

# THE PASS: EXPERIENCE AND TESTIMONIES

## STUDY DAY OF THE SCHOOL OF THE IVth EUROPEAN CONVENTION

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### **Experience:**

Philosophy has always endeavoured to determine the relationship between experience and knowledge: what precedes it or even conditions it, what is deposited in it and what can be transmitted from it. The debates and polemics have bounced back and forth from century to century, without ever concluding that one takes precedence over the other. Any mediation that provides access to the experience will remain on the side of the semblant, and nothing will exhaust its real.

Science, in establishing experimentation as a possible measure of truth, has not been able to establish a discourse that is not one of semblance.

'Experience' is a polysemous term, and its German translation reflects its different values: '*Erlebnis*' refers to lived experience and its contingency, '*Erfahrung*' indicates its value as a process, and '*Experiment*' denotes experimentation.

**The psychoanalytic experience** involves these different dimensions.

The event that Freud introduced into the world was that of a new knowledge, the unconscious, based on an experience he conceived as an experience of speech. He developed an "experimental" dispositive ordered by the process that Lacan would call the "Freudian process", one which involves the structural effects discovered in transference. The operation "of the analyst" can lead to a subversion of the relation to knowledge and to the jouissance that this transference displaces.

Lacan's teaching, which seeks to bear witness to what he emphatically calls "the experience of analysis", specifies its conditions, formalises its structure, implies its effects, and deduces from it the matheme of the Discourse that establishes it. From this he draws out what the experience can produce as an end, from which he distinguishes the "experience of the pass", the passage from psychoanalysand to psychoanalyst, the condition for the future of the analytic act. The proposal of the dispositive of the Pass wagers that this experience will not be ineffable and that the School will be able to gather testimonies about it.

### **Testimony:**

The Latin '*testimonium*' has given rise to 'testament', 'attest', 'contest', 'protest', etc. All these derivatives clearly indicate a performative impact that is found in the Saying [*Dire*] of the testimony, an act of enunciation that has the value of proof. To witness is to transmit the "knowledge [*savoir*] of experience" of a lived experience by one

person alone, summoned to affirm the value of this unique experience before another who is supposed to validate, or not, this real.

Justice and history have placed the function of testimony at the heart of their trials, while underlining its paradoxical aspect: how can one person's experience establish certainty?

Wars, the Holocaust and trauma in general give rise to another dilemma for testimony: that between the impossibility and the urgency of saying.

### **The pass:**

In proposing the pass as a clinical event and as a dispositive for 'guaranteeing' the analyst, Lacan proposes a knot between experience and testimony, trial and proof. The unheard-of experience of the passand is suddenly presented as the urgency of a testimony that takes the School as its witness. Passers are also surprised by this knot between testimony and experience. The Cartel in turn, although called "jury" by Lacan, does not emerge untouched by the experience it witnesses, and for which it must give an account.

**The European Convention of the SPFLF** in Venice offers us another opportunity to put our community of experience to the test of our testimonies.

**European members of the ICG 2023-2024**

*Translated by Susan Schwartz*