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Analysis

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## TESTIMONIES

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From my experiences as coordinator and member of a group of children of survivors of the Shoah called "Witnesses of Memory" and as a passer in the Pass device of the EFBA (Escuela Freudiana de Buenos Aires), I began to question the issue of Testimony both about the children of survivors and to the Pass.

Testimony is considered as the statement made by a person to prove or assure the veracity of a fact by having witnessed it. In ancient times, testimony was used as a synonym of witness: a subject who has observed a certain event. In law, the witness is the one who testifies about the facts while the testimony is the denomination of his statements. Testimony is also the evidence that serves to confirm the truth of a thing, while the false testimony is punishable. In the juridical field, the reference to truth arises from evidence. It is the written, a produced object. Medicine also finds its origins in the attention paid both to the account of the symptoms referred by the patient and to the signs observed by the physician. Truth depends on the discourse in which we are immersed. For psychoanalysis, the truth of what is said sustains the relationship with the Other, which medicine would not have as its foundation. Freud puts the symptom and its relation with the truth in the operative place, meeting there with the transference.

This truth that emerges in its relation to saying does not validate the truth/lie opposition that arises from the notion of truth as the adequacy of the representation of the thing. From

this perspective the opposition lie/truth would not be such since where there is a lie there is a way to truth.

This is a truth related to the discourse of psychoanalysis in which the truth would be concerning to what is said so that the representation of what happened would not have to be adequate to the fact itself.

There is a relationship between truth and knowledge since truth is what is missing in unconscious knowledge. The relation of truth with the real makes the condition of the subject who is constituted based on what the Other says about him. This truth has the structure of fiction, therefore fiction entails a truth. It is due to the effect of the analysis that would make possible the fall of the confusion between truth and Real. Truth and the Real would not be the same, just as truth would not be One, since it accounts for the real without being the Real.

If the symptom deprives of forgetting, and Memory would be the act of not forgetting, what place for psychoanalysis concerning truth, Memory, and Testimony? We see that the symptom testifies to repression, there is an unconscious truth. But how does truth play in the testimonies of the Shoah and the so-called testimonies of the Pass? For whom is the testimony? In both, there is another who listens: in the testimonies of the pass, first of all the analyst himself; and in testimonies of the Shoah, the other of the social bond. In the first one, it is about the truth, and in the other, it is about the real. Another question also arises: How does the passer play as a witness in the testimony of the pass? The passer, as a sound box, will resonate the truth of what is said beyond the passand's words. To be able to listen, and to have a logical position. Lacan says that writing is what language leaves as a trace. This would be attempted in the pass, knottings of language that constitute traces of the impossible.

According to Primo Levi in the testimony there is an impossible dialectic between the survivor, pseudo-witness; and the integral witness, who was there and died besides those called Muslims for the way they bent down on the edge of death, death while alive. The former can speak but cannot testify of the death. The integral witness who was there and

died and who, together with the Muslim, dead while alive, cannot testify precisely because they are dead. Therefore there is no complete witness, none in itself is THE Testimony, one lacks the experience of death, and the one who died did not return to testify about it. There is no holder of the testimony. Speaking/testifying is to enter into something that de-subjectives and silences. And something becomes subjective and speaks without having -in itself- anything to say.

Is it possible to testify?

The Memory of not forgetting comes into play when we refer to the Testimony of the Shoah survivors. It is an act of the culture of a historical event that happened. Yosef Yerushalmi in his work "Reflections on Forgetting" says that when we say that people "remember", actually we say that a past was actively transmitted to contemporary generations through what he calls "the channels and receptacles of memory".

Proust already told us that the power of Memory is not to resurrect. Memory will never be a faithful copy, or else how can a grieving and mourning memory try to write in memoriam?

It is different when we speak of the Testimony of the Pass: a device created by Lacan to extract knowledge from the experience of analysis. In that experience we are not talking about a simple story or its historization/histerization but about the meaning of pass from analysand to analyst, and about the nomination related to being named for this Pass. Lacan in his Proposition of October 9, 1967 says: First, a principle: the psychoanalyst derives his authorisation only from himself.

We see that both testimonies are concerning the signifier Pass. On one side, the testimony of Shoah as something happened historically, to what happened, therefore possible to be transmissible. And, on the other side, the Testimony of the Pass, which speaks of a passage that tries to account if something happened in an analysis and of the desire of the analyst.

I consider that in both testimonies there is what is impossible to testify.

In the Testimony of the Pass, it is impossible to testify and symbolize what inhabits the Real and does not stop not being written. What is more, the symbolic is reached through the imaginization of the real, since that Truth that comes from the Real must first be imaginized.

The impossibility of testifying would be in the Testimony of the Shoah, since by structure there would be no possibility of a complete integral Witness who could testify of death.

Both Testimonies attempt a writing: in the Testimony of the Shoah there are books, documentaries, or diverse artistic expressions that give an account of what happened. It is an act that remains in the Memory.

There would be a writing from the impossible in the Testimony of the Pass. The Testimony in the Pass should not remain with what happened. The Pass is a saying that raises questions. As Osvaldo Arribas wonders: if the testimony of the Pass is about giving an account of the satisfaction achieved by the passand in his demand for analysis, or rather of a remainder of a desire always unsatisfied beyond the satisfaction achieved.

In the Testimony of the Shoah we are in relation to what happened while in the Testimony of the Pass there will have been no passage if we remain in what happened.