

Jealousy Against Mourning

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While discussing 'normal' jealousy, Freud also addresses its effects: “the pain caused by the thought of losing the loved object, and of the narcissistic wound, in so far as this is distinguishable from the other wound.”¹

The sentence that stands out here is noteworthy: “the pain caused by the thought of losing the loved object”. I was particularly struck by a sentence from Lacan's sixth seminar, where he presents his remarkable interpretation of *Hamlet*. The relationship between jealousy and mourning mentioned by Lacan is important here: “The jealousy involved in mourning is, in effect, one of the most salient aspects of this tragedy.”²

While this sentence made me reflect on the functions of jealousy, it led me to consider it a phenomenon of defence against loss and mourning. Everything begins with transference created by the love object; the love believed to be lost originates from the object and creates a narcissistic wound in the subject.

The jealous individual struggles to avoid entering a mourning process for the object, which, within the transference relationship, always carries the potential for loss. J-A. Miller describes the issue concerning the object as follows: “We may write the fundamental lovable object as a. Its quality of being lovable is designated by the predicate A. Aa means that this objet a has the property of being lovable. If the subject encounters an object x which resembles a, indeed ($x = a$), then object x is considered as lovable, Ax.”³

In that case, there will be a relationship between the idea of jealousy as a form of relating to the object and the process of mourning. The primary object, which serves as the root cause of the beloved object, simultaneously becomes the trigger for jealousy, as it acts as a reminder of the potential for loss.

As a condition of love, 'x' simultaneously functions as the unknown. Perhaps the very condition of love is, in fact, the encounter with this unknown: “If I am loved, it is because there is something in me that makes you love me”.⁴

The relationship between love and the unconscious implies that love is connected to the unknown, particularly to the encounter with an Other about whom the subject knows nothing

¹ Freud, S., “Some Neurotic mechanisms in Jealousy, Paranoia and Homosexuality”(1922), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XVIII*, London: Hogarth Press, 1922, p. 223.

² Lacan, J., *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book VI: Desire and Its Interpretation*, ed. J.-A. Miller, trans. B. Fink, Cambridge: Polity, 2019, p. 333.

³ Miller J.-A., *Love's Labyrinths*, available online at

<https://www.lacan.com/symptom16/love.html>

⁴ Voruz, V., *Love & The Ego, Volume 3 – Issue 11*, Lacanian Compass, January 2018,

<https://lacaniancompass.com/project/volume-3/>

and whom they do not recognise. This unknowing not only pertains to the choice of love but also to the relationship with the object itself. Within this state of ignorance, the possibility of losing the object always looms on the horizon, awaiting the lover.