

## PARADOXES OF DESIRE:

### *From One to Sinthome?*<sup>1</sup>

*We fight for men and women whose poetry has yet to be written.*

*Robert Gould Shaw*

The ethics of psychoanalysis depends on despoiling away and an insistence on a poetics of relationships. The work with psychoanalysis, in the clinic or in the social field, will always depend on an encounter with the other. Many practices also require this meeting. However, what radically distinguishes psychoanalysis is the respect for the abyss of the Real between the I and the other.

The tendency today is to sanitize the «Foul», banishing from reality what reminds us of our precariousness, finitude and conflict, abolishing differences with discourses of globalized promises of health and happiness. There is a great temptation to fall into the “easy formulas” that reduce a subject to his organism and behavior. Among analysts, however, the bet is, through a working relationship, to insist on the Real of the tragic human experience, on the countercurrent of totalizing/universalizing policies/practices: on this depends their ethics and their politics.

Though, with regard to the training of analysts, which implies both our position in the clinic and in our work with other fields of intervention, it is fundamental to insist on listening to the singular sonorities in their (dis)encounter, perhaps as the only way emergence of new scriptures and unique ways of transmitting psychoanalysis without miss the point of the questions :

- What can psychoanalysis do?

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- What can we do as ethical operators, betting on the triumph of the subject in acting in accordance with his desire, even in a society in agony?

- How to establish the link between the subject to act according to his desire if his implication in the destiny of the society in which he lives is not given to him to know?

We don't want to answer these questions, but just open paths that alerting us to the subjectivity of our time, without which our task will not find its effects. For this reason, we will take segregation in its broadest sense here as perhaps the deepest mark of our time: it throws desperate bodies into the sea every day in search of a welcoming exile. Segregated in a «social galley», the postmodern subject «finds himself» exiled from existence.

Segregation is, today, a social symptom of which we have not yet testified all the consequences, as Lacan pointed out to us in his time. Although we have already been theorizing its effects, the pandemic we have recently experienced has violently unveiled them. We have no choice but to draw from it the teachings of an «awakening» provoked by this Real that has crossed the world, questioning us about ours, that of the analysts, praxis: the intimacy of the clinic, training and even about our perspective of looking at the social, about our contemporaneity.

Lacan (XXX, p. XX) warns us that we would have to deal with segregation, not only in the psychiatric domain, but in a generalized way. « Entering the realm of the generalized child is entering the realm of segregation. Today we would be dealing with this «generalized», capricious child, surrounded by primary narcissism, who «preserves his libido to the selfishness of his self-preservation» (FREUD, 1974, p. 214) and therefore intolerant of differences, not infrequently, moody and about to launch yourself into the void of your existence? They are often subjects who rant, insult under the imperative of an archaic superego demanding unbridled jouissance.

Unresponsible for their word, they find themselves immersed in the impoverishment of speech. Deprived of the symbolic mediation that introduces the benefit of the doubt into paranoid certainties, they repudiate the metaphor as a sublimatory resource for the gaps in language that lead us to enunciations and call us to extract new knowledge from what always remains unsaid.

Since Marx, we know that man invented the most sophisticated form of exploitation. Freud denounces it in his own way, and Lacan (1992, p. 76) states: «What Marx denounces in surplus value is the spoliation of *jouissance*». Memorial of surplus-enjoyment, being its equivalent, it defines the "society of consumers". In it, what we qualify as «human» becomes homogeneous with this surplus-enjoyment forged by industry. The «surplus value» has imprinted its mark and the Capitalism that feeds on it does not cease to sophisticate such a form of exploitation that has shaken the Earth, provoked wars and gigantic migratory waves that do not cease.

"Progress" has deeply changed people's daily lives. Just compare the centuries before the so-called «Industrial Revolution» and our times. He brought about transformations that include a portion of the world's population, yet a large mass of people in his world are literally and cruelly excluded. There is no carpet that is able to hide this «reality». Exclusion, segregation, is everywhere!

Freud, in « Civilization and its Discontents», considered the idea that «progress» could deal with the *unbehagen*, the discontent inherent in *kultur*, to be naive. Written in 1929, this text announces the failure of the Enlightenment promise of happiness and collective well-being, the failure of rationality to control the ills produced by the «civilizing achievements». Men, Freud told us there (1974, p. 133), «are not gentle creatures», disposed to help and to let themselves be loved. They are creatures disposed to aggressiveness whose neighbor is nothing more than a «helper» or «sexual object», always ready to take them without their consent, to take over their goods, to exploit their work without due compensation, to humiliate them. him, causing him suffering and death, even if these «creatures» have sublimatory outlets, love, Art, no «project» is able to eliminate suffering, unhappiness from life. It is in the face of this, this Real, that we must question our practice and ethics.

Freud's ethical duty led him to follow his course without erasing the traces of what had preceded him. His rigor and ethics guided his actions in relation to what the scientific community and society of his time could expect from him. However, they were not enough for the «aesthetics of reception» of his audience to accept the truth of what he stated: the unfolding of the laws of the unconscious and their relations with sexuality and death. It was, then, from an «exiled», «segregated» position,

that Freud proceeded, alone, in his arduous work: the invention of the clinic supported by Psychoanalysis.

It is also in this position of «heretic, expelled, exiled and segregated» from his «society» that Lacan refounds and takes to the last consequences the virulent path inaugurated by Freud to approach the clinic and the formation of the psychoanalyst. For that, both relied on an ethics sustained by a position of extimity. Thus, they were «contemporary» because, although immersed in their historical realities, from their «segregated» positions, they were able to shed light on the darkness and subjectivity of their times (AGAMBEN, 2009, p. 28).

Faced with his paradoxes, Lacan explains that the «ethical duty» of both the subject and the psychoanalyst is «to act in accordance with the desire that inhabits him». Thus, in his Seminar *The Étic of Psychoanalysis*, book 7, he confronts us with questions that challenge us in our singularity, in the clinic, as well as in our responsibility towards the collective. In it, Lacan tried to remove ethics from the field of morals – subverting Aristotelian ethics – to relocate it in the field of desire, of eroticism.

As far as man is concerned, there is no progress, Lacan tells us (1976-77, p. 13). With each subject that comes into the world, the civilizing law needs to be reedited. Proof of this is that nations around the world, a current trend, have been enmeshed in a galloping process of Nazi-fascist invasions, leading us to seriously question our role in the face of what is happening: how to find and establish the link between the subject acting according to your most intimate desire and its implication in the fate of your world? It is possible? For Lacan, the position of power vis-à-vis desire leaves us an enigma. He says, asking:

What would Alexander the Great have proclaimed when he entered Persepolis triumphantly, or Hitler arriving in Paris? It doesn't matter, but probably this: I came to deliver you from this or that. The bottom line is this – Keep working. May the work not stop. Which is to say - Let it be understood that it is absolutely not an occasion for manifesting the slightest desire. The morality of power, of the service of goods is – As for desires, you can sit and wait (LACAN, 1988, p. 378).

Lacan's alert makes us imagine the scene considering the trivialization of evil: throughout his stay, we settle in... however, another path is to open our eyes and ears wide! Therefore, in the field of psychoanalysis, we have the analyst's discourse, which is not a property of psychoanalysts, the effect of a saying, but it is always threatened with being *verwefung* of the social bond. It is, therefore, the ethical responsibility of the psychoanalyst to dialogue with other types of knowledge, taking into account the subjectivity woven by the discursive statements of his time, offering his grain of knowledge. But how? Is psychoanalysis still subversive? What can she do, given the current promises of happiness?

If there is anything close to happiness, in the face of the ungovernable death pulsion, «only if it is by magic», that is, when, paradoxically, we recognize the impossibility of «achieving it, since the measure of human action is its *hybris*, with its arrogance and its excesses» (AGAMBEN, 2007, p. 23). And *hybris* is one of the names of the parasitic *jouissance* of the symptom, of what is inscribed by the One that particularizes a subject, but which becomes a constant force to peek at man from within himself, making him his own enemy, making him seek shelter in culture. for your helplessness.

Perhaps we can call of a « challenge »... today, ours, not only in the psychoanalytic field, but in others, and even in connection with psychoanalysis, is to sustain «ethics» that link, in the collective, plurality, establishing «poetics of horizontal relationships» as proposed by Édouard Glissant (2021). The poet invites us to permit ourselves to be crossed by what he calls the «poetic impulse of language», «the political dimension of denouncing violence» that segregates diverse voices arising from North American and Eurocentric colonialism (GLISSANT, 2021, p.13). It is a political act to allow oneself to be contaminated by the «wandering and sound multiplicity of other cultures» establishing «poetics of relationships» (idem, p. 21).

Such an experience *prevoques* made the encounter with the foreigner in us, with our alterity, opening the possibility to twist narratives that respect the discursive differences, the fracture of the Real that is common to us. Is it possible to support the shock that the alterity present in the

discourse of the different produces in us without segregating it? Is it possible for us to experiment poetics of relationships that separate us from our «geopolitics» to inhabit a space whose landscape is the saying that causes dissonance crossing us in the encounter with the other?

Glissant's political and poetic task invite us to think about the work of the analysts in *Convergence*, about the survival of psychoanalysis. If it has any chance of continuing, it is precisely by opening itself up to singular sounds that resonate from a saying inscribing itself in some others, producing different ways of transmitting psychoanalysis, not without the rigor of the concepts established by Freud and Lacan.

The task of transmitting the intransmissible of psychoanalysis depends on the analyst's mourning realized in his experience on the couch. Stripping oneself of one's narcissism and opening oneself up to the encounter with the otherness that presents itself in the other, this requires what Glissant called the «separation of monolingual prejudices», since the idea that «my language is my root and not my root I can separate myself to open myself to other sonorities» can leave us narcissistically paralyzed, infatuated, as if there was only one way of transmitting knowledge. «After all, what do you have to do again when you believe that only a single language can give us the key to progress?» (GLISSANT, p. 24).

Can we then say that our ethics must be contemporary? That it should allow us to continue building “paths” in the civilizing forest, waiting without waiting, to extract some knowledge from the clarity traced by the effect of «failure» – *l'insu que sait* – that the unconscious, in its private and public dimension, produces in the discourse of his time? Can a «poetics of relations» help us in arranging a passage from the *One to the sinthome*?

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