

The hour of the star

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“ A sense of loss” and “ The right to protest” A Lacanian reading of the film The Hour of the Star¹ When Clarice Lispector wrote this ‘ story with a beginning, a middle and a grand finale followed by silence and falling rain. ’ (HE, pp. 13) she hoped that it could ‘ become my [her] own coagulation one day’ (HE, pp. 12). In fact, ‘ her hour’ was near for she would soon die of cancer. The book emerged as an experimental novel gradually dialoguing with and producing illusions of itself, like images in mirrors, paradoxically portraying the invisible.

Both her book and Susana Amaral's cinematic adaptation seem extremely conscious of Lacan's concept of subjectivity and adherent to his psychoanalytic theory that reinterprets Freud in structuralist terms, adapting the linguistic model to the data of psychoanalysis. What lies beneath the choice to attempt a Lacanian reading of The Hour of the Star is not the film's patent openness to Lacan's ideas on desire, lack and the language of the unconscious.

Despite the theoretical suggestiveness of much of the analysis that is to follow, the aim of this essay is to analyse The Hour of the Star using the methodology developed by Lacan whilst criticising its very mechanisms, stressing the importance of issues such as ethnicity, marginality, and poverty, social, cultural and political alienation, left behind by his account of the development of the human subject. A fairly mainstream cinematic version replaces the avant-garde, subversive structure of the book.

In the film things fall into place more handily in the name of coherence, and social issues (the chronic plight of a certain type of North-Eastern Brazilians who undertakes a journey to the great cities of the South in search of a

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better life) replace the major metaphysical meditations found in the book. In *The Hour of the Star* everything is subjected to a multiplicity of reductions, exaggerated to the minimum, a caricature in reverse that works in favour of a growing invisibility of things.

Physical invisibility, abortion and repressed sexuality are highlighted in the film, depicting the drama of Macabea, a humble orphan girl from the backwoods of Alagoas, North Eastern Brazil, who was brought up by a forbidding aunt before making her way to the slums of Rio de Janeiro. In this city, she shares the same bed sitter with three girls and works as a typist. Centred on her (in)existence, the film explores Macabea's marginality by placing her among the marginalities of the characters that populate the world of Rio de Janeiro.

There is a strong focus on the relationships between the characters: Seu Raimundo and Seu Pereira (her bosses), Gloria (her colleague from work), Olimpico de Jesus Moreira Chaves (her 'boyfriend'), and Madame Carlota (the fortune teller). Throughout the essay, *A Hora da Estrela*, (HE) will refer to Clarice Lispector's novel (Portuguese version), while the title: *The Hour of the Star* (HS) will refer to the film, a Brazilian cinematic adaptation of Clarice Lispector's book (*The Hour of the Star*, Dir.

Susana Amaral, Raiz Producoes Cinematograficas, 1985). The dialogues in this work were translated and transcribed from the film, while the book excerpts were taken from the English translation of the novel: *The Hour of the Star*, trans. Giovanni Pontiero (Manchester: Carcanet, 1992). 1 teller). Macabea has poverty, inexperience, ingenuity, ill-health and anonymity

written all over her. All she can afford to eat and drink are hotdogs and Coca-cola.

Her only (unachievable) dream is to become a film star. Without any goals in life, her sole interest is listening to Radio Relogio (Radio Clock) that broadcasts the seconds, minutes and hours of the day along with random information about life. Olimpico, who she meets in the park one day, starts going out with her but ends up in Gloria's arms, after the latter's visit to the fortune teller. When Macabea decides to visit the fortune teller herself, her life seems about to change completely.

The promise of abundance is followed by utter disappointment when Macabea, wearing her new Cinderella-blue dress, is run over by a car and dies alone, fantasising that she is running into the arms of the promised rich lover Hans, her long curly hair in the wind. Any Lacanian approach to this Cinderella-in-reverse story would proceed with reference to the unconscious, interpreting the text as a metaphor of the unconscious and the subject as a linguistic construct. Lacan is unequivocally clear when he states that: (...) the unconscious is structured in the most radical way like a language, that a material operates in it according to certain laws, which are the same laws as those discovered in the study of actual languages (...)² To the French psychoanalyst, the unconscious is constituted by a signifying chain, whereby the negative relations between the signifiers³ are never anchored in meaning: one signifier leads to another but never to the things it supposedly represents. Macabea launches the play of signifiers in the film: the assemblages of signifiers clustered around her convey the elusiveness of the signified and the centrality of the unconscious.

Her problem with the meaning of words stands for Lacan's model which gives primacy to the signifier and not the signified. The audience feels somehow "oppressed" by the many unanswered questions and the violence of the oblique illusions of truth inside definitions. What follows is a dialogue between Macabea and Olimpico during one of their walks together: Macabea On Radio Clock they were talking about alligators... and something about 'camouflage'... What does 'camouflage' mean? Olimpico That's not a nice word for a virgin to be using.

The brothels are full of women who asked far too many questions. Macabea Olimpico Where is the brothel? It's an evil place where only men go. 2 Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits: A Selection*, pp. 234 2 'Just because people ask you for something doesn't mean that's what they really want you to give them'⁴, Lacan would argue, commenting on this dialogue. What Macabea desires from Olimpico is not exactly a word's signification but something else implied in that same dialogue. She desires the meaning, yet lacks the meaning and that same lack structures her desire.

Macabea asks others for definitions, but others are as ignorant as she is. The film's plays on ambiguity, misunderstandings and misjudgments add to Lacan's play of signifiers: Olimpico Macabea Olimpico Macabea Olimpico Macabea Olimpico Macabea Olimpico Macabea Olimpico Macabea Olimpico Macabea Well... Well what? I just said well. But well what? Let's change the subject. You don't understand. Understand what? Oh my God, Macabea. Let's talk about something else. What do you want to talk about? Why don't you talk about you?

Me? What's the problem? People talk about themselves. Yes, but I am not like other people. I don't think I am many people. If you are not people, then what are you? It's just that I'm not used to it. What? Not used to what? I can't explain. Am I really myself? Look, I'm off. You've no wits. How do I get wits? Insofar as the Lacanian analyst doesn't take himself/herself as the representative of knowledge but sees the analysand's unconscious as the ultimate authority, all these questions about the meaning of words are also metaphors of the unconscious.

Macabea is under the illusion that meaning can be fixed and the illusion of stability destabilizes her. According to Lacan's view of interpretation, meaning is imaginary and irrelevant: It is the chain of the signifier that the meaning insists without any of its elements making up the signification. 5 In one of the last scenes, Macabea is driven to the fortune teller by her colleague friend, Gloria, in an effort to fix her life. Madame Carlota divines everything about Macabea's past, acknowledges 3 Lacan followed the ideas laid out by the linguist Saussure, who viewed the sign as the combination of a signifier (sound image) and a signified (concept). Lacan focuses on relations between signifiers alone. 4 J. Lacan, *Ecrits: A Selection*, Seminar XIII 3 the signs of the future but fails to interpret them. Macabea's fate is consummated despite the fortune teller's misinterpretations because, Lacanians might argue, understanding is irrelevant to the process. But, in this case, understanding becomes very relevant indeed for the Lacanian critics who argue that death represents the destiny of those who get hold of the Phallus.

By misunderstanding the signs, Madame Carlota tells Macabea her supposedly brilliant future. As if 'listening to a fanfare of trumpets coming from heaven' (HE, pp. 76), Macabea learns that she is going to be very rich, meet a wealthy handsome foreigner named Hans, with whom she will marry, and become a renowned famous star. Macabea believes every single word she is told, hence truly acknowledging that all her fantasies will come true that very day. Macabea's desire to have the Phallus is now a reality. Once desire is extinguished, there are no more reasons to keep on living.

This scene shows how Lacan's view on interpretation as an easy reductionist task leading to imaginary understanding can rebound on him. The scene previously referred to is rooted in another depicting the beginning of the relationship between Macabea and Olimpico, which shows the essentialist views latent in Dr. Lacan's theory of sexualization. Lacan's concept of 'object (a)' is considered to be his most significant contribution to psychoanalysis. 6 'Object (a)' is that which is desired but always out of reach, a lost object signifying an imaginary moment in time.

According to his theory, people delve into relationships because they are driven by the desire to overcome Lack (consequence of castration). Because Lack is experienced in different ways by men and women, both sexes have different ways of overcoming their Lack: they either place themselves in relation to the Phallus (feminine structures) or the 'object (a)' (masculine structures). Lacan argues that in the sexual relationship⁷ the sexes are defined separately because they are organized differently with respect to language/to the symbolic: 8 masculine structure limits men to Phallic 'jouissance' while feminine structure limits women to 'object (a)' 'jouissance'

and also allows them to experience another kind of ‘jouissance’, which Lacan calls the Other ‘jouissance’⁹. By jouissance Lacan implies what ‘is forbidden to him who J. Lacan, *Ecrits: A Selection, Instance de la lettre dans l’inconscient ou la raison depuis Freud*’ In the preface to *Ecrits*, Lacan mentions ‘object (a)’: ‘We call upon this object as being at once the cause of desire in which the subject is eclipsed and as something supporting the subject between truth and knowledge. ⁷ It must be kept in mind that Lacan’s work on sexual difference crosses over the borderlines of biological distinction. He defines femininity and masculinity on the basis of psychoanalytic terms. ⁸ Lacan explains the alternative versions of castration: ⁶ ⁵ (...) suggerer un derangement non pas contingent, mais essentielle de la sexualite humaine (...) sur l’irreductibilite a toute analyse finie (endliche), des sequelles qui resultent du complexe de castration dans l’inconscient masculin, du penisneid dans l’inconscient de la femme. In ‘La signification du phallus’, *Ecrits*, pp. 85 ⁹ When Lacan discusses the notion of another kind of “jouissance” (Other ‘jouissance’), he explains that women (human beings structured by the feminine) are the only ones that have access to it, while men are limited to Phallic ‘jouissance’. According to Bruce Fink, this concept roughly implies that the phallic function has its limits and that the signifier isn’t everything. ‘B. Fink, *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance*, pp. 107) ⁴ speaks (...)’¹⁰, that is, that completion of being which is forever inaccessible to the split subject.

To paraphrase Fink, insofar as a woman forms a relationship with a man, she is likely to be reduced to an object – ‘object (a)’, reduced to no more than a collection of male fantasy objects, an image that contains and yet disguises ‘

object (a)'. He will isolate one of her features and desire that single feature (her hair, her legs, her voice, etc.), instead of the woman as a whole. In a different way, the woman may require a man to embody the Phallus for her, but her partner will never truly be the man as much as the Phallus.

Therefore, ' il n'y a pas de rapport sexuel' (Lacan's famous remark) because the dissymmetry of partners is utter and complete. By lack of symmetry Lacan means what she/he sees herself/himself in relation to [either the Phallus or ' object (a)']. Going back to the film, the masculine and feminine realms seem to be clearly limited in terms of a traditional heterosexual system (the odd-one-out being the character of the fortune teller in whom we perceive traces of homosexuality). When Olimpico first meets Macabea in the park, she is holding a red flower in her hands.

Olimpico draws nearer, asks her name and invites her for a walk. At a certain point he mentions her red flower, gently asks for her permission to pull out its leaves, and finally returns it to Macabea. Under Lacan's eyes, insofar as she holds the flower, Macabea sees herself in terms of the Phallus, the flower being its metaphor, what she desires to hold in her hands. Olimpico is, in her eyes, the biologically defined man incarnating the Phallus (her true partner being the Phallus and not the man).

As Lacan's theory sets out to show, Olimpico belongs to those characterized by masculine structure. He will search within this woman's features, a particular one and reduce her to ' object (a)' in his fantasy, trying to overcome the primordial Lack. However, it seems terribly hard to invest a precious object that arouses his desire in this particular woman: ugly, dirty and looking rather ill, there is nothing in her left to be reduced to a male

fantasy object. Hence the customized flower: Olimpico invests what arouses his desire¹¹ in the flower and not the girl.

If we pursue Lacan's theory a step further in terms of masculine/signifier and feminine/'signifiante'¹², we will conclude that his work on sexualisation rests on the belief that subjectification takes place at different levels in different sexualised beings: while the signifier refuses the task of signification, the 'signifiant' plays the material, non-signifying face of the signifier, the part that has effects without signifying: 'jouissance' effects. ¹³ This is displayed as the J. Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, pp. 319 A similar flower will appear again in the film: Macabea has put it in a glass on her desk at work. Gloria, her colleague from the office, is getting ready for a first date with a man she never met before. She decides to wear the red flower in her bodice so that he can recognise her. Her appropriation of the flower symbolises her future appropriation of Olimpico's fantasy (she will steal Macabea's boyfriend, following the fortune teller's advice) and her reduction to a male fantasy object. At the same time, the man she is about to go out with is reduced to his sexy voice. ¹² Lacan's concept of 'lettre de la signifiante', found in Seminar XX, is explained by B.

Fink in these terms: 'I have proposed to translate it as «signifierness», that is, the fact of being a signifier (...) the signifying nature of signifiers. When Lacan uses this term, it is to emphasise the nonsensical nature of the signifier, the very existence of signifiers apart from and separated from any possible meaning or signification they might have.' B. Fink, *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance*, pp. 118-9 ¹³ B. Fink, *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance*, pp. 119

heoretical reason implying that the signifier of desire can be identified with only one sex at a time, meaning that Woman can never be defined as long as Man is defined. As Fink puts it, (...) the masculine path might then be qualified as that of desire (becoming one's own cause of desire) while the feminine path would be that of love. 14 Watching this scene in isolation, one has the impression that love is for Macabea as desire is for Olimpico. This is not entirely the case, for in this scene and in the film in general, a woman (Macabea) is defined as long as a man (Olimpico) is defined.

In a relationship where the partners are not identical (different feminine/masculine structures) both of them are ruled by desire. On the one hand, Olimpico desires all the attributes that Macabea sadly lacks, so he turns to Gloria, Macabea's ideal imago (a version of what the latter wants to be, a version of herself that she can love). On the other hand, Macabea is not ruled by love. What she experiences with Olimpico is nothing compared to what she feels when Madame Carlota tells her about Hans: she feels inebriated, experiencing for the first time what other people referred to as passion.

She falls passionately in love with Hans because the fortune teller had told her that he would care for her. Both Macabea and Olimpico are ruled by the desire to be loved and not by love. And if in this heterosexual relationship (which for Lacan is the norm) the dissymmetry is not entirely complete, what can we say of the homosexuality referred to by the fortune teller, who finds Macabea much too delicate to cope with the brutality of men and tells her, from experience, that love between two women is more affectionate?

In fact, Lacan never theorized homosexuality very seriously, although his failure to account for it may be explained by the fact that the Symbolic is structured in favour of heterosexuality. In his theory of the Symbolic, the baby undergoes the mirror stage between 6 and 18 months old. By this time, the baby sees its own image in the mirror and enters the symbolic stage (realm of the imaginary: imaginary identification with the image in the mirror). As Lacan sets out to explain,

This event can take place (...) from the age of six months, and its repetition has often made me reflect upon the startling spectacle of the infant in front of the mirror. Unable as yet to walk (...) he nevertheless overcomes the obstructions of his support and (...) brings back an instantaneous aspect of the image. For me, this activity retains the meaning I have given it up to the age of eighteen months. 15 Mirrors play an important role in Macabea's life. Looking at her own reflection, she tries to find out who she is.

After having used Gloria's trick (making up an excuse to skip work), Macabea decides 14 15 Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance*, pp. 115 Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits, A Selection*, Chapter I: 'The mirror stage as formative of the function of the eye as revealed in psychoanalytic experience.', pp. 1, 2 6 to spend her day off in her room, listening to Radio Clock, dancing and looking at herself in the mirror. The camera shows her reflection and what we see is a split image in the mirror: she stands between what she is, what she wants to be and what others want her to be. 6 When she tells the mirror: "I'm a typist, a virgin and I like Coca-cola" she complements her identity split with her mirage identity: Macabea is staging her identity by identifying with other people's perceptions of herself. She is

not eighteen months old but an eighteen-year-old in the middle of Lacan's mirror stage, looking for models (which are the models in shop windows: the parental Other is absent), learning new words (at work as a typist, at home listening to the radio), looking at herself in mirrors. It is as if the Symbolic were staging 'reality' too late in the character's life.

During a walk at the Zoo, Olimpico accuses Macabea of being a liar: Macabea It is true. May God strike me dead if I'm not telling the truth. May my mother and my father drop dead right now. Olimpico Macabea You said your parents were dead. I forgot... As Lacan would put it, we are watching how the Symbolic can bar the real, overwriting and transforming it completely, the reason for this being that the Symbolic is but a pale disguised reflection of the Real; the reason for this not being a basic assumption about the condition of being a child without living parents, that is, about the alienation caused by orphanage.

This does not mean that Lacan did not reflect on the concept of alienation (check Fink, footnote 28, chapter 7, seminar XVI). In his opinion, that is what places the subject within the Symbolic. In alienation, the speaking being is forced to give up something as she/he comes into language. Lacan sees it as an attempt to make sense by trying to act coherently with the image one has about oneself. These attempts alienate the person because meaning is always ambiguous, polyvalent, betraying something one wanted to remain hidden or something one wanted to express. Lacan does not condemn or avoid alienation in his analysis.

At a certain point, in Seminar XVI, he establishes a comparison between 'surplus value' (Marxist concept: the 'jouissance' of property or money that is

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the fruit of the employees' labour, the excess product) and 'surplus «jouissance»' (what we seek in every relationship/activity but never achieve). While capitalism creates a loss aiming at 'surplus value' (the loss of the worker), our advent as speaking beings also creates a loss (the loss of 'jouissance' through castration). In Lacan's economy of 'jouissance', both losses are at the centre of the development of civilisation, culture and market forces.

At a certain moment in the film, we 16 In this respect, Lacan explains that 'the only homogeneous function of consciousness is the imaginary capture of the ego by its mirror reflection and the function of misrecognition which remains attached to it.' In *Ecrits, A Selection* (1966) 7 watch Macabea handing over a certain 'jouissance' to the Other: she is told by her boss she has to work late. The consequence is that Gloria will meet Olimpico in the park, instead of Macabea. Following Lacan's theoretical discourse, the scene depicts Macabea being forced to give up 'something' as she comes into language (as she finishes typing the documents).

That 'something' is her love object. The scene can be read as a reference to the primordial loss – castration – by meditating on the importance of the sacrifice of 'jouissance' as it creates a lack¹⁷ and consequently gears life (the Symbolic/the plot) onwards: Gloria steals her colleague's boyfriend and eventually gets a husband, following the fortune teller's instructions; Macabea loses her boyfriend and ends up at the hands of the fortune teller who guides her towards her death.

This analysis focuses on the 'surplus «jouissance»' and not on the Marxist concept of 'surplus value', therefore neglecting important class

struggle/capitalist issues. Adopting a Lacanian frame in the analysis of alienation in *The Hour of the Star* involves losing what a Marxist concept of alienation might otherwise bring into light: the alienating effect society operates on Macabea as an exploited underpaid employee who finds herself working (sometimes after hours) for the employer's enjoyment.

The film, on the contrary, is quite clear in its portrait of an alienated subject working for less than the minimum wage in a decadent, poor-lit warehouse. A dialogue between Seu Raimundo and Seu Pereira suggests the capitalists' attitude towards the proletarian Macabea: Raimundo Pereira Raimundo (...) Pereira: Raimundo Besides, she is really ugly. Like a shrivelled pomegranate. Where did you get her? Ok, she's a bit clumsy. But a brilliant typist would want more money. It's the new typist, Macabea. Maca what? -beia. Macabea. No one else was willing to do the job for less than the minimum wage.

Adding to the notion of the film as a metaphor of the unconscious are: mirrors and their fragmented reflections, Radio Clock and its fragmented, dispersed bits of information and the gaze of the camera as the audience accedes to Macabea's world through furtive gazings behind windows, doors, in the street. This gaze could be interpreted as belonging to Macabea's wicked aunt who has died but still haunts her conscience. Macabea's paradoxical fantasy, her dream to become a film star, is also hooked up to the circuit of the unconscious as the end term of her desire.

Lacan explains that the unconscious, ruled as a language, is overpopulated with other people's desires that flow into us via discourse. 18 So, our very fantasies can be foreign to us, they can be alienating. Macabea's fantasy to become a film star could " Without lack, the subject can never come into

being, and the whole efflorescence of the dialectic of desire is squashed. ” In Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance*, pp. 103-178 be read as a way of answering other people’s desire: that she takes care of herself, eats better, dresses better, and works better.

Interpreting Macabea’s dream as a response to her own desire (she wants to be loved; film stars are loved; therefore, she wants to be a film star) implies walking away from Lacanian theory. The subject is here very much implicated in the process. Others don’t seem to have had a hand in it. Olimpico laughs and humiliates her when she tells him about her dream and doesn’t encourage her to pursue it: Olimpico What makes you think that you’ve got the face or the body to become a film star? (...) Take a good look at yourself in the mirror.

Lacan’s approach to the unconscious considerably reduces the sources from which one can carve out knowledge in relation to this film. Macabea’s ethnicity calls forth the analyst’s knowledge of Brazil’s North-Eastern structural roots of poverty (drought plagued agriculture, slums, human rights abuse in terms of health and education, the plight of street children, women’s issues in terms of class, race and land tenure). An informed reading of *The Hour of the Star* raises the question of marginality within the frameworks of location, gender, race, individual/social conscience, language and testimony.

In the context of this film, the concept of marginality has to be addressed in the plural. There are different definitions of margin at stake, as well as different layers of marginal behaviours, each of them empowering the social/individual transgressions suggested by Macabea’s lack of attitude

towards existence. The characters in this story are aware of their condition as outsiders. They are seen through their relation to Macabea: her apathy and emptiness are exquisitely painful in that they remind others of the collective pain felt in a dehumanised world.

In the pyramid of the excluded, Macabea is victimised as a female and as a North easterner in search of her inner self. Her voluntary attempt, although grotesque and inarticulate, to question and witness her blunt existence stands as the last stance of her marginality. It is the hour of the tragic question: ' Who am I? ', echoing the major preoccupation of every mortal. Unlike the other characters, she fails in every sphere of her life but not in asking this question.

She is aware of her inner otherness, although unable to verbalise or make sense of it. She witnesses it, tries to speak it, but never tells it, because what needs to be told is pure silence narrated from within. The title of the present study resonates with the limits of a psychoanalytic reading of *The Hour of the Star*. " A sense of Loss" and " The right to protest" are two of the fourteen titles¹⁹ advanced by Lacan suggests that ' it is in the reduplication of the subject of speech that the unconscious finds the means to articulate itself. ', J.

Lacan, *Ecrits: A Selection*, ' A la memoire d'Ernest Jones: sur la theorie du symbolisme' ¹⁹ List of titles found at the beginning of HE: *The Blame is Mine* or *The Hour of the Star* or *Let Her Fend for Herself* or *The Right to Protest* or . As for the *Future* or *Singing the Blues* or *She Doesn't Know How to Protest* or *A Sense of Loss* ⁹ Clarice Lispector in her book *A Hora da Estrela*. They were chosen by me for two reasons. The first implies that analysing the film by <https://assignbuster.com/the-hour-of-the-star/>

giving the book behind it the cold shoulder would weaken the analysis. Another is the belief that choosing only one title would dramatically reduce the scope of this work of art.

Macabea cannot escape looking at mirrors and gazing at a sense of loss that dazzles her in her opaque leading-nowhere-abstractions. But she is herself a mirror reflecting the social inequities of the Brazilian society in she lived. Taking a step further, we could add yet another title: “ I can do nothing”, number eleven in Lispector’s title list. This one would eclipse the Other’s discourse, unconscious and unintentional, and give way to the informed discourse of a conscious audience viewing writing as a representative mirror of reality.

Having said all this, one can only afford ‘ A discreet exit by the back door’²⁰ once a final, irrevocable question is posed. Is it still possible, having pointed out the missing dimensions of analysis and the resistances to a Lacanian approach of *The Hour of the Star*, to make sense of Lacan’s theoretical framework? On the one hand, answering with a ‘ no’ would seem fatally solipsistic in what the existing quantities of written work on psychoanalysis are concerned, as Lacan’s work lies at the epicentre of contemporary discourses about otherness, subjectivity, sexual difference, to name just a few topics.

Answering with a ‘ yes’, on the other hand, would plainly simplify subject matters that are, as this work intends to show, very complex. Perhaps the question, in the fashion of all interesting questions, offers no answer insofar as a balanced account of the possibilities, limitations, meanings and implications of Lacan’s theory is not thoroughly considered. or Whistling in

the Dark Wind or I Can Do Nothing or A Record of Preceding Events or A Tearful Tale or A Discreet Exit by the Back Door. 20 Final title in Clarice Lispector's list of titles. 10 Primary Bibliography Lacan, J. *Ecrits* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1966) _____, *Ecrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Routledge, 1977) _____, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book II. The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis*, trans. Sylvana Tomaselli (New York/London: Norton & Co. , 1991) _____, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis: The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book VII*, trans. Denis Porter (London/New York: Norton & Co. , 1992) Lispector, C. , *A Hora da Estrela*, (Rio de Janeiro: Jose Olympio, 1977) _____, *The Hour of the Star*, trans. Giovanni Pontiero (Manchester: Carcanet, 1992) Freud, S. *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, ed. /trans. J. Strachey (London: Penguin Books, 1991) *The Hour of the Star*, Dir. Susana Amaral, Raiz Producoes Cinematograficas, 1985 Secondary bibliography Barry, P. , *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002) Benvenuto B. & Kennedy, R. , *The Works of Jacques Lacan: An Introduction* (London: Free Association Books, 1986) Cixous, H. , ' *The Hour of The Star: How Does One Desire Wealth or Poverty?* ', *Reading With Clarice Lispector*, ed. and trans.

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