

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF CONVERGENCIA/BARCELONA 2023

What Ethics for Psychoanalytical Practice Today?

Ethics, Responsibility and Invention

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"I have had to listen to this objection from my patients many times after having promised them a cure or a relief: "You are saying so yourself, it is probable that my suffering is interlaced with the conditions and vicissitudes of my life; you may not change a single thing in it; so how do you intend to aid me? To which I could have responded: "I do not doubt that it would be easier for fate to take away your suffering than it would be for me. But you will see for yourself that much has been gained if we succeed in turning your hysterical misery into common unhappiness". (Freud. S., Psicoterapia de la histeria en O.C. Tomo I, Amorrortu Editores, Buenos Aires, 1968 - "Psychotherapy of Hysteria ").

Responsibility comes from Latin «*responsum*», which is how to be considered the subject of a debt or obligation. Responsibility demands consistency when acting, and it is in agreement with values or ethical forms. It originates in the word *responsible* which has the sense of responding to a duty, committing to something; therefore, responsible is the person from whom a response is expected.

The verb invent comes from *invention*, which in turn comes from the Latin word «*inventus*» - prefix *in* (inwards) and *ventus* –the participle of the verb *venire* (a-d-venture), a creation finding. Finding, thinking, conceiving something new that did not previously exist, creativity alignments with reference to known standards. It is not about disengaging any determinations, but rather, enabling the new.

Transmit comes from Latin «*transmittere*», which means conveying a message from one place to another. The analyst's desire leaves no way out - it does not rest on the stances of a beautiful soul.

Responsibility for the subjective stance that someone assumes is posed to us in terms of say yes or say no.

Everyone's sayings place them before responsibility; it is either assent or refusal of the signifier; signifier stance is fundamental and undeletable.

The analyst keeps total responsibility based on his listener position; a psychoanalysis is the cure to be expected from a psychoanalyst.

We might say that an analysand is the support of the Subject Supposed Responsibility; we know that liberty is not without the Other, castration permitting.

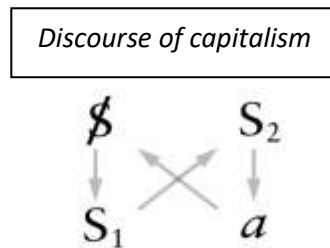
A psychoanalyst does not go excluded from *polis* affairs, is not banned. Which does not mean that he may rid himself of his professional robes to get lost among people in the street; it means that these matters are his own because he has been taken by them in his practice; Lacan himself states this: "*De notre position de sujet, nous sommes toujours responsables. Qu'on appelle cela où l'on veut, du terrorisme*" (*We are always responsible for our stance as subjects; and you may call this terrorism if you like*) (Lacan, J., *Escritos 1*, "La ciencia y la verdad" [1965], SXXI Editores, México, 1971 – *Writings 1: Science and Truth*).

Politics is not about having power for doing; in order to have power, you have to invent.

The art of the possible is not fitting into what already exists but rather giving existence to whatever proves to be possible, and its ethics lies on this power to invent what is possible, because there is no single good applicable to all, nor a general good. The target of psychoanalysis is a politics of symptom and dream, it invites to conceive a non-colonizable subject, to build and to expand the margins of liberty without appealing to confinement; it is not indoctrination, or domination, nor is it a proposal to adapt. A dream as a reservoir of liberty is a factory of future, it retrieves insofar as it is a return to what has been repressed, but at the same time, it is opening, invention-creation, psychic might, foundational might, it is an unpredictable knowledge.

In capitalistic discourse, the subject goes to the agent's place, but this subject agent has no bearing on object *a*. It is a subject of craving, a consumer of non-castrating objects fostering the illusion of happiness through consumption; and affective bonds are forced to be ruled by

the same standards, they tend to be transient and disposable, they are used - satisfaction guaranteed right away; conversely, love necessitates eternity and care for the other who is not a negotiable object. We wonder what value desire takes on in each singular and individual subject when consumption tends to create uniformity in the desiring singularity.



Neoliberalism shuns crisis and represses it by promising absolute freedom and the reign of goods; psychoanalysis embraces it, taps on it, thus becoming an ethical, poetic method; psychoanalysis is a method where there is an asymmetry but no exercise of power; it entails reviewing servitudes, allegiances, as Freud says. Then, the tragic option is avoidance of desire, and this is why the politics of symptom is fertile ground for leading the subject to his nearest division.

Desire is not a category for the psychoanalyst; rather, it is the strict consequence to which he is exposed in exercising his practice, it is a function of liberty, an impossibility for discursive universe to be closed. If the man divided by language speaks without knowing what he says, desire renders him responsible for what he says, whereas the ways of betraying this –which seem to converge in that not-knowing - engulf the subject in the mists of a defaulting and oppressive guilt, estranging him from truth.

The analyst has to pay something in order to support his function. He pays with his words, his interpretations. He also pays with his own person, insofar as he is literally deprived of his person in transference. It is necessary for him to pay with a judgment concerning his action; a minimal requirement, this judgment. The analyst knows extremely well that it is impossible for him to know what he does in psychoanalysis. What he knows is that he is directing the

cure but not the subject; the analyst's desire separates the *a* from the Ideal. He himself veils a part.

What the analyst is to attain in order to take his typical position, which is the essence and the grounds of his action, is the affording of an empty place in the place of his own desire. This means that the place should not be taken by the object which is the desire of his Other. It is an uncomfortable place, but he commits his company on the direction-of-the-cure journey.

The Other's determination is not a determination *per se*; rather, what is determining is, on one hand, whatever a reading *a posteriori* will have placed as determining in an empty space, and, at the same time, the very empty space, a hole, determines its potency.

Psychoanalysis bets on word validity, and it upholds an ethical position in connection with the direction of the cure and subjective suffering, postulating in its essence the validity of the Unconscious under transference conditions. Does the incidence of psychoanalysis in culture not have a relationship with the analytical act?

If there is a desire-of-the-analyst function, there will be analysands demanding "the future of an illusion". Hence, we must be forewarned of the cultural and epochal signifiers inhabiting our subjectivity and the subjectivity of our analysands. In the horizon of psychoanalysis there is the Real, and, when sense is pierced, discourse creates an encounter with emptiness which revives desire, making room for the one by one and for the difference which enriches and dignifies.

It is necessary for the analyst to be at least two – the one who practices, and the one who reflects on his practice; citing Jacques Lacan ("Función y campo de la palabra y el lenguaje en psicoanálisis" [1953]. Escritos 1, Siglo XXI Editores Argentina, Buenos Aires, 1988 –The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis): "*témoin pris à partie de la sincérité du sujet, dépositaire du procès-verbal de son discours, référence de son exactitude, garant de sa droiture, gardien de son testament, tabellion de ses codicilles, l'analyste participe du scribe*". (On the analyst's efficacious witnessing of the patient's discourse, the subject's sincerity, guaranteeing the speech act, as reference of accuracy, rectitude, almost like a scribe)

In the direction of the cure, the analyst supports transference so that the analysand will not give up his desire – each subject's unique, singular number.

Later on, in the same writing, Lacan underlined: “Let whoever cannot meet at its horizon the subjectivity of his time give it up then” (Lacan, J., “Función y campo de la palabra y el lenguaje en psicoanálisis” [1953]. *Escritos 1*, Siglo XXI Editores Argentina, Buenos Aires, 1988 – *The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis*); we may see that Lacan excluded any indulgent connivance with the subjectivity of his day. In this order, nothing is definitive, a response may always be addressed as a reiterated question, and thus, it will always remain open. It is in the logic of psychoanalytical argumentation – questions whose replies will not make the questions disappear, and which will even enable positioning them better.