

Opening

Thank you for coming in such large numbers to this 12th meeting of the International Lacanian Field Forums.

For 2 days, you'll be hearing about anxiety from a wide variety of perspectives: anxiety by gender, by contemporary moorings, by clinical type, by temporality, by its fruitfulness - let's not forget the positive side it can have - and, of course, by the way it's treated by psychoanalysis.

In the few minutes I've been given to open, I'd just like to say a few words about current events on the European continent.

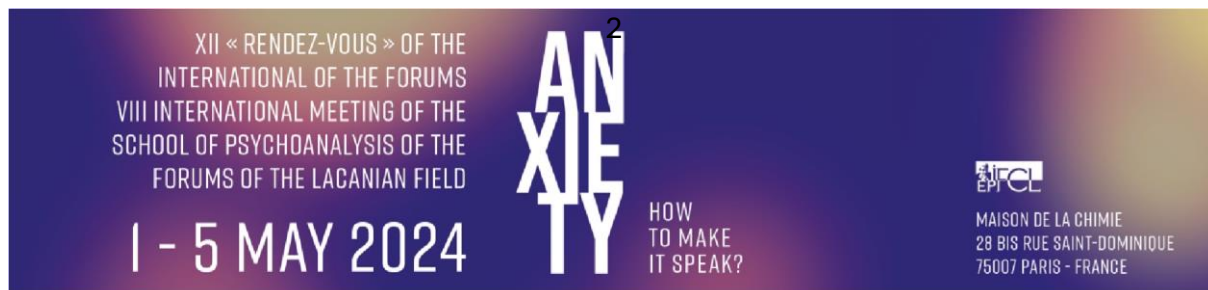
On anxiety, we have canonical formulas: anxiety is *the typical symptom of any advent of the real*, as Lacan puts it. It functions as a signal of danger, to quote Freud. As a signal, it's the unmistakable affect that signals the subject's relationship to object *a*. This is the object that causes desire, assures the surplus of enjoyment (*plus de jouir*), and lies at the foundation of all the subject's intentions.

Since it doesn't lie about its cause, it's *beyond doubt*. Seized by this affect, the neurotic usually responds with a defensive, avoiding reaction. The hysteric will opt for avoidance, the obsessive for doubt. But both structures manage to avoid the *dreadful certainty* of anxiety as an indication of reality.

To say that this certainty is dreadful is a clear indication of how repulsive it is in neurosis. This differs from the radical certainty that the psychotic subject is married to.

In analysis, the analysand must face whatever is causing his anxiety. He is expected to be driven by a desire to know. Outside of analysis, however, the opposite is true. That of "not wanting to know anything" about enjoyment (*jouissance*), both one's own and that of the Other.

Lacan formulated this at the beginning of his teaching, in other words. He doesn't speak of the advent of the real, but states that the subject surrounded by all kinds of reals, some of which are threatening, prefers not to take them seriously. This enables him or her to enjoy a more relaxed existence, bathed in *happy uncertainty*.



So to the *dreadful certainty* of a threatening danger, the subject chooses to respond with a *happy uncertainty*.

There are all kinds of threatening realities, of real events that cause anxiety. There is one, however, that is knocking at our door, and whose advent has already occurred.

I'm referring to the war that has taken hold in Europe.

We - the generations arriving after the 50s - were no longer used to war. It had been more than 70 years since Europe had experienced a major conflict.

This is the longest period of peace on our continent since the fall of the Roman Empire. And during that time, we've fallen asleep. I'm not talking about the Baltic States and Poland, who knew full well what their Russian neighbor was capable of, having experienced it first hand. They had long warned the countries of Old Europe. But the latter countered them with this happy uncertainty, preferring to bet on the pacifying effects of a globalization that was intended to be a happy one.

Indeed, we thought we were protected from the appetites of the imperialist ogres by our intertwined trade links, even if they have never hidden their intentions.

The dreadful certainty of being eaten, as demonstrated by the annexation of Crimea, has been replaced by the happy uncertainty embodied in happy globalization.

And we thought we could get away with it by accepting the *fait accompli*, but that was to ignore the aggressor's underlying aims.

A bit like Munich in 1938, when, by sacrificing a few territories, we thought we'd got even with Hitler's expansionist aims.

You may say that this is a gloomy opening for our meeting. But the worst is never certain, and resignation is not an option.

For confronting anxiety as an awful certainty requires courage. And in analysis, you need this courage to move forward in your treatment. Without it, there's no way of overcoming our own "not wanting to know anything about it". It's a way of stepping out of our candid reverie and realizing that the Other's desire and the enjoyment (*jouissance*) it aims for, could threaten our very existence.

Lacan could say that in the analytic field, progress had been made on an affect as important as anxiety. And that in the unbreathable consequences of the discourse of science, it was the artificial lung. Thanks to this, we were able to find the enjoyment (*jouissance*) we needed in speech to keep history going. I would add that of humanity. It was an ambitious perspective, a wager he said, a challenge even¹.

What followed showed that this perspective was not presumptuous; it held, but current events show us that the challenge remains.

XII « RENDEZ-VOUS » OF THE
INTERNATIONAL OF THE FORUMS
VIII INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF THE
SCHOOL OF PSYCHOANALYSIS OF THE
FORUMS OF THE LACANIAN FIELD

1 - 5 MAY 2024

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HOW
TO MAKE
IT SPEAK?



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ⁱ "Le *jouir* de l'être parlant s'articule" (The enjoyment *jouir* of the speaking being is articulated), Lacan states to France Culture in a 1973 interview."