

CONVERGENCIA 2023
Ethics in Psychoanalysis. Symptom Policy
What does the latter mean?

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Of all the impossible professions enumerated by Freud, Psychoanalysis is the only one in which both technique and ethics must form a single, Moebianly-united face. A wrong in practice becomes an ethical wrong. And psychoanalytical policy should only be that of symptom. But... what does this mean?

In his seminar *Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, Lacan does not base his ethics on a series of moral precepts descended from the heavens of some father or legislating body, but rather from respect of the border of *das Ding*, the incestuous thing, the core (*kern*) of the Other. And by extension, of the other human being, whose advance should not be abolished by either the symbolic machinery or by our sundry appetites. This respect of the Other's/other's real is psychoanalysis' ethical core.

This is what the Greeks called unwritten laws of the *dyké*, which make human what is human. Written laws, instead, the ones of the *nomos*, should find their roots in those of *dyké*: the prohibition of incest, of murder and the ritual duty to bury the dead, as even the dead person is our fellow.

The symptom, embodied in Antigone when Creon bars Polynices' burial, comes across precisely as a shriek of the real which attempts to stop the unconscionable advance of the symbolic when the laws of the *maître*, needed for the city to function, change at the patriarch's whim. Such is Creon's *kerygma* (unconscionable proclamation), which infringes the laws of *dyké*. Our policy is that of the symptom, an attempt to stop the unconscionable excess. Frail balance between the law needed for a subject or a socially-bound community to function as well as its symptomatic border -whenever this law is unconscionable, considering that the symptom constitutes a limit to paying the price for a wild liminar writing.

The real circles around that, the real which should rule the ethics of psychoanalysis, which we analysts should try to preserve, rewriting it, taking on the responsibility of helping safeguard psychoanalysis within culture.

Let us remember the unique analytical-cure peculiarities: only analysis gives word to the

suffering by accepting the analysand's assumption that we know how to help him out of the quagmire like an effective *tromperie*. With our presence, a strange shape grows in us with each cure, transforming us; we allow ourselves to become shapeable matter to be sculpted by the analysand, making the profile of an object appear which in the past constituted the core of something resembling a cocoon, a protective fantasy which at the time of consultation stifles the patient and stops patient's life ; or otherwise makes the patient act unbridled or beyond measure.

This cocoon, once protective, now blocks what Freud postulates for analyses end, when this plane (which Lacan called *cross-cap*) must be cut by the good place in order for the subject to regain the capacity of (and I cite Freud in German) *Genuss und Leistungsfähigkeit*, that is, not so much «to love and work» but rather to *jouir de la bonne manière* (enjoy in the good way) and to be able to produce for their own life.

Once this has been achieved, the analyst becomes superfluous. And will be ejected as the object's representation, as we well know. That's the real about which we are talking. A *good enough* (barely good) analyst accepts this destiny of *palea* (straw) which surrounds a precious grain not his own, and whose border writes the letter. Even ejected, we must be their scribes.

This real which we must protect tends towards ignoring the real, or, eventually, even to «its systematic denial».

Freud described the most frequent manner of this radical denial: human masses, multitudinal, are formed, or, in psychoanalysis, small groups are, even forming masses of twos. It's is nothing but the trick of all tricks: the encounter of the ideal and the object in a leader, closing fully the gap which, conversely, should remain widely open in order to safeguard the real.

As commented by Lacan, Freud - whom he recognizes as his *maître*- realizing that his discovery could not possibly be transmitted by his disciples (reticent to safeguard the clear-cut furrow of his letter), accepted the International then being outlined. He wanted it as a sort of sarcophagus so that psychoanalysis might be kept in dormancy, in a vegetative status, waiting for the letter reader lying there in the hope of finding its reader, for arriving in time to meet his destiny.

Lacan describes himself as instilling life in the mummy which, reading the letter, awakes this *corpus* of practice and formalization, reopening this sterilized furrow. An erosion

furrow formed by the Cascade of Letters.

The constituting of a group to deposit both the ideal and the object in whoever leads, be it an international or a *de facto* group, however it is called, transforms itself into a place (I cite) of «routine ensuring our comfort», with heavy boredom effects. Along with obsequiousness - not be mistaken for respect-, they end up turning into symptoms of lack of vitality, of letter obliteration, of mudding (why shouldn't one think so?) the furrow, now no longer clear-cut.

What I am describing may happen to anyone if we do not take into account the unique difficulty to tackle this cold fire which is the real we work with, which also burns; or furthermore, which makes us end up as material to be discarded when the analysis ends. Many a time, probably without even realizing: we compensate ourselves for the fall occurring in each analysis within the analytical social bond domain, instead of trying to rewrite it and safeguard it. Above all, whoever has had a historical and symbolical place, who have tagged (themselves and ourselves) psychoanalysis policy vectors.

They should be the symptom's. Because the symptom is precisely, as I said above, the shriek of the real that marks a limit to the necessary momentum, but which should not go beyond the master's discourse either. When it goes too far, the symptom's real appears, and it is psychoanalysis policy which gives it its place.

Going back to the seminar on Ethics: Antigone became a symptom, wild writing of Creon's boundless proclamation. Who did not function as the father to his polis but rather as a patriarch, an invasive neoplasia, potentially deadly, of the function of the paternal structural operator.

Lacan had founded his school as a «shelter against culture's malaise», hoping to achieve a space «free from *all and every* group effect».

Clearly, it did not work. The reasons for such a school exercise sometimes contrary to these aspirations, remain to be interrogated. Part of this departure from the stated purposes, perhaps excessive, is to be found in group effects and charismatic leaderships, both claimed and (sometimes) offered in such setting. Because, exactly as described by Etienne de la Boétie in his *Discourse on Voluntary Servitude*, it is easier to be led than it is to decide and think on one's own account and risk.

In this brief time, the above is my reminder that our task tends to awakening, to «saying

no» to any group consolidating in this sense, and to avoid giving rise to a writing of the letter which wraps the real less wildly than the way in which the symptom wraps it; and not only in our practice in intention but also in this setting of extension. Which seems so hard.

In the polis, this is both a crucial and a burning topic, at a time when science's totalizing discourse disputes with psychoanalysis the subject's «mental» suffering, attempting to standardize it.

In attempting to eliminate the symptom's real, it confiscates the sufferer's writing, wild but his own, and it takes away the sufferer's knowledge.

Exercising the symptom policy comes back to respecting the ethics that brings us together, before a wild letter that does not aspire to domestication. Rather, to its own rewriting.

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