

THE INVARIANT OF THE ETHICS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS ¹

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What can we say about ethics regarding today's psychoanalytic practice?

Barcelona 2023. On this occasion, as analysts we gather around a question: What ethics for psychoanalytic practice nowadays? It is a question that surprised us and led us, once again, to reflect on its foundations. Among the ideas that emerged, one criterion stood out: the ethics of psychoanalysis is of the order of the invariant.

Cultural times change, modify, generate the novel or rescue the preterite. In that becoming, at a particular and determined moment, psychoanalysis – founded by Sigmund Freud – emerged as a symptom, and its proposal remains the same, ENCORE. From its unprecedented discourse, the analyst's desire awaits and promotes the production of the Subject, which – defined by Jacques Lacan as "what a Signifier represents for another Signifier" – broke with the prevailing ontological conception.

Preserving the ethics of psychoanalysis requires an untrapped analyst from a uniform discourse so as to position himself in the face of the challenge posed by the **emergence** of the subject. By doing so, one bets on the future.

The analysand generally presents himself with a certain "**emergency**", and this suffering assumes the form of the variants and particularities of the time. In the face of this urgency, the market also proposes varied offers to suffocate the discontent.

The sense of the symptom is the real that is crossed and accounts that things "do not work" for the *parlêtre* in his RSI structure; his stigma is not being able to bind to anything, despite the infinite list of consumer objects. A real that cannot be fooled by promises that everything is possible.

¹ *VIII International Congress of Convergence, Lacanian Movement for Freudian Psychoanalysis*. Barcelona, 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th May 2023. The translation is ours.

This hole that we locate in the intersection of the three rings and that Lacan calls: **a**, is what guides the ethics of the analysis to locate the place of the unhealable truth and guarantee the impossibility of the encounter with the object.

He debated in his time with evolutionary theories that postulated the possibility of a mature and sexually organized man. He had a critical and acute glance on some psychoanalysts who, endorsed by a supposed ego strength, practiced an emotional indoctrination in patients. He also warned that other discourses in the name of God, science, or religion, pronounced themselves from a knowledge about the truth of the truth. We quote.

"(...) this discourse has engendered all kinds of instruments that, from our point of view, must be qualified as 'gadgets'. From now on, and much more than you believe, all of you are subjects of instruments that, from the microscope to the radio-television, have become elements of your existence. At this moment, you cannot even measure their reach (...)" ²

Nowadays, patients turn up to consultation crossed by the illusion of the healing offered by the family constellations and the bioneurodecoding.

What is our work as analysts then? We maintain, just as Lacan transmitted to us, that the subversive aspect of our practice is to bet, that a subject, there, shall be, the subject of the unconscious.

We have a responsibility in this regard: to be involved in those places where analytical discourse has not yet entered or where other discourses predominate, even within psychoanalytic institutions themselves.

At this moment, gathered in Barcelona, in the context of Convergence, we are given the opportunity to debate among analysts: "The Future of Psychoanalysis".

² Jacques Lacan. *Aún: Seminario XX (1972-1973)* Buenos Aires: Paidós, 1981. Clase Nro. 7 (13 de marzo de 1973) pág. 99. The translation is ours.

We are responsible for revealing the effects of our clinical work and confirming, from experience, that psychoanalysis is the most suitable device, so far, to transit the unbearable of human condition.

Freud proposed the foundations of psychoanalysis at a certain time and established, after a long journey, that the direction of the cure consists of listening to the patient. One of the memorable pages is found in the reading about the Wolf-Man where "WESPE - ESPE"³ allowed Sergei Pankejeff to emerge. However, Lacan provided it a conceptual framework from logic and from that point we listen to the subject of the unconscious, the subject of desire, the subject of enjoyment, the subject of phantasy.

Analytical act does not focus on the variables of the time nor on the objects that the subject outlines in his entanglements, but rather, by interpreting them, the analyst intervenes in the position and particular mode of enjoyment with which each analysand presents himself in his difficulty in recognizing himself as lack of being.

Self-destruction drive jeopardizes humanity, each time, once again.

Freudian question in *Civilization and Its Discontents* is relevant today: will cultural, scientific, and technological development be able to command the drive of aggression and self-annihilation? Or is the destiny of human species to exterminate each other, until the last man? We quote: "It is to be hoped that the eternal Eros will make an effort to assert itself in its fight against its also immortal adversary. But who can foresee the outcome?"⁴

Psychoanalytic discourse -unlike other discourses- is located in the place of the lack of sexual relationship and operates with the real, the symbolic, and the imaginary. This radical lack, when presented as inhibition, symptom, or anxiety, challenges and concerns us. The analyst's mission is to confront the real, even when the real rears up.⁵

³ cf. Sigmund Freud. *De la historia de una neurosis infantil (el Hombre de los Lobos)*. En: *Obras completas de Sigmund Freud*. Buenos Aires: Amorrortu, 2003. Tomo XVII. págs. 86-87. The translation is ours.

⁴ Sigmund Freud. *El malestar en la cultura*. En: *Obras completas de Sigmund Freud*. Buenos Aires: Amorrortu, 2003. Tomo XXI. pág. 140. The translation is ours.

⁵ cf. Jacques Lacan. *La Tercera*. En: *Actas del VII Congreso de la École Freudienne de Paris*, Roma, 1974. Madrid: Petrel, 1980. The translation is ours.

The Real of enjoyment lurks and its stigma is not to bind with anything despite the infinite list of consumer objects.

In conclusion, we believe that the ethics of psychoanalysis will remain invariant regarding the place occupied by the psychoanalyst, while at the same time betting on the possibility that there shall be a subject each time - a pulsatile, fleeting, and evanescent emergence - that challenges culture and ideologies.

Sustaining the ethics of psychoanalysis implies an analyst situated in the bet on the emergence of the subject, so as not to become besieged by the homogenizing discourse.

Bibliography:

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