanian castration 'has to do with the fact that, at a certain point, we are required to give up some *jouissance*' (1995, p.99). This certain point, as previously outlined, is entry into the symbolic order via the addition of language. From the 1970's and onwards Lacan asserts that the Real is constantly surrounding our everyday lives and therefore 'circling around the impossible traumatic encounter' (Homer, 2005, p.89). In order to avoid it Homer states the subject must 'traverse the fantasy' (2005, p.89). Fantasy refers to the subject's inconceivable pursuit of the *objet a*¹⁹ and protects reality, the Imaginary and Symbolic registers from the Real's expansion. This is a subjectification of the Real's trauma by accepting *jouissance* in the renounced nature of the Symbolic register.

The following examination cites Levi Bryant's book *The Democracy of Objects* (2011), specifically Chapter Six titled 'The Four Theses of Flat Ontology'. This

¹⁹ As outlined in Chapter Two, the *objet a* is the unattainable missing object that the subject repeatedly searches for in the Symbolic register.

section of the text outlines Lacan's graph of sexuation unambiguously by Bryant. Sexual difference, with particular regard to the feminine subject, must be examined carefully as Homer states it 'is surely the most controversial and contested area of Lacanian psychoanalysis'²⁰ (2005, p. 95).

3.2 Masculine and Feminine Subject *Jouissance*'s

Although Lacan uses the terms masculine and feminine as the two types of sexuated structures within the graph of sexuation, he proposes these as psychoanalytic structures, divergent from biological sexuality. This is crucial to recognise before moving further with this analysis. First presented in Seminar 20 *Encore* (1972-1973), the concepts of masculine and feminine sexuated subjects are ordained through 'different kinds of relations to the symbolic order, different ways of being split by language' (Fink, 1995, p.106). Masculinity is completely alienated by the Symbolic order whereas femininity, although also alienated, is not totally subject to and restricted by the Symbolic. The feminine sexuated subject acts as a partner with this register in order to experiences something else; an Other *jouissance*.

²⁰ Lacans slogans regarding sexual difference such as 'There is no such thing as a sexual relationship' and 'Women do not exist' have been received erroneously by members of the psychoanalytic field and beyond. However, Adrian Johnston comments that thesis slogans are 'deliberately provocative' and this 'shouldn't obscure his carefully considered reasons for saying this' (2013).

'Women do not exist' refers to existence as the Symbolic register and if women were to *exist* she would have to exist in this register. Because the symbolic is 'phallic by definition it would subordinate femininity to the phallus in the same way that Freud saw femininity as defined by not having a penis' (Homer, p. 102).

'There is no such thing as a sexual relationship' and 'Women do not exist' is examined on page 42 of this chapter (Homer, 2005, pp.103, 106).

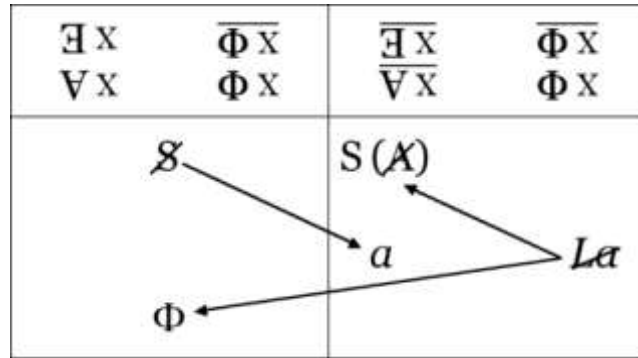


Figure 16. Lacanian Graph of Sexuation

The top sections of Lacan’s graph refers to ‘the structural deadlocks that inhabit the symbolic’ (Bryant, 2011, p.253). These deadlocks are what we can achieve as a result of the structures within and of the Symbolic register. The two lower sections of the graph indicates the two forms of *jouissance* a subject can experience, the masculine/phallic *jouissance* (left) and feminine/phallic and Other *jouissance* (right). The basic equations of this section must first be outlined in order to continue.

Φ is known as the phallic function. This symbol refers to what the phallic function signifies, ‘power, potency or a master’ in the bottom section of the graph (Bryant, 2011, p.258). In the top section this phallic function is understood as castration. As Bryant notes ‘the manner in which we must pursue *jouissance* through language and therefore encounter a priori restrictions or limitations to *jouissance*’ (2011, p.254).

\forall is known as a ‘universal quantifier’ or ‘all’(Bryant, 2011, p.254).

X is understood as a single entity and so the subject.

$\forall x$, Bryant translates, is ‘for all entities’ and Φx as ‘x as submitted to the phallic function’ (Bryant, 2011, p.254).

$\forall x\Phi x$ sits on both the masculine and feminine sides of the graph. On the masculine side, it reads ‘for all entities, x is submitted to the phallic function’ (Bryant, 2011, p.254). In other words, all subjects who are psychically structured as masculine are under the function of the phallus. On the feminine side of the graph, $\forall x\Phi x$ exists with a \sim before the universal qualifier. This symbol occurs as a negation of \forall , therefore proposing $\sim\forall x\Phi x$, translated by Bryant as ‘*not all of x is submitted to the phallic function*’ (2011, p.254). Despite the phallic functioning referring to the phallus as a primary signifier, not all subjects are exclusively governed by it. The feminine subject is not ‘whole, bound, or limited’ to the phallic function (Fink, 1995, p.107).

This limitation refers to the bottom section of the graph; the forms of *jouissance* the subject may experience. According to Lacan, the masculine sexuated structure is limited by the phallic function, therefore he is subject to symbolic castration and in doing so experiences phallic *jouissance*. Whilst the feminine subject is also castrated and too experiences phallic *jouissance*, this subject also has access to a surplus. This is *extra*, known as Other *jouissance*. The capitalization of the O indicates the possibility of this surplus *jouissance* within the Symbolic register (S1) and references the Other as connected with the signifier. Fink explains the significance of the Other *jouissance*’s relationship to S1 in Lacan’s thought. It is the:

...unary signifier, the signifier that remains radically Other, radically different from all other signifiers. Whereas S1 (the father’s “No!”) functions for a man as a limit to his range of motion and pleasures. S1 is an elective “partner” for a woman, her relationship to it allowing her to step beyond the boundaries set by language and beyond the pittance of pleasure language allows. An endpoint for men, S1 serves as an open door for women (Fink, 1995, p.107).

Homer notes ‘the problem with talking about Other *jouissance*, however, is that it cannot be spoken about’ (2005, p. 105). This is because it goes beyond the Symbolic and therefore beyond language; ‘If we could talk about this Other *jouissance* then it would, by definition, be phallic, as the symbolic order is phallic’ (Homer, 2005, p.105). Lacan defines this Other *jouissance* in Seminar XX; *Encore*, with reference to the statue of ‘The Ecstasy of Saint Teresa’(1647–52) by the Italian Baroque sculptor Lorenzo Bernini. The work depicts St Teresa ‘swooning in ecstasy’ as she’s injured by an angel’s arrow (Homer, 2005, p.105).



Figure 17. *The Ecstasy of Saint Teresa* (1647–52), Bernini.

Lacan himself cannot fully explain this Other *jouissance* in an academic manner. Not only does he direct his readers attention to an art work in order to explain but further deploys crass language to speak of the statue.

[I]t’s like for Saint Teresa – you need but go to Rome and see the statue by Bernini to immediately understand that she’s coming. There’s no doubt about it. What is she getting

off on? It is clear that the essential testimony of the mystics consists in saying that they experience it, but know nothing about it. (Lacan in Homer, 2005, p.105)

He doesn't know what Teresa is 'getting off' on but he does know she having an orgasm; this is the experience of Other *jouissance* he refers to (Lacan in Homer, 2005, p.105).

In Seminar XX *Encore* (1972-73) Lacan famously stated 'There is no such thing as a sexual relationship (*il n'ya pas de rapport sexuel*)' (In Fink, 1995, p.104). With this, Lacan opposes the obsessive societal fantasy of complete harmony and balance within a relationship. Lacan believes that 'the role of psychoanalysis is to reveal how any harmonious relationship is fundamentally impossible' due to the 'non complementary structures' of the masculine and feminine subjects being 'different relationships to the Other' (Homer, 2005, p. 106). Therefore 'the major problem of male and female subjects is that they do not relate to what their partners relate to in them' (Salecl in Homer, 2005, p.106). This relationship is to the phallus and the *objet a*. As Lacan states, 'We can never be One' (In Homer, 2005, p.106).

It is with this argumentation of the opposing structures of Lacan's masculine and feminine subjects that the following section analyses both *Die Famile Schneider* and *Haus UR* respectively. The careful doublings of *Die Famile Schneider* are argued as reflexive of the endless attempts of the masculine subject to continuously think they are missing out in relation to *jouissance*. While the moving beyond *Haus UR*; transporting sub-sections for exhibition elsewhere, is argued as illustrative of both phallic *jouissance* and Other *jouissance* and therefore the feminine subject's relationship with and beyond the limitations of the Symbolic register.

3.3 The Phallic *Jouissance* of *Die Famile Schneider*

To recapitulate, *Die Famile Schneider* consists of two parallel, identical Georgian houses on Walden St in White Chapel, London E1. The houses are twins in every detail of their interior. Identical twins perform prescribed tasks in specific rooms of both houses; A woman washing dishes at the sink in the kitchen, a man masturbates in the shower of the bathroom, and a child sits on the floor of a bedroom with its head under a bin bag. As evaluated in Chapter One, Schneider actions are exemplar of a subject's compulsive nature through a doubling of both the identical twins and the entire aesthetic of the first house within the second next door.

The nature of the phallus in phallic *jouissance* is represented by a lack because of its relationship to castration, the *giving up* of *jouissance*. The masculine subject, who can only experience one type of *jouissance*; the phallic, is realised through the compulsive repetition of the idea that they must continually search for more *jouissance*. Homer notes the lacking as ascribed to the Other as 'the Other is believed to experience a level of enjoyment beyond our own experience' (2005, p.90). However, there is no exaggerated *jouissance* of the Other's and therefore it cannot be found. Phallic *jouissance* is consequently linked with failure as the masculine subject will never achieve the experience of the 'something more' it so strives for. 'We will inevitably be disappointed – the satisfaction we achieve is never quite enough' (Homer, 2005, p.90).

In Le Galerie Nelson Freeman's 2011 press release of a selection of Schneider's photographic work, the artist is quoted as being fascinated with the idea of working with the unknown: 'And the more I deal with it, the more unknown it becomes. That's the challenge for me, to keep running on the spot' (Schneider, 2011).

Schneider continuously searches for something more by doubling within *Die Famile Schneider*. This blind pursuit is just as the masculine subject is convinced someone has more *jouissance* than them and wants to attain it for himself. 'We have a sense that it is there and we want it' (Homer, 2005, p.104). The phallic *jouissance* is not enough for the masculine subject. Schneider appears to experience phallic *jouissance* or, as Lacan refers, '*jouissance* of the vanquished idiot' through his meticulous repetition in *Die Famile Schneider* (Robbins, 2014). The artist doesn't move within the houses but stays in a constant, compulsive cycle of repetition. Lacan refers to the vanquished idiot as a subject that believes he is a 'master'; 'I am a master of myself as I am of the universe' (Robbins, 2014). He deems the phallic subject an 'idiot' because he will never reach the mastery he so longs for. Due to the phallic functions compliance into language it fails to be something that dominates successively. Thus Schneider can be considered as Lacan's vanquished idiot as he repeats to no end within the work.

By repetition of the identical twin mother and father's respective acts of washing dishes and masturbating while crying *Die Famile Schneider* expresses a subject obsessed with mastering his repressed experiences of both the termination of *das ding* (outlined in the mother) and societal prohibition of oedipal fantasies (outlined in the father). Similarly *Die Famile Schneider* asserts a failed attempt at mastery of an unchangeable event with the repetition of punishment of the identical twin child under the bin bag. The work expresses a subject's wish to extinguish the event of castration. The neurotic repetition of these experiences will not relay the events in the characters favour however many times they are repeated. This foolishness is evidence of Lacan's vanquished idiot as the work repeats something the neurotic the artist is obsessed with mastering the situation but never will.

Die Famile Schneider therefore expresses a subject experiencing phallic *jouissance* who considers himself in control of the Symbolic register when it is precisely that which limits him. It is Schneider's working with the unknown through *Die Famile Schneider* that the masculine sexuated subject falsely believes in. As Bryant states:

Through a fantasy structure organized around an impossible desire, the masculine subject can thereby sustain his desire and protect against the disappointment of *jouissance* coming up short (2011, p.256)

Die Famile Schneider's doubling is therefore exemplar of a subject's obsession with *jouissance* that Lacan's masculine subject experiences.

In the following section I further consider Schneider's work as an expression of the feminine subject with both *Die Famile Schneider* and *Haus UR* examined as Other *jouissance*.

3.4 Other *jouissance* of Die Famile Schneider and Haus UR

'The idea of Other *jouissance* is seen to mark an advance over the phallocentrism of Freud, in that Other *jouissance* is more than phallic *jouissance*' (Homer, 2005, p.105).

Where Freud centred his sexual theories on the biological penis (of having and not having) this 'more than', through the feminine subject, is as being able to experience phallic and Other *jouissance*. The feminine subject can align herself within the

Symbolic register and experiences phallic *jouissance* but she also exists beyond the Symbolic and thus has the opportunity of Other *jouissance*.

To reiterate, *Haus UR*, examined in Chapter Two, engages in a repetition dissimilar to that of the identical doubling within *Die Familie Schneider*. Schneider is not repetitively producing the same thing in *Haus UR*. Instead his repetitions vary in internal construction of the work and of subsections taken out and inserted elsewhere. In the Symbolic register the subject is aligned ‘against a background of social relations from which they derive their meaning’ (Homer, 2005, p.35). The Symbolic register therefore creates a structure for meaning in the subject. This relationship to structure is examined as the Symbolic’s relationship to the feminine subject *jouissance* of phallic and Other.

Repetition exists both in and of *Die Familie Schneider* and *Haus UR*. Inside both works Schneider repeats the interior. The home in both works represents the limitation of the Symbolic register. Therefore repetition within the houses is specifically an experience of phallic *jouissance* and beyond the house represents Other *jouissance*.



Figures 18, 19. Photographic documentation of *Die Familie Schneider* (2004) in the book *Die Familie Schneider: Gregor Schneider*.

With the works, Schneider uses both *Die Famile Schneider* and *Haus UR*'s buildings structures and reappropriates them. In the case of *Die Famile Schneider*, the aesthetic of 14 Walden St., in (made up of both performers and objects), is cloned and transported next door into 16 Walden St. In *Haus UR* rooms of the building are transported for exhibition elsewhere.

As outlined in Chapter Two Schneider also repeats the home consistently in the documentation of his work. Here the artist controls the photographic presentation of *Haus UR* through publications. With *Die Famile Schneider*, Schneider aligns the photos of 14 and 16 Walden St. akin in the book *Gregor Schneider: Die Famile Schneider* (2006) published Artangel. The description reads 'This book is the artist Gregor Schneider's extension of the original work, a document and exploration of Schneider's obsession with repression, reproduction and repetition in images and text' (O' Hagan, 2006). Schneider is using the structure of both *Die Famile Schneider* and *Haus UR* repetitively as the work is further moved around in the presentation of photographs of each works interior.

In the way the feminine sexuated subject works with and not just inside the Symbolic order, Schneider works with and inside his artworks. Schneider seems to experience both phallic and Other *jouissance* by not being limited by the works through repetition both within and of the building. Therefore, a female subject is evident in this use of *Die Famile Schneider* and *Haus UR*. The subject has the power to control how much he is bound by the Symbolic, defying and exceeding the 'role allotted' by this register, going 'beyond its "designated role"' (Fink, 1995, p.119).

3.5 The Hysteric and the Feminine Subject

Although Fink notes that all subjects within Lacan's graph of sexuation are neurotic he also states that the feminine subject 'bears close affinities to hysteria as defined in the hysterics discourse'²¹ (Fink, 1995, p.107). The feminine subject structure proves that 'the phallic function has its limits and that the signifier isn't everything' (Fink, 1995, p.107). This is similar within the hysterics discourse where, as Fink states, the hysteric 'takes its cue from the master signifier, glossing over it with some sort of trumped-up system' (1995, p.133). The connection is therefore a subject working within the Symbolic but also controlling it. Also, a neurotic subject is a castrated subject and must subjectify the trauma of the Real by traversing the fantasy in order to avoid full engagement with this register. Similarly, the hysteric maintains 'the primacy of subjective division, the contradiction between conscious and unconscious, and thus the conflictual, or self-contradictory, nature of desire itself whereby the 'division' takes the role of the trauma' (1995, p.133). Lacan defines the hysteric as a subject who:

... pushes the master – incarnated in a partner, teacher, or whomever – to the point where he or she can find the masters knowledge lacking. Either the master does not have an explanation for everything, or his or her reasoning does not hold water' In addressing the master, the hysteric demands that he or she produce knowledge and then goes on to disprove his or her theories (Fink, 1995, p.134).

Bryant reasons this affiliation as 'both Lacan and Freud argue that the subject is, at root, a hysterical subject' (2011, p.260). Therefore if a subject is hysterical before orientation of sexuation then Bryant argues that this is due to the masculine and

²¹ The Hysterics Discourse is one of the four discourses of psychoanalysis developed by Lacan in 1969 as a way of formalising psychoanalysis.

feminine subject's same alienation within language. They 'encounter the same paradoxical structure of language with respect to its inability to totalize or complete itself' (Bryant, 2011, p.260).. Accordingly, the obsessional neurotic exists within the essence of the hysteric. As Bryant notes Žižek:

It was Freud himself who noted that obsessional neurosis is a kind of "dialectic of hysteria": hysteria as a fundamental determination of a neurotic position contains two species, obsessional neurosis and itself as its own species (2011, p260).

The feminine neurotic takes up a position within this dialectic of the hysteric since 'the status of the subject as such is hysterical' (Žižek in Bryant, 2011, p.260).

Conclusion

This thesis has examined the rapport between the unconscious psychological structure of the subject within Schneider's repetition in both *Die Famile Schneider* and *Haus UR* as evident of a neurotic, non-psychotic, feminine subject.

The artist's doubling in *Die Famile Schneider* (2004) was elucidated as symptomatic of a neurosis, tied with a masochistic tendency, applied through Sigmund Freud's concept of the death drive and neurotic mastery in 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' (1920). An engagement with Jacques Lacan's Real register was inspected in the repetition of and in *Haus UR* (1985-present) in Chapter Two. This deduced the work as representative of a non-psychotic subject controlling the Real's presence within social reality. Both *Die Famile Schneider* and *Haus UR* were subsequently examined in relation to Lacanian phallic and Other *jouissance*'s of the neurotic masculine and feminine sexuated subject.

A resolution was then made of these works expressing both *jouissance*'s and therefore exemplar of a feminine subject. Further inspection of the neurotic feminine subject's relation to hysteria derives that all subjects are at origin hysterical. The repetition at work in *Haus UR* and *Die Famile Schneider* is therefore an epitome of expression from a neurotic, non-psychotic, feminine subject experiencing both phallic and Other *jouissance*.

Specific limitations of this inquiry must be acknowledged in conclusion. An analysis based purely on aesthetic production, even in the case of the particular artist's use of psychoanalytically proved symptoms of mental disorders is contentious due to the lack of biography referred to by the analyst. However, the palpable access of the

artist's work as behaviour is much more reasonable than a direct narrative analysis of Schneider himself.

I am of an artist's education and occupation, therefore, without undermining the extensive breadth of psychoanalytic research that has been carried out, it is notable to recognize that this inquiry has been limited by a lack of professional education in psychoanalytic discourse. I am therefore unable to convey an unfailing psychoanalysis of a subject.

Conclusively, the theories of Freud and Lacan have effectively demonstrated repetition in both *Die Familie Schneider* and *Haus UR* as exemplar of a subject's psychological behaviour.

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