

Ethics of the analyst, ethics of jouissances.

1. Introduction

The argument of this congress invites us to talk about the ethics of psychoanalysis with emphasis on the *resistances* that psychoanalytic practice encounters today.

First of all, regarding actuality, it seems to me that one must start from the difference between psychoanalysis in *extension* and psychoanalysis in *intension* raised by Lacan in his proposition of October 9, 1967, between the space of the cure and the presentifications of psychoanalysis in the world¹, to say that, in order to conceive an ethics in relation to practice, we must approach ethics in *the actuality* of the cure and not in an ideation about the actuality of the world. For, as Lacan pointed out in 1967, "all *Weltanschauung* is considered in Freud's idea as outdated and unimportant"². In this sense one could even argue that in the cure there is no world, in any case, no world other than that which is produced predicatively in the analysand's utterances and which is deconstructed by the impredicativity of its enunciation by means of that fecund force that Freud called the *death drive*. This is the direction Lacan gives to psychoanalysis when he says: "a practice without value, this is what we [psychoanalysts] should institute"³. A practice of emptiness that operates in the act of speaking. On the contrary, on the extensional side, the cure runs the risk of becoming the place where the analyst seeks to resolve the difficulties that psychoanalysis encounters in "the world", a place of ideological indoctrination.

¹ Jacques Lacan, " Proposition du 9 octobre 1967 sur le psychanalyste de l'École ", in *Autres écrits* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2001), 246.

² Jacques Lacan, " De la psychanalyse dans ses rapports avec la réalité (à l'Institut Français de Milan, le 18 décembre 1967 à 18h30) ", in *Autres écrits* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2001).

³ Jacques Lacan, *Le séminaire, livre XXIV, L'insu que sait de l'une-bévue que s'aile à mourre (1976-1977)*, Publication hors commerce. Document interne à l'Association freudienne internationale et destiné à ses membres, s. d., Séance du 17 mai 1977.

If it is therefore a question of speaking of the *resistances* of psychoanalysis in intention, it is imperative to turn to the function of the analyst. This is because, from Lacan's work, "the only real resistance in analysis is the resistance of the analyst"⁴. Resistance that is put into play in the present of the cure by the analyst as the *Rea^l*, through the operation of what René Lew calls, taking up Kant's terminology, his schematism.

I digress to emphasize the importance of the analyst's schematism in the treatment cure by referring to the third person schema described by Freud in his 1905 work on the joke. In this text, Freud uses Shakespeare's words to say that "the prosperity of a joke rests on the ear of the hearer, never on the tongue of the teller"⁶. Drawing a parallel with the cure, we could say that the prosperous (creative) character of what is said depends on the analyst's schematism, on the *conditions* that he opens up and on the possibilities that the analyst takes advantage of the *opportunities*. Indeed, the flow of the analysand's signifiers can take one direction or another according to the schematism into which he falls. It is to underline the function of the schematism of the analyst that the title of this conference refers to the ethics *of the analyst* and not to the ethics of *psychoanalysis*.

This scheme indicates the specificity of analytic discourse, that of this mode of exchange called *transference* (*übertragung*). A recursive exchange in which the antecedent calls the consequent to depend on it in a retrogradient manner.

All this gives a particular meaning to the meetings between analysts, because what is at stake in the theoretical work to which we are called is to advance in the conception of a schematism, one for each analyst, which offers the conditions so that, in the cures, the impredicativity proper to the dynamics of the unconscious operates and so that this

⁴ "the only real resistance in analysis is the resistance of the analyst" (Jacques Lacan, *Le séminaire, livre II, Le moi dans la théorie de Freud et dans la technique psychanalytique (1954-1955)* (Paris: Éd. du Seuil, 1978), p.373.)

⁵ René Lew, "Construction des impossibles", *Analyse Freudienne Presse* 16, n°1 (2009): cf.

⁶ Sigmund Freud, "Le trait d'esprit et sa relation à l'inconscient (1905)", in *Œuvres complètes: psychanalyse. Volume XVII* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1992), 168.

openness remains alive at the end of a cure. Let us now return to the argument of this congress to consider the place given to jouissance and the effects of what is proposed there.

2. In the argument, a unique pleasure schematic

In the argument it is said that "we are in a civilization that reifies subjects and pushes jouissance", referring here only to a deadly jouissance, jouissance of the Other $J(\bar{A})$, and leaving aside the phallic jouissance $J(\Phi)$, which is that which sustains the creative side of the psychoanalytic act and puts at stake the existence of the subject⁷.

To start from such a schematism would not be without effect in the cures, because, by not taking into account the phallic jouissance, one would come to consist of a *weltanschauung*, a predicative and spherical world that would seem to be completely external and independent of the subject, a world that would precede him, of which he would form a part and to which he would have to conform. An extensional world, in which the impredicativity of the functions in intension is forgotten in the predicativity of the objects they produce. This is, in my opinion, what is at stake in the catastrophist tone of the argument of this congress according to which it would seem that psychoanalysts should face a world full of adversities.

If I am interested in the question of jouissance, it is because the conception of the world is intimately linked to that of the jouissance of the Other because this implies the jouissance of the world and its objects. Realizing in a certain way Sade's promise that it would be possible, through pain, to have a sensitive access to *the Thing*⁸.

From the mere consideration of this jouissance of the Other that does not find a phallic jouissance to complete it, a clinic of adaptation to a supposed reality would follow. A practice that would aim at normalizing and limiting this harmful jouissance, which would be nothing more than a "pathological variant of pleasure"⁹. A practice that would not go beyond the

⁷ cf. René Lew, *L'économie littérale de la jouissance*, Série Organon de la psychanalyse (Paris: Lysimaque, 2022), chap. Corps, lettres et jouissance, p.121.

⁸ cf. Christian Fierens, *Le principe de jouissance: Critique de la raison pratique (Kant), Kant avec Sade (Lacan)*, Lire en psychanalyse (Louvain-la Neuve: EME éditions, 2020), 131-32.

⁹ cf. Fierens, 17.

principle of pleasure and that, *in the end*, would sustain the existence of the Other (not barred) and would in turn sustain its jouissance.

It is not for nothing that the question of jouissance occupies so much space in the seminar on ethics. Among the different approaches to the subject I will dwell on the expression "access to jouissance"¹⁰ that Lacan uses in order to say that just as for Kant, for whom aesthetic jouissance is not related to an existing reality¹¹, the jouissance proper to psychoanalysis, the phallic jouissance, is not related to an existing object but to that metaphysical object which is the Lacanian *object a*.

Considering jouissance in terms of "access to..." allows us to move away from a supposed reality of the object and consider rather the modes of relation with the Thing that are at play in the schematism of the subject. It is a question here of taking into account that jouissance is played out in the different modes, more or less delirious, of access to the object.

Schematically, access to jouissance would be the arrow that figures the link from one signifier (S2) to another signifier (S2'). And as I have argued from the beginning of this presentation, it is the consistency of the second, of the analyst, in the case of the transference, that returns the arrow to the first, opening the door to an impredicative logic.

In the recursive dynamics of the transference, this is equivalent to saying that the analyst punctuates the analysand's saying from the mode of access to jouissance that he sustains from his second position, from his position of object a (empty object, which fatally arises from the impossibility of access to Das Ding).

The analyst exercises the inaccessibility of the Thing from his position as Other and induces a return of the arrow to the subject by reordering the Subject and the Other as structural positions present in the subject, bringing into existence the *spaltung of the subject*, the

¹⁰ cf. Jacques Lacan, *Le séminaire, livre VII, L'éthique de la psychanalyse (1959-1960)* (Paris: Éd. du Seuil, 1994), Séance du 30 mars 1960.

¹¹ cf. Jacques Lacan, *Le séminaire, livre VII, L'éthique de la psychanalyse (1959-1960) -AFI*, Publication hors commerce. Document interne à l'Association freudienne internationale et destiné à ses membres (Paris, n. d.), 460.

splitting of the object and the *unfolding* of the signifier¹² through the bar of the Other. In other words, it is from the bar of the Other that the analyst (small a) responds where the Other was expected by the analysand. There is always something disappointing. The phallic jouissance is a jouissance of the castration of the Other, certainly, but it is above all a jouissance of that which in the castration of the Other operates as a recursive function giving existence to the Subject. Analysis can be defined as the possibility of a passage from one mode of access to jouissance (which has to do with the pleasure principle) to another mode of access to jouissance which, being Moebian and recursive, repositions the jouissance of the object towards the jouissance of the function on which it depends. A passage from a supposed accessibility to the Thing to an impossible Real that organizes the relation to the object in a recursive way, departing from the jouissance of the Other.

Thus, through the positioning of the analyst, a hole can be produced in the field of the so-called interpersonal relationships, a predominantly imaginary field organized by the consciousness, a hole that reorients the relationship of the subject with the other according to the reals that organize the symbolic logic of the unconscious.

If the analyst puts himself in the place of the *little a*, another jouissance becomes possible: other than that of the jouissance of the Other. A jouissance that is not that of the psychological subject of the analysand or the analyst, but a subject that is the effect of the signifying relation and its movements of alienation and separation, a subject caused by a functional void that demands the production of an *en-plus* (a displacement, a novelty), a subject of the unconscious. Phallic jouissance is thus a jouissance favorable to the functioning of the signifying dynamic that produces the passage from Being to non-being and, to use Lacan's expression, operates "an emptying of the evidence". Phallic jouissance implies the impredicativity of the object, the subject and the signifier. It brings into play the existence of the subject " $J(\Phi) = \exists$ ", "existence [which] is the axis, the meta [visée], the focus

¹² René Lew, " Récursivité de l'abord psychanalytique des troubles pour lesquels la psychiatrie se sent concernée " (La récursivité comme anticipation, Copenhagen, 2017), p.49.

of psychoanalytic treatment"¹³ as René Lew maintains. Phallic jouissance is the name of the dynamic of emptiness, of the re-launching of a recursive signifying dynamic.

On the contrary, the Jouissance of the Other fails to maintain the failure by instituting a correspondence between signifier and signified that produces an arrest of the signifying dynamic, that is to say, a position that, if prolonged, can become pathologizing. This is where a schematism that brings into play two jouissances that decomplete each other can open to impredicativity and reactivate the movement.

In his article "Position of jouissance in front of the letter"¹⁴, René Lew argues that "the jouissance of the Other and the phallic jouissance are in continuity, with nothing that can be established as first. This continuity allows us to say that it would be wrong to maintain that there are two jouces. It would be more appropriate, in this sense, to say that they are organized under a Moebian logic: as locally opposed and globally identical (indistinguishable). This continuity gives rise to impredicativity because the production of one jouissance cannot take place without the destruction of the other, thus excluding the possibility of the creation of a seamless totality or of sustaining the existence of the One. It is this impossibility of totality that keeps the signifying dynamic alive.

This openness to the unpredictable restores to the cure its unpredictable and singular character and makes it impossible to establish precise objectives in clinical work. The only horizon of a cure, as mentioned above, is to produce the conditions for the unconscious subject to be engendered in the signifying dynamic.

3. Conclusion

Placing things on the analyst's side allows us to say that, *in intention*, ethics is written in the singular, because it is put into play differently in the schematism of each analyst.

¹³ Lew, *L'économie littérale de la jouissance*, chap. Corps, lettres et jouissance, p.121.

¹⁴ cf. René Lew, "Position de la jouissance vis-à-vis the Letter" (16 March 2021).

In his seminar Lacan reminds us that the word ethics can be related to two roots: *ethos* (ἔθος), *character*, and *êthos* (ἦθος), *order*, and that ethics properly speaking articulates the one and the other seeking the conformity of the character to a given order. This order, for us, is that of the unconscious, of course, that of its laws, of its dynamics. Ethics is thus a question of work, of analytic work in all its dimensions (cure, seminars, posters and the pass) and of the void that is made to operate in the schematism of the analyst. The ethical choice is thus a choice of work and of commitment to one's own desire.

Ethics of desire, of the object a, ethics of emptiness, ethics of the analytic act, ethics of impredicativity, ethics of the signifier.