

**VIIth International Meeting of the IF-SPFLF:
What does the psychoanalyst respond? Ethics and clinic.**

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PRELIMINAR 1

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To speak of response is indirectly to evoke a demand or a prior question. Both are present in each analysis and the analyst, once the demand for analysis has been accepted, responds to it with interpretation. However, in the structure of discourse, the offer precedes the demand and conditions it, before the analyst can respond to it with interpretation. Our title thus interrogates as much the specificity of the analytic offer as the ways of its operation, and introduces as a consequence two main questions: that of the act which the analyst makes function as cause in the treatment and...in civilization, and that of interpretation.

The analytic offer inaugurated by Freud was itself already a response to what he called discontent. It was a response which brought into play a desire *for* an unprecedented knowledge, unconscious knowledge. More than a century later, the offers have multiplied for many put themselves forward to respond to the great clamour of suffering humanity and without passing through a desire *for* knowledge: priests of various religions, sect-based gurus, experts in the religion of science, and as well the various psychotherapies. They all promise something else, and in this concert of voices how can that of

psychoanalysis still prevail? Will it be through the specific knowledge which ensues from it, or through the transformed desire that it produces, or even through their interrelation?

The foremost urgency thus is without doubt to pose the question of the pass as Lacan did: what motivates someone, if it is not money, nor charitable compassion, to place him or herself in Freud's wake and to relay the analytic act? Only this pass has a range which is not solely individual: it implicates the political impact of the act in the culture of the time, always reaffirmed by Lacan, and it might very well be that the permanence of psychoanalysis depends upon this.

In effect, if the discourse on the unconscious is a discourse condemned in advance, there is nothing to be hoped for from any analytic proselytizing were it to be publicised in the media, but rather something to be expected from the effects of the desire *of* knowledge which makes the analyst. This desire, ex-centric to the ends of capitalism, which separates from the herd, which permits taking cognizance of the consequences of the solitude that the unconscious programs for the speaking being exiled from the sexual relation. These consequences have two classical names: castration and symptom. From the first nothing escapes, whereas the second inscribes the "absolute difference", which is real, for each one. The offer which psychoanalysis presents to subjects overcome by capitalism may be reformulated as: do you wish to know nothing of what made your suffering, do you wish to know nothing about what you share with all speaking beings, but also about what constitutes your unparalleled uniqueness? An unprecedented satisfaction would follow from that.

In the treatment itself the question is different. What must be the rejoinder of interpretation which responds to the analysand's demand that the analyst be this "partner who has the chance to respond"ⁱ, according to Lacan's expression. Chance, good fortune? It is thus not won in advance; Lacan clarifies: this chance, I must provide it this time. Is this to say, as it very well seems, that Freud did not furnish this partner who has the chance to respond

to transference love, this love which “is addressed to knowledge”ⁱⁱ?

On this last point one must then start again from the highest, and from Freud himself. He deserves it since it is he who invented the device constituent of the analyst. How did he respond and how did he proceed to the place of the symptoms fomented by the unconscious to give his response of interpretation? He first of all advances by deciphering the series of signs which make up the symptom, the Rat Man is the paradigm there. But from the series of deciphered signs sense emerges and that is what Freudian interpretation aims at: the sense of desire. It is arrested at the sense called sexual which sustains the fantasy. Lacan does not object, and he is justified in saying that this sexual sense is rather ab-sex since its spring is the “sexual reality”ⁱⁱⁱ of the unconscious, that is, in memory of Freud, the repressed drives and their surplus jouissance, those “four episodic substances”^{iv} of object a. With them is confirmed that the sexual sense is no more than “test” of the lack of the sexual relation of which all of Freud’s sayings lay down the formula.

What however remains is what is neither “sexual reality” nor fantasy, but symptom. The symptom which makes up for this deficiency of relation, but not without its real kernel, outside sense, “antinomic to all verisimilitude”^v playing its part. What is the name of the specific interpretation, which Freud will not have given, but which can make a limit, as Lacan said^{vi}, to “the non-dialogue” which is the rule in the exchange of words? The chance to respond is found there on Lacan’s side: an interpretation is needed that is not satisfied with truth and which takes account of the real outside sense. It is up to those who draw inspiration from this to make of it the clinic.

June, 2011

Translated by Esther Faye.

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- i Introduction à l'édition allemande des *Ecrits*, *Scilicet* 5, p. 16
- ii Ibid.
- iii *Les quatre concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse*, Seuil, Paris 1973, p. 138
- iv Note italienne, *Autres écrits*, Seuil, Paris 2001, p. 309.
- v Préface à l'édition anglaise du Séminaire XI, *Autres écrits*, op. cité, p. 573
- vi Ou pire, *Autres Ecrits*, p. 551.