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New Encounter with the Hysteric's Desire

Abstract:
When we view hysteria as the site where desire's function demonstrates its perplex yet imminent perturbations, we can create a more demanding level of theorizing than merely viewing hysteria as being an outcome of heteronormative oppression. This perspective exposes how there is something exclusively female, writ large, that structurally defines contemporaneity.
In this article, I suggest that having subjected the study of the feminine to the activist agenda's immediate and often short-sighted objectives, feminist writings have sidelined research into existing phenomena crucial for the understanding of femininity. In doing so, I demonstrate a specific discontinuity between the objectives of feminist activism and the desire underlying it. At the same time, accentuating the nuances of a desire-functioning psychoanalytic approach has necessary theoretical instruments to more accurately contour female desire. Pursuing Jacques Lacan's logic of *jouissance* as the main discursive operator, Alexander Smulyanskiy's psychoanalytic theoretical

apparatus offers fresh and unorthodox solutions to the question of femininity and its crucial importance as the constitutive element of modernity.

Keywords:
Psychoanalysis, feminism, hysteria, female desire, sexuation, formula of sexuation, jouissance, fan fiction, Dora

Psychoanalysis and feminism have several significant areas of intersection that are marked by tension. Yet recent advances in psychoanalytic theory encourage us to believe that the psychoanalytic perspective offers a number of unexpected turns relevant to the discussion about the feminine and female desire. According to Juliet Mitchell, when the feminist movement enacted its major breakthrough as a social struggle and defined political movement in the '60s, "the bizarreness of the conjuncture of psychoanalysis (thought of as the arch-patriarchal discourse) and feminism (patriarchy's greatest analyst and strongest opponent) was both welcomed and abhorred. Both reactions were equally important" (Mitchell 2015: 113).

Indeed, by the very character of its undertaking, psychoanalysis was viewed as a site of exposure and an attestation of integral patriarchal structures. For the most part, feminism was suspicious of how psychoanalytic conceptualization of women was prejudiced and restrictive, prescribing women a secondary, derivative role as Sigmund Freud's penisneid presumably implies.

On the other hand, early feminist interventions into psychoanalytic theory were interested in closely reading psychoanalytic texts and did not eschew its notorious perplexity; in continuously challenging its thorny issues, they adjusted psychoanalytic apparatus for feminist ends.

In this article, I will introduce some aspects of psychoanalytic theory elaborated by the Russian psychoanalyst and theorist Alexander Smulyanskiy, whose work is useful in questions concerning the feminine and female desire. I suggest that the theoretical attention directed to the latter should also be directed to the desire of this discourse's agents, if we assume that the intentions declared by the feminist agenda do not necessarily coincide with female desire. I consider such an assumption necessary as long as we wish to overcome the impasses registered across the field.

Whereas the question of sexual difference remains one of the most urgent issues for the contemporary subject, the response to this question mediated by feminist or gender theory reveals a number of inconsistencies that are indistinguishable from their position. One of the foundational theses within any gender-ori-

ented theory is the need to provide a better understanding, if not a definition, of sexual difference and sexual desire, which is considered subjectivity's major driving force. However, having shifted toward sociopolitical struggle, intersectional feminism and other gender-oriented movements have diverged from the task of their own theoretical inquiry. Although the feminist agenda's account of injustices motivated by gender, racial, or class inequality are socially indispensable, it still has little to say about what it means to be a sexual being and what consequences this sort of being implies. Since it is precisely the hysteric's desire that is preoccupied with the idea of sexual difference, I consider it important to reformulate this desire's significance in view of the latest psychoanalytic argumentation. For this purpose, this article presents a fresh rereading of Dora's case. In 1905, Freud published a case study about a young woman whom he diagnosed with hysteria and treated for about four months. Dora, who found herself at the epicenter of controversial relations with her father, her entourage, and even Freud himself, was destined to become one of the avatars of the feminist struggle and the cornerstone of psychoanalytic theory.

Furthermore, it is not sufficient to demonstrate what precisely drives sexually conditioned desire, but to shed some light on how this very desire intervenes in the process of theorizing, which leads to peculiar collisions. Feminism speaks from a position that is already marked by the effect of desire that is the object of its research. Therefore, I suggest that we cannot understand certain paradoxes of contemporaneity unless we change our methodological framework. The last part of the article analyzes fan fiction literature precisely as an already established phenomena indicative of a specifically female enjoyment. Yet, it has managed to escape feminist attention for the reasons mentioned above. Smulyanskiy's psychoanalytic optics is an appropriate instrument to locate the perplexing effects of female desire in both — a fiction and the feminist disinterest in it.

The Russian Psychoanalytic Scene

Considering the great interest that psychoanalysis evokes in the West among both psychoanalytic movements and general academia, little has been said about its fate in the post-Soviet space. The history of psychoanalysis during the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries in Russia could be characterized as a protracted intermission superseded by a frantic surge of nearly epidemic interest.[1]

[1] This brief summary is mainly based on the two sources: Dmitriy Rozhdestvensky's "The History and Theory of Psychoanalysis: Psychoanalysis

Whereas at the beginning of the twentieth century Russian intelligentsia welcomed the new scandalous European endeavor quite heatedly, it failed to produce a sufficient level of either theoretical or clinical research even prior to the upcoming period of total intellectual isolation and stagnation during the Soviet era. The development of psychoanalysis was directed "in breadth, but not it depth." Rather than a scientific tool, psychoanalytic theory gained its popularity as a source and inspiration for cultural and literary exploration resulting in its limited implementation as a clinical instrument, something that has always been its primary end for Freud and his European followers. Psychoanalysis basically disappeared from the Soviet intellectual scene and its contemporary form is shaped under the weight of nearly half a century of isolation and disdain. Eventually, Soviet Russia turned into a country with a nearly totalizing state regulation. In contrast to Western countries, public institutions and the practice of public licensing was destroyed, which led to the loss of autonomy for the analysts. Thus, in combination with scant serious scientific ambition, lack of clinical basis, and consequent shift to the "tradition of scholastic philosophizing regarding psychoanalysis" (Reshetnikov 2003: 316), psychoanalytic theory was radically deformed and eventually proved useless.

The shift of the political climate in the '80s contributed to the emergence of a new gateway for the hitherto illicit or undesirable disciplines that was welcomed with even more rampant enthusiasm then it saw at the beginning of the century. This restitution in the '90s and what followed in the beginning of the twenty-first century had to face a new challenge in the form of a different economic regime, which formulated a more straightforward task of immediate financial profit and in this way contoured the scene not in its most favorable way.

Saying that, early post-Soviet era saw an increasing demand for all sorts of alternative discourses, thus a significant rise of interest in psychoanalysis in particular was accompanied by a massive outbreak of interest in a wide number of disciplines and pseudo-disciplines, resulting in major confusion among various fields and a severe shortage of professional training.

Nevertheless, alongside this change, Freud's work started getting published and distributed, and various associations were established such as the Russian Psychoanalytic Association in Moscow in 1989, the St Petersburg Analytic Society in 1990, the Moscow Psychoanalytic Society and the first Institute of Psychoanalysis in St Peters-

in Russian Culture, 2nd ed." (2019), and Mikhail Reshetnikov's "Psychodynamics and Psychotherapy of Depressions" (2003).

burg in 1991. Several periodicals appeared, followed by an explosion of public associations, groups, and study programs included in state university programs devoted to psychoanalysis. Yet, in the spirit of prerevolutionary disinterest in serious research combined with the pressing urge of clinical practitioners' prompt formation, this dynamic led to dubious results. Eventually, the Russian psychoanalytic scene writ large became riddled with an enormous amount of very often poorly trained quasi-professionals, whose practice was held under the guidance of loosely and, for the most part, randomly coordinated concepts derived from a variety of disciplines.

There are myriad discussion boards, reading groups, and social network societies propagating self-made theoretical principles, training practitioners and supervising them. Mikhail Reshetnikov (Reshetnikov 2003: 166–82) expresses serious concerns regarding the methodological opportunism of post-Soviet quasi-professional therapists whose emergence on the professional arena was not a result of mutual work with the discourse, but a result of "inventing psychotherapy based on the fragmentary information and sources" (Ibid.: 315), which on the one hand was the inevitable consequence of the installed political regime, yet on the other has lasted for too long and thus had led to the field's deformation.

So, currently now there are two major trends in the development of psychotherapy in Russia: one trend still confirms the worst fears expressed above; however, it is precisely over the last thirty years that the Russian psychoanalytic scene has managed to introduce Lacanian psychoanalysis not only as a new clinical dimension but as an arena for diverse intellectual research. There has been a notable shift over the past thirty years, however, from the initial attempts to connect scattered scraps of information to construct a basic understanding of the most relevant and pressing psychoanalytic problems.

The Russian Lacanian scene today is a noticeably growing community whose effort is directed on studying Lacanian theory and establishing and consolidating connections with various international organizations and individual authors. Developing in what could be roughly sketched as the two parallel centers of St Petersburg and Moscow, areas of interest range from translating Lacan and other important Lacanian researchers, elaborating the most demanding Lacanian interventions such as topological formulations, organizing international conferences, seminars, and readings devoted to presenting and discussing key psychoanalytic topics.[2] Nevertheless,

[2] The key centers: "The School of Freudian-Lacanian Psychoanalysis" and their periodical *Lacanalia* https://freud-lacan.spb.ru/;"Lacan in Moscow"

this rapid expansion of Lacanian psychoanalysis in the Russian intellectual scene is not without internal difficulties caused by ideological disagreements or inconsistencies in the question of formal organization.

Smulyanskiy is one particularly noteworthy author in this scene. Distancing himself from any of the movements mentioned above, Smulyanskiy positions himself as an independent thinker and psychoanalyst of what he himself names "structural psychoanalysis," referring to the theoretical grounds that Lacanian psychoanalysis owns to structuralism.[3] From 2010 till 2019, Smulyanskiy ran a monthly seminar, *Lacan-likbez*.[4] Whereas the name "likbez" ironically refers to the Soviet "illiteracy elimination" program, eventually the seminar established its own status as an autonomous event in the process of exploration and advancement of Lacanian discourse reaching far beyond a merely educative or recapitulation level.

Due to his radical rereading of Freudian psychoanalytic apparatus and its consequent reformulation in conjunction with linguistics, Lacan managed to produce an independent theoretical contribution still rooted in Freud's text, but one that was nevertheless unquestionably groundbreaking. Likewise, Smulyanskiy's course and his four books[5] are an effort to surmount what has become the traditional commentary level of dealing with Lacanian psychoanalysis and make a series of separate theoretical steps.

Most notably, Smulyanskiy pays considerable attention to the condition of Lacan's theory as such, which reveals the signs of stagnation regardless its popularity. The adaptations of Lacanian conceptual apparatus are traced within the entire field of critical thinking, however it is quite frequently ill-fitted. Smulyanskiy gives an account of how academic critical thinking has confined psychoanalytic theory, and for his part he proposes a number of new theoretical solutions that regardless of their novelty retain theoretical accuracy.

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under the guidance of New Lacanian school and their *International Psychoanalytic Journal* https://lacan.moscow/.

[3] His recently published book, *Vanishing Theory. A Book about the Key Figures of Continental Philosophy. Foucault, Derrida, Lacan, Žižek* (2021), provides a thorough and unorthodox account of the fate of structuralism in the second half of the twentieth century.

[4] https://lacan-likbez.com/

[5] *About the Concept of Enunciation. On the Failure of Communication* (2014), *The Desire of the Obsessed. Obsessional Neurosis in Lacanian Theory* (2016), *Paternal Metaphor and Desire of the Analyst. Sexuation and Its Transformation in Analysis* (2019), *Vanishing Theory. The Book about the Key Figures of Continental Philosophy. Foucault, Derrida, Lacan, Žižek* (2021).

Therefore, it seems advisable to outline Smulyanskiy's propositions on hysteria, namely on Freud's famous case of Dora, to challenge how hysteria is generally accepted and give it an alternative kink. This article is not an attempt to bring feminism and psychoanalysis to the point of mutual consent, rather I suggest that psychoanalytic theory has not exhausted its potential to offer unorthodox solutions to the question of femininity and can be useful in a way different from academic and feminist agendas, which traditionally take a protest stance.

Hysteria at the Crossroads of Feminist and Psychoanalytic Thought

What is most important for the psychoanalytic perspective is the historical scene where the hysteric's desire was born and sustained. As Patricia Gherovici puts it, "hysteria and psychoanalysis bring forth the same issues: desire, *jouissance*, the drive, and the contingency of the sexual object. Not in vain did the one incite the invention of the other" (Gherovici 2014: 49). Therefore, challenging once again the problem of hysteria attends to the intersections as well as the divergences that could be helpful for the understanding of female desire.

It was the texts of famous French writers that made the decisive step forward in differentiating and politicizing the position of women. Starting with Simone de Beauvoir's critical dismissal of Freud, formulated in her famous pensée that one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman, the so-called poststructuralist female writers—Hélène Cixous, Catherine Clément, Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva—followed with their intensive interaction with Lacanian psychoanalysis.

The passage of new feminist thought from France to the English-speaking world was put forward by such authors as Juliet Mitchell, Elizabeth Grosz, Jaqueline Rose, Jessica Benjamin and others, who took over from French feminists in the particular interest in hysteria as a scene where women's exclusion from the patriarchal order was exposed and radically contested.

For Diane Hunter, "both psychoanalysis and hysteria subvert the reigning cultural order by exploding its linguistic conventions and decomposing its façade of orderly conduct" (Hunter 1983: 486). The paradigmatic stories of Anna O., Emmy Von N., and Dora were read against the conjuncture that arose when the psychoanalytic method and modern feminism were invented. In contrast, according to Claire Kahane, the case of Dora stood "at the intersection of psychoanalysis and feminism" to push "psychoanalysis from the

consulting room into an ideological arena where it must engage in a dialogue with feminism and thus recover its radical promise" (Kahane 1990: 31).

Needless to say, the feminist history of politicizing hysteria is the history of politicizing femininity in the first place. It is an effort to mobilize, to endow an otherwise mute hysteric with the voice that she was deprived of while being trapped in the alienated female body imposed on her by the patriarchal society. *L'écriture feminine,* promoted by Hélène Cixous, was supposed to "surpass the discourse that regulates the phallocentric system" and "be conceived of only by subjects who are breakers of automatisms, by peripheral figures that no authority can ever subjugate" (Cixous 1976: 883). For Cixous, Dora is "the one who resists the system, the one who cannot stand that the family and society are founded on the body of women, on bodies despised, rejected, bodies that are humiliating once they have been used. [...] It is the nuclear example of women's power to protest" (Cixous, Clément 1986a: 154).

An exchange of opinions between Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément in *The Newly Born Woman* (1986) demonstrates unity in certain questions and disagreement in others. An obvious common point for any feminist writing regarding hysteria is Dora's revolting potential in the face of "epistemological phallocentrism" and patriarchy, yet, this potential can serve contradictory ends (Moi 1981: 73).

In her 1975 play *Portrait of Dora (1983),* Cixous presents a portrait of Freud's famous patient that is radically different from Freud's own presentation of this heroine. In his narrative, Freud sounds openly annoyed and bewildered, eventually declaring what he initially considers merely a case of "*petite hystérie*" as a failure, since the patient abandoned the treatment uncompleted. Whereas for Cixous, Dora is a heroine who opens the gate of feminine writing that "can never be theorized, enclosed, coded—which doesn't mean that it doesn't exist. But it will always surpass the discourse that regulates the phallocentric system" (Cixous, Clément 1986b: 92). Cixous experiments with chronological sequence, linearity, and quotes from Freud's text itself, yet without clear introduction, thus her own narrative mode is symptomatic, "hysterical," presumably allowing the hysteric's body to be spelled out and staged in flesh in both its corporeal and discursive elusiveness.

But Clément wishes to shift the focus to the political, to a discussion of class struggle and what is possible for social bodies in the first place, so she is noticeably more suspicious of Dora's rebellious potential. She objects to Cixous saying that Dora "does not explode anything at all" and she refuses to regard Dora's role in her family drama as a symbolic act, as "the political act, the passage to in-

scription in the Symbolic" (Ibid.: 156). However, she praises another famous hysterical patient, Anna O. (Bertha Pappenheim), who finally "made something of her hysteria" (Ibid.: 156). So it is not enough to challenge or to destroy the oppressive heteronormative order, but it is necessary to overcome it by producing one's own symbolic entry. Dora did revolt against the humiliation of women's exchange but there is no real value in praising hysteric's rhetorical artistry in the urgent class struggle for women's liberation.

This reading is further revised by Jane Gallop, who jettisons the debate of whether Dora is a rebel or a failure, and criticizes "apolitical psychoanalytic thinking that has traditionally reduced economic questions to 'family members'" (Gallop 1990: 215). For Gallop, psychoanalysis erroneously "reduces everything to family paradigm [...] Class conflict and evolution are understood as a repetition of parent-child relations. This has always been the pernicious apoliticism of psychoanalysis" (Ibid.: 213). Her reading concentrates on the threshold figure of the maid/governess/nurse who is "the intrusion into the family circle" (Ibid.: 213) and the embodiment of economic alterity, which is haunting Freud as much as Dora. However, one of psychoanalysis's theoretical goals should be to acknowledge the inferior economic status of all women, since neither Dora nor Freud were ready to admit that it is not only the maid who is "a threatening representative of the symbolic, the economic, the extrafamilial" (Ibid.: 216) order, but literally any woman in the patriarchal system of exchange.

Meanwhile, some feminist critics remain wary of this particular conjunction of hysteria and feminism. When placed in a larger sociohistorical context, hysteria is indeed accepted as a gender-based condition that is distributed among both genders if not equally, then at least steadily.[6] In her essay, Elaine Showalter objects to assigning hysterical symptoms based on gender and insists on disarticulating hysteria from any definitive gender attribution. She is highly skeptical of what she calls "the modern marriage of hysteria and feminism" (Showalter 1993a: 286), since this sort of emotional romanticizing jeopardizes the feminist initiative at its core. She agrees with Clément in that the feminist adoption of hysteria extols "unsuccessful hysterics" such as Dora, whose fate, according to Showalter, only reinforced the already marginal position of women. As a feminist she remains openly hostile to the extreme valorization of hysterical narratives praised by Cixous, which she calls "a waste-basket term of literary criticism, applied to a wide and diffuse range of textual techniques,

[6] For a detailed account, see Gilman et al (1993).

and, most alarmingly, taken as a synonym for women's writing and the woman's novel" (Showalter 1993b: 24).

So according to Showalter, using Freudian vocabulary and the attempt to "rehabilitate" this terminology fails to fit the ends of the real feminist critical context. Furthermore, she argues that labeling "women's writing 'hysterical' is to denigrate it as art," which could then be used as a "device of ridicule and trivialization" (Ibid.). Showalter is particularly wary of this sort of labeling in literary theory since "calling women writers hysterics can hardly be a compliment," and she calls for a wider understanding of hysteria "through the work of medical historians and psychiatrists" (Ibid.), a project eventually completed in the edited volume *Hysteria Before Freud* (1993).

That being said, I propose that in a sense both "hysterically" engaged writing, praising hysteria as a liberating force, along with historiographic research, aimed at revealing the underlying social and economic conditions of a gender-based disorder, bypass a much more complicated question of the structure of woman's desire. Fueled by its undeniable success in the political and public domain, the feminist agenda remains incongruous with the level of its own act of enunciation. This is experienced as a sort of backlash in the form of ongoing strife within its own proponents and its opponents outside the field indicated above. The voices of those who express a certain skepticism concerning the true desire of feminism are heard more and more often today, even from those who remain sympathetic to and theoretically or politically with feminist activism (see Horbury 2017).

Moreover, psychoanalytic accounts suggest that the level of anxiety and confusion concerned with the question of femininity and the question the subject addresses to herself—What does it means to be a woman?—are no less troubling today than they were at the beginning of the twentieth century, yet its contours are definitely different. In her book, *What Lacan Said about Women* (2006), Colette Soler talks about her analytic experience with female analysands, for whom progressivism increases the burden of their struggle. Not only do they have to combine their traditionally female duties such as childcare and household activities with the new demand to contribute financially to the family budget but also locate their femininity within this context of expanded rights. Clearly, these psychoanalytic accounts echo what has already become a "traditional" criticism of neoliberalism and its ideological bluffing, (see McRobbie 2009; Fraser 2013; Vandenbeld 2014) therefore I consider it important to make a step aside from this trajectory and to follow the way initiated by Freud and taken up by Lacan. In other words, to investigate the specific *jouissance* that underlies these processes.

Regardless of the indisputable changes achieved in the course of the struggle for gender justice, the pursuit for these changes can hardly be considered its actual driving force. If we make a cut in the otherwise vernacular aggregate of feminist criticism, what comes to the fore is that the ardent public debate promoted by feminist proponents remains on the level of demand, whereas the level of its desire is insistently discarded.

Soler is also concerned with the demands of what she calls "egalitarian ideology," which aims at erasing the Other's alterity, taming it to satisfy the demands of new contractual and human rights agendas. What she calls "new cynicism"—the idea that sexual *jouissance* can (or rather should be) claimed as a right (Soler 2006: 184) is alarming because it can lead to the annulation of the Other *jouissance*: "the values of equality, combined with the growing homogenization of lifestyles for both sexes, work to reduce, as much as to fail to understand, the dit-mension of heterogeneity. [The women] are the ones who introduced contractual ideology into sexuality itself" (Ibid.: 189). However, for Smulyanskiy, these worries that the psychoanalytic community quite frequently voice miss the point. Not because of the homogenization's underestimated danger, but because, first, we are already confronted by the effects of these processes, which lead to the field's increasing polarization, and second, they do not stop revealing desire's further inconsistencies and asymmetry.

Whereas hysteria in the feminist perspective is regarded as "a specifically feminine protolanguage" (Showalter 1993a: 286), Smulyanskiy raises the stakes and advances the hysteric's desire to the next level, to the category of "protoanalytic project" (Smulyanskiy 2019: 66, 79). Returning once again to Dora's case, Smulyanskiy draws missing theoretical links, namely, the relation between the analyst's desire—a highly problematic question within the psychoanalytic field—and Dora's quest for the mystery of Freudian desire. He suggests that the hysteric's vested interest in the function of desire anticipates Freud's own initial desire, which eventually results in the birth of psychoanalytic theory. Considered in this light, Dora's venture takes on a much more fraught and scandalous appearance than the one offered by the familiar feminist approach. Her revolutionary role is thus radicalized, since viewed in this way Dora's contribution cannot be reduced to a revolt against social injustice, rather it is a revolt against any order whatsoever.

One key problem raised by Dora's case is the question of transference/countertransference, which, as Freud already acknowledged in his commentary on the case, he failed and thus the treatment also

failed. In fact, he could have been spared numerous reproaches, since he was the first one to address this problem:

> I have been obliged to speak of transference, for it is only by means of this factor that I can elucidate the peculiarities of Dora's analysis. Its great merit, namely, the unusual clarity which makes it seem so suitable as a first introductory publication, is closely bound up with its great defect, which led to its being broken off prematurely. I did not succeed in mastering the transference in good time. (Freud 1905: 117)

According to an already established interpretation, it is Freud's ill-fated and mistaken position as master that led to the case's failure. Toril Moi criticizes Freud for being unable to register that he was overwhelmed by countertransference and thus rather than providing a neutral scientific observation, he acted rather as an "archaeologist" who "must be suspected of having mutilated the relics he finds" (Moi 1981: 64). Moi decisively objects glorifying Dora as a rebellion against the patriarchal order, because in the end it was not Dora but Freud who became successful. However, she insists that Freud's success as the liberator is actually just disguised oppression, since Freud "is a male in patriarchal society, and moreover not just any male but an educated bourgeois male, incarnating *malgré lui* patriarchal values. His own emancipatory project profoundly conflicts with his political and social role as an oppressor of women" (Ibid.: 64). Lisa Appignanesi and John Forrester echo these assumptions and claim that Freud's publication of the case was yet another sign of his countertransference and his opinions about women's role in society (Appignanesi, Forrester 1993: 146–71). Psychoanalysts do not shy away from, and in fact shares these reproaches, as Paul Verhaeghe puts it: "Freud appeared on the scene as a master [...]. Freud explained, taught, proved [...]. He was the one who knew, he just had to convince his patients of the truth. The accent was put on the combat against resistances and the motives for illness. All means were justified" (Verhaeghe 1999: 57).

In his turn, Smulyanskiy steps aside and reconstructs the relations between the founder of psychanalysis and his famous patient from a different angle. He pursues this analysis in Lacanian terms with the concept of *jouissance* as the key operator of the subject's structure.

For over a century, the hysteric has been an object of medical discourse, whereas doctors, obviously men, struggled to guide her to restore her presumably lost *jouissance*. Dora "refused this identification with the master in the only way that was left to her: she refused almost everything coming from Freud," as Verhaeghe puts

it (Ibid.: 61). Meanwhile, following Lacan, Smulyanskiy stresses that it was Freud's genius to discover that in her refusal, Dora never renounced her *jouissance* (Smulyanskiy 2019: 75). What Freud registered and what made him so uncomfortable, subsequently creating the material for psychoanalysis's further unfolding as a discipline, is the fact that Dora aimed at transforming the very mode of male desiring strategy.

The structure of the subject, according to Lacan, is a certain question the subject is asking when confronted with a logical impasse caused by the signifying effect. Whereas the obsessional neurotic's question could be formulated as "am I dead or am I alive," the hysteric's question is directed to sexual difference, thus it can be formulated as "am I a man or a woman." "What is Dora saying through her neurosis? What is the woman-hysteric saying? Her question is this—What is it to be a woman?" (Lacan 1993: 175). The lack of the corresponding signifier "results in the normal genital relationship being abandoned, repressed, because it is impossible. Dora had to fall back on a pregenital relationship" (Verhaeghe 1997: 64).

Thus, being stuck by the impossibility of answering this question, but still refusing "to renounce her faith in a knowledge of the absolute *jouissance* of the woman as such," as Roberto Cavasola (2015) puts it, the hysteric resorts to the "master" figure whom she erroneously equips with the capacity to provide the missing answer. Here originates her interest in the male figure. The hysteric, according to Lacan, has to address the Other in order to access her own desire. Dora's quest, addressed to the mystery of femininity, was designed to provide her with a space in the symbolic universe as a sexed being. In this way, Dora's object is not Frau K., but is "a mystery, the mystery of Dora's own femininity" (Lacan 2006: 180) and her only access to this object could be mediated by means of her identification with the male partner—in Dora's case Herr K. and Freud himself.

Thus, according to Verhaeghe, the hysteric's difficulty in symbolizing some of the Real results in the development of fantasies "directed to the other, and espe cially to the father," and that "the end point of the defensive elaboration by the Imaginary is an identification with a man. For the hysteric, the ultimate answer to the lack of a signifier for the woman lies in an identification with the man-father" (Verhaeghe 1997: 45).

Here the question arises of Dora's intricate identification strategies, as Sergio Benvenuto claims "an hysteric's identification is perfectly capable of subsisting, in a correlative manner, in several directions" (Benvenuto 2005: 9). By this, Benvenuto means that we can hardly capture Dora's "true" identification and thus hysteria resists

any resolute closure: "this hesitation between identifications and their correlative objects, that seems to me really crucial in hysteria. The ultimate truth of hysteria is its lack of an ultimate truth [...] is its oscillation between several fundamental truths without ever making a decision" (Ibid.: 19).

However, for Smulyanskiy the focus has to shift from hysteric's identification strategies to the question of *jouissance's* perturbations. He agrees with Benvenuto that the hysteric "does not want to fulfill her adult sexual *ministerium*" (Ibid.: 18), that is, to realize her genital sexuality, she does not want to serve these goals. But for Smulyanskiy Dora's refusal of genitality is not the only real truth about hysteria: rather than an endpoint, it indicates that the hysteric is motivated by a special interest in the figure of the genital man.

The question of the "master's" genital and intellectual impotence is vitally important for the hysteric. Benvenuto stresses how Dora appears as "a *knowledge-teaser*" whose "wish is to demonstrate those who wish to penetrate her that they know nothing about her, her wish is to confront them with their own impotence" (Ibid.: 18). In both cases of what Benvenuto considers a nearly open confrontation—with Herr K. and with Freud—Dora triumphed in "her passion to humiliate men." He concludes that "for the hysteric woman, the male is above all he who disposes of strength and power, thus her act of force against him to make him, or reveal him, as impotent (one reason why many feminists, with their critique of male power, find a good resonance in hysteria)" (Ibid.: 10).

The Hysteric and the Lack

Smulyanskiy calls this opinion into question. Behind this presumable confrontation he detects Dora's intimate interest in the figure of the genital man as a creature whose jouissance is catastrophically deficient. In this sense, Benvenuto is correct when he says that Freud "had understood that her real, deepest wish was to make manifest to the male his own impotence" (Ibid.: 10), but according to Smulyanskiy she does that with quite a wide-scale project in mind.

The genital man, the father, whose mode of *jouissance* is fully castrated by the symbolic law, is registered by the hysteric as someone excessively constrained:

> Detecting these limitations — for example, as a typical male stiffness, his characteristic and nearly insurmountable dependence on the judgement of the closest male community, inevitability of panic reaction to the possibility of homosexual satisfaction etc.—the hys-

> teric analysand tends to make an offering that is supposed to cover somehow the deficiency of *jouissance*, that the man holds on to as the constant of his position. (Smulyanskiy 2020)

For Smulyanskiy, the hysteric regards the genital man as a creature whose being is fundamentally deprived of enjoyment apart from those pathetic scraps doled out to him within the limits of matrimonial satisfaction. As Verhaeghe puts it, "clinical practice of hysteria provides massive confirmation of this phallic redundancy" (Verhaeghe 1997: 157). Dora is anxious about the situation of the man whose possibilities from the perspective of desire realization are extremely deficient. In other words, the phallic *jouissance* that frames him deprives him of access to something that is available only to the feminine side of sexuation, as Lacan suggests it.

The sexuation procedure as Lacan formulated it in his 1972–73 seminar is an operation of acquiring one of the two possible positions in relation to the lack caused by the signifier's work, operated under the guidance of paternal metaphor. It is the paternal instance in the form of the ego-ideal that obliges—the subject to submit to one of the forms of *jouissance* distribution to take one's own place in the chain of the signifiers as a sexed being.

Lacan formulates the two possible *jouissance* distribution modes in relation to the lack as follows: "analytic experience attests precisely to the fact that everything revolves around phallic jouissance, in that woman is defined by a position that I have indicated as 'not-whole' (*pas-tout*) with respect to phallic jouissance" (Lacan 1975: 7), whereas "it is through the phallic function that man as whole acquires his inscription" (Ibid.: 79). In other words, the man is fully subjected to the phallic function and the woman is "not-all." Differentiation on a sexual basis is grounded in the effects of castration introduced by language, about which Lacan says that "those are the only possible definitions of the so-called man or woman portion for that which finds itself in the position of inhabiting language" (Ibid.: 80).

In this way, the gift of loving skills that Dora offers to her father in the form of her intimate relations with Frau K. is not so much a tool of referring to the question of femininity but is rather meant to compensate for the man's structural lack. Whenever the hysteric is confronted with the miserable shortage of the genital position, as Lacan's formulae illustrates, she is urged to desire a more attractive, enjoyable fate for him. The one that is available to herself as *not-all* circumcised by the phallic law.

It is therefore not the female but the male condition, that is doomed to be confined by the rigid frame of genitality that is the crux of Dora's

anxiety and the target of her therapeutic efforts. Her attempt to modify the imperative desiring regime installed by the paternal metaphor reveals her project's vast and outrageous amplitude. She wishes the man to be able to disrupt the signifier's symbolic law and partake in *jouissance* that is not commanded to him. Thereby, as Smulyanskiy points out, she does not only encroach on male privilege no matter how socially attractive and historically important the outcome could be, but rather attempts to adjust the very category of male desire to reach beyond its genital limitations (Smulyanskiy 2020).

This conclusion allows me to suggest that the hysteric's desire is essentially an inquiry for the function of desire that shapes contemporary subjectivity and its modes of functioning inasmuch as the signifier both conditions and constrains it. To ask about the options for desire modification de facto equals asking about the foundations of subjectivity, which immediately relocates the hysteric's desire to a more refined level of reasoning than the one promoted by the protesting feminist agenda. Thus, circling around the perspective of male genital deficiency, Dora's intention reaches far beyond the question of gender discrimination into the territory of structure functioning per se, where so-called sexual identity loses its immediate relevance yet still maintains its inherent attachment to sex.

Smulyanskiy follows this by suggesting that Dora's passion for knowledge on the peripeteia of desire surpasses her interrogation on the subject of femininity and her contribution to the production of psychoanalysis is far more piquant than commonly accepted. As mentioned above, Freud was the first to provide the hysteric with a platform for her otherwise neglected messianic speech be heard. Returning once again to the interpretation of Dora's dreams, Smulyanskiy suggests that Dora was mainly puzzled by an unexpected willingness of a male doctor to listen to the speeches that were for a long time commonly perceived as the ridiculous whining of capricious girls. Saying this, Dora became increasingly concerned with Freud's nonanalytic desire to solve the riddle of her protesting speech, which he did not dare to articulate.

Freud was not altogether oblivious of Dora's wide-scale interest but he was not able to handle it in a more delicate manner, since he repressed his nonanalytical desire and, by and large, the emergence of psychoanalysis could be viewed as an acting out in regards to this initial impulse (Smulyanskiy 2019: 48–111). Smulyanskiy claims that having not betrayed any of his analytic principles, Freud nevertheless put analysis at the service of his own unanalyzed desire, namely, his quest for the source of the hysteric's *jouissance* (Ibid.: 60).

In other words, the founder of psychoanalysis was astonished by the hysteric's persistence in her attempt to block the paternal metaphor's demand. In Lacanian terms, the paternal metaphor is a requirement to provide a self-differentiation on a sexual basis, to form one's own way of desiring. But according to Smulyanskiy, in demonstrating her desire to surpass the boundaries of genitality the hysteric defies this demand at its core.

Thereby, if Freud did fail in something, it was his blindness to Dora's meta-analytical desire to understand what Freud wanted apart from analysis. Responding to Freud's desire proto-analytically, Dora basically anticipated analytic enterprise as the on dealing with the question of desire. Not only did she succeed in identifying the presence of a nonanalytical element in Freud's initial desire, but, according to Smulyanskiy she had her own alternative terminological apparatus (Ibid.: 93). This echoes John Forrester and Lisa Appignanesi's assumption that Freud overlooked the way Dora managed to appropriate his own medical discourse with its dry scientific signifiers for the demonstration of her erotic pleasure, thus "psychoanalysis can easily become a warmhouse for the eroticization of language, for getting pleasure from knowledge, as well as an enclave protecting from it" (Appignanesi and Forrester 1993: 159).

Along with this, Smulyanskiy suggests that the hysteric's pursuit of modifying male desire can be also traced in the feminists' attempts to modify the existing state of affairs (Smulyanskiy 2019: 95–96). The claim for changing austere, violent male manifestations for the sake of universal humanization and progress reveals the female desire to transform the male subject and his way of desiring (Smulyanskiy 2020). It is precisely the masculine position that bears the testimony of man's renouncing a certain part of *jouissance* that makes the man more attractive to both sexes—women as well as men. In other words, the changes that are sought by gender-based activists should not be viewed as trying to subvert heteronormative disciplinary boundaries, but rather as an indication of an alternative outcome that is possible for male desire per se.

Furthermore, according to Smulyanskiy, radical feminism registers a special interest in the particularly masculine desire (Smulyanskiy 2021: 121–23). Leaving aside other issues raised by radical feminists, what interests us here is their position in the dispute over transgenderism that supports our claim stated above, namely, that the subject of either sex is attracted to male desire characterized by its structural scarcity.

Sheila Jeffreys regards queer theory's development as an aftermath of the particularly male fantasy of transgressing and violating the fem-

inine. According to this vision, feminine and masculine are separate and biologically ordained casts whose limits cannot be surmounted by gender equality. For radical feminist critics, gender's "transgressive" flexibility enrooted by queer theory's advocates is an erroneous vector since gender is not a "moveable feast" (Jeffreys 2014: 147) but a hierarchy inscribed by the order of biological constitution. In this way, "masculinity is the behavior of the male ruling class and femininity is the behavior of the subordinate class of women" (Ibid.: 40).

Jeffreys is particularly concerned about a palpable dissymmetry in valorizing the masculine, typical not only to patriarchal society but, most notably, registered across transgender practices as patriarchy's logical heir. There are two types of transsexual men: those who love men and are basically homosexual and those who are sexually attracted to the idea of themselves as women (Ibid.: 28–29). From the positions of radical feminism, male-to-female transition in an insulting practice precisely because men caricature stereotypes of women for their own amusement and pleasure:

> Men who promote their rights to "gender identity" frequently imagine womanhood from an unimpeachably masculine position [...] The desire of men to transgender [...] can be understood as an aspect of deeply conservative and hypermasculine behavior, rather than demonstrating any commonality with women. (Ibid.: 145)

Whereas female-to-male transition renounces femininity for the sake of reconstructing masculinity. Thus, Jeffreys insists that in transgenderism both male-born and female-born subjects support a particularly male fantasy. When referring to lesbian experience, Jeffreys demonstrates that women find it difficult to think of themselves as women since in the queer community, "only manhood has value" (Ibid.: 46), whereas female-born women "wished to enact a male role toward those they loved" (Ibid.: 32).

Likewise, in Jeffreys's view the valorization of men could best explain female-to-male transition (Ibid.: 103). In butch/femme practices, the butch acquires access to her sexuality by means of masculinity, whereas the femme is supposed to be attracted to her partner in this way, supporting butch's masculinity. For Jeffreys, female-to-male transition takes "the form of emulating masculinity" (Ibid.: 109), Smulyanskiy's observation correlates with this:

> The results of gender transgression, which is practiced equally by the subjects of both biological sexes, demonstrate a frequently observed dissymmetry, resulting in that eventually both sides—or

different reasons though—are more susceptible to the signs of "masculinity." (Smulyanskiy 2021: 121)

According to Jeffreys, as long as the roots of transgenderism can be traced in the male homosexual community and male cross-dressing practices, it is practically never registered among women. Smulyanskiy objects to this, pointing that there exists a large stratum of specifically female practices such as female cross-dressing, fan fiction, or slash fiction, which is completely disregarded not only by culturologists but surprisingly by feminist critics as well.

Enjoyable Reading

Reconstructing Michel Foucault's late work devoted to kinship structures, Smulyanskiy suggests considering the gender question and the numerous backlashes that emerged in this field by means of kinship structure analysis. When the frame of kinship formation and the specific satisfaction inherent to these procedures are analyzed in Foucauldian terminology, female homosexuality as a form of kinship is "an aftermath of an entire cascade of practices whose relation to the formation of these units is not apparent at the first sight" (Smulyanskiy 2021: 71). Remarkably, female kinship can be sourced in the reading practices that emerged from European Enlightenment.

The epoch of the modern European novel reshaped the typical male protagonist that Rousseau initiated on sexuality's baffling character. Men were deprived of their "typical gender façade" (Ibid.: 73), thus enabling women to form alliances with each other based on their interest in the new, different male protagonist, one who demonstrated a particular weakness absent in traditional male character. Analyzing an overwhelming obsession with reading that emerged concurrently with grand hysteria, Smulyanskiy draws our attention to the fact that what we consider female desire in its contemporary shape was born of women's massive immersion in fiction.

Thereby, Dora's father's intuition was indeed on the right track when he expressed his worries concerning Dora's excessive passion for reading. Reading has a transformative power in terms of the function of desire, which is first observed and structurally analyzed in Smulyanskiy's second volume, *Paternal Metaphor and Desire of the Analyst. Sexuation and its Transformation in Analysis* (2019).

Smulyanskiy elaborates on the Freudian notion of diphasic sexuation, that is, the infantile sexuation of partial objects and its revival after the latent period in the form of genital sexuation, by

adding further modes of sexuation. He suggests that reading should be considered a specific psychosexual form that dominates during development's so-called latent phase. As soon as the libidinal tension of infantile sexuality has faded away it is followed by what is commonly believed a relatively tranquil and somewhat benign period of latency.

Freud mentions that "the libidinal trends belonging to the Oedipus complex are in part desexualized and sublimated [...] and in part inhibited in their aim [...]. This process ushers in the latency period, which now interrupts the child's sexual development" (Freud 1924: 176–77). In his 1905 article, "Infantile Sexuality," Freud notes that a child's educative aptitude following the dissolution of the Oedipus complex to start from roughly five to six years of age. Later, Anna Freud (1968) and Erik Erikson (1950) both further analyze the notion of latency as the suspension of libidinal tension and its transformation into the "impulses of affection" emphasizing this stage's pedagogical value.

Yet counter to this well-established understanding of latency, Smulyanskiy distinguishes this phase as no less libidinally intense than the preceding period. First, he dismantles the Enlightenment myth of education as a source of sociopolitical refinement. Education plays its major role in providing the subject with alternative jouissance. Whereas the real father's rigorous demand is to renounce any sort of pleasure other than the genital, the subject insists and finally gains access to a non-genital supply of jouissance, one of which is formulated by means of reading. Second, following the Lacanian thesis that a subject is capable of deriving jouissance from the signifier, Smulyanskiy adds that education offers a specific *object a,* which generates sexuation. He draws on several clinical examples to demonstrate that educated subjects are often discriminated on the basis of their non-genital sexuation; this common response confirms that an educated person is affected by at least partial loss of his genital sexuation; in this way his or her sex is being constantly questioned. Yet, this non-sexed desire is nonetheless sexuated, since it is involved in the work of circling around the partial object (Smulyanskiy 2019: 227–28).

Having no connection with the second phase of sexuation by sex, reading sexuation nonetheless remains a type of sexuation that is indicated by its reliability on paternal metaphor and its function of joining sex and desire. In other words, reading intervenes into the subject's desire and shapes her oscillation between knowledge and *jouissance* in such a manner that it reveals an alternative for genitality. A book cannot be reduced to a source of encyclopedic

knowledge nor it is a tool for communicating any sort of information; rather it manifests a potential to meet something that would coincide with one's *object a* in a mode of repetition. In this sense, the reader is permanently searching for those initial signifiers that provoked infantile jouissance, thereby he or she gains access to the text on the drive's non-genital level.

This brings us back to Dora and her vast project of reshaping male desire, along with the secret of female desire that underlies modernity's discursive character. Acknowledging an idiosyncratic, completely autonomous character of specifically female literature, Smulyanskiy's analysis reveals how female desire is directed toward an attempt to provide her beloved male character with the opportunity to transcend genital law restrictions, thus gaining access to the zone of prohibited *jouissance* that he had to renounce to occupy male sexuation as such.

As mentioned above, it is the grossly underestimated literary genre of fan fiction, slash fiction in particular, that provides valuable coordinates to analyze female desire. Written almost exclusively by female fans,[7] fan fiction refers to what is sometimes called folk or amateur non-commercial writings that engage established popular narratives in different contexts. These stories can be found in pan-fandom Internet archives—fanfiction.net and Archive of Our Own. Slash fiction is a subgenre of fan fiction that features popular fictional characters in unexpected romantic pairings, mainly of a homosexual bent, such as Kirk and Spock from the *Star Trek* series, Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy from the *Harry Potter* chronicles or Obi-Wan Kenobi and Anakin from *Star Wars*.

Although slash fiction is not an exclusive representative of fan fiction, it is an illustrative subgenre both in terms of quantity and in the most urgent questions raised: 49 percent of slash fiction pairings are male/male, whereas only 9 percent are female/female.[8] Unexpectedly, male same-sex appearances are substantially more explicit considering that the vast majority of fan fiction authors are women, thus it is precisely this baffling ratio of gender distribution that receives critical response among those few who are interested in this unappreciated literary tradition. Morgan Leigh Davies stresses the importance of recognizing that fandom is a space where women

[7] The statistics for Harry Porter fandom cites 50.39% of the authors identified as female and only 13.39% as male. 74.02% preferred she/her(s) pronouns, therefor about half and three-quarters of fans consider themselves to be female (Duggan 2020).

[8] Available online: https://destinationtoast.tumblr.com/post/174382160499/toastystats-gender-representation-in-movies-vs.

can explore their sexuality and their sexual fantasy unhindered, yet fan fiction means that this could only be achieved via "writing a fictionalized form of maleness" (Leigh Davies 2013).

In her objection against the glorification of *l'écriture feminine*, Julia Kristeva mentions female literature where "women's desire for affirmation manifests itself" (Kristeva 1981: 31). Even though she remains skeptical of this production's "dubious" character, she confirms that "the symptom is there—women are writing, and the air is heavy with expectation: What will they write what is new?" (Ibid.: 31). While for Kristeva the problem with women's writing is exhausted by the need for representation, which is supposed "to make up for the frustrations imposed on women by the anterior code" (Ibid.: 33), Smulyanskiy gives women's writing quite a different place in the economy of desire and *jouissance* distribution. Leaving aside the skirmishes between the advocates and opposers of *l'écriture feminine*, Smulyankiy finds its place somewhere else.

This approach attests to the fact also registered by Leigh Davies in her non-psychoanalytic research that "slash is much more about women and female sexuality than it is about men or male sexuality, for all that the characters on the page (or, well, screen) are male, and in possession of biologically male genitalia" (Leigh Davies 2013). The female literary phantasm traced in slash fiction reveals female interest in the male protagonist and her desire to grant him access to the restricted areas of *jouissance* in the form of the most obscene and the most luxurious pleasure available for the man, namely, homosexual relations.

Attracting attention to the unfortunate position of the genital man, the hysteric's effort is to achieve the non-genital form of *jouissance*, which Smulyanskiy calls latent *jouissance*. Pursuing the Lacanian logic of differentiation between the phallic *jouissance* and the one that is not altogether circumcised by the primacy of the phallus—*la jouissance qu'il ne faudrait pas*—Smulyanskiy emphasizes that female *jouissance* cannot be conceptualized as something beyond the phallic logic, since it is rooted in speech and so is no less discursive than the phallic one.

When Lacan describes woman's position as not-whole he means that "there is always something in her that escapes discourse" (Lacan 1975: 33), and he introduces the term "supplementary *jouissance"* as something excessive that resists articulation, yet by a complex sequence of logical operations Lacan insistently demonstrates that this *jouissance* is still subject to the logic of the phallus. As Collette Soler puts it, women "are no less in the grip of the primacy of the phallus. To say that they are not completely within the phallic

function and to recognize another *jouissance* than the one that is organized by castration is not to credit them with some "anti-phallic nature" (Soler 2006: 27). Kristeva, who was charged with reducing women to the being outside the Symbolic, attests to the same: "and yet, since woman speaks, she is subject to the same sacrifice: her excitability falls under the prohibition; the *jouissance* of her reproductive body is expressed in the representation of a word, an image, or a statue" (Kristeva, Clément 2001: 15). Having acquired its articulated form as a result of woman's historic processes of mastering writing practices and public speech (Smulyanskiy 2015), this *should-rather-not jouissance* can be given detailed formalization.

Insomuch as he sustains the Lacanian method of thinking the subject in terms of the logic of *jouissance* and its distribution, Smulyanskiy emphasizes that latent *jouissance* is inherent to modernity as its main operator. Initially registered by Freud in the hysteric's conversion symptom, latent *jouissance* exhausted this form's limits and de facto overflowed the entire scene of contemporaneity. It could be held responsible for what we register today as the excessive and insistent involvement of the subject in the wide range of political projects of progressivist or generally humanitarian character.

Two concurrent movements—the massive preoccupation with reading and the emergence of latency as a stage associated with the abandonment of infantile instruments of *jouissance*—contributed to the transformation of textual products into the source of subject's phantasm (Ibid.). This marks contemporary subjectivity as the one interested in alternative options for non-genital desire realization.

> The latent desire has been embodied socially as the result of the shift from the master discourse to the university discourse and its main target is not securing male privileges for the female subject, but rather securing the right for the realization of latency and *jouissance* inherent to it. (Ibid.)

Smulyanskiy bases his work on Lacan's understanding of the hysteric subject who, as Jacques-Alain Miller puts it, "invented psychoanalysis being unsatisfied with *jouissance* and fascinated by their passion to the desire of the Other" (Miller 2017: 119). His conceptualization of the hysteric's desire reveals the female subject has a specific satisfaction "that has nothing to do either with comfort or with progress. As long as there is nothing significant that could be said about this satisfaction so far, it is only for the reason that it defines the situation where we find ourselves in the

anticipatory manner" (Smulyanskiy 2020). Whereas the tradition of psychoanalytic thinking about hysteria after Lacan stressed the hysteric's immanent interest in the question of femininity and sexual difference, Smulyanskiy demonstrates its political weight precisely at the point where every project guided by the intention to to convert the restriction and inflict a change is affected the another desire that was contoured above. Female desire is built into the situation where it produces indelible effects, yet it remains incapable of giving an account of itself.

Considered this way, female desire eventually gains the status that has been long pursued by advocates of the feminist agenda, except for the fact that there is no longer any need to struggle for it. Likewise, the original reading of Dora's case against the reformulation of the analyst's desire brings out the hysteric's desire to the level of discursive significance left unnoticed so far. In this article, I have suggested that these theoretical innovations allow us to detect the effects of hystericized desire already present as the active force of contemporaneity: being "the forceful geopolitical power," this desire does not cease to reshape the scene (Smulyanskiy 2015).

Smulyanskiy's contribution to psychoanalytic enterprise outlined in this article could be recapitulated as follows: first, Smulyanskiy's main theoretical task is to explore the consequences of *jouissance* transformations. Second, with no intention of calling into question Lacanian achievement, Smulyanskiy explores how Lacanain psychoanalysis endures both clinical and theoretical hardships. Other psychoanalysts cited in this article managed to provide a solid interpretative archive, however, the assimilation of psychoanalytic thinking into the broader context of what could be roughly called "the humanities" results in a decrease of theoretical tension and a lack of new theoretical findings.

To indicate the trajectory of surmounting these difficulties, I have here offered a brief summary of hitherto unknown conceptual extensions elaborated by Smulyanskiy that are logically drawn from the original Lacanian propositions: latent *jouissance*, sexuation by reading, the hysteric's desire as the one interested in the male lack transforming and underlying gender-oriented discussion for the entire twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. This does not only provide us with the tools to detect and formalize the phenomena that has thus far escaped serious theoretical attention, for example in fan fiction, but allows us to think about contemporaneity and the historical role of the hysteric's desire from a different angle.

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