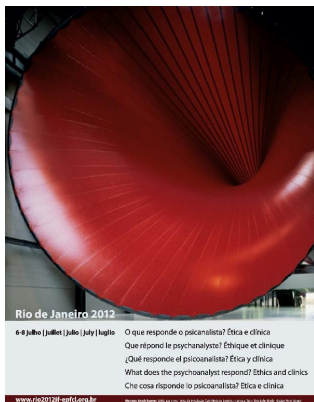


VII Encontro Internacional da IF-EPPFL  
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## VIIth Meeting of the IF-SPFLF

# WHAT DOES THE PSYCHOANALYST RESPOND? ETHICS AND CLINICS

**WISHES YOU A HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!**

July 2012, 6th – 9th

Convention Center, Hotel Sofitel – Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro.

### PRELIMINAR 3:

### WHAT THE ANALYST RESPONDS.

#### Ana Laura Prates

In 1969, Lacan wrote that, in his understanding, “the child’s symptom is able to respond to that which is symptomatic in the familial structure”: the truth of the parental couple. The use of the verb respond attributed to the child’s standpoint, in this context, can also mean correspond, such as in the poem by Baudelaire [1] *Correspondances*: “Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent”. [2] This correspondence between the Other and the subject alludes to the irreducible dimension of the transmission of a desire which is not anonymous [3].

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There is a topology in the transmission which reinforces the connotation of sending, of something which goes from one place to another. Here, we remember The Purloined Letter, by Edgar Allan Poe, and the Seminar which Lacan dedicates to it: that which lacks in its place is the symbolic, since the real goes hand in hand with it. When it comes to the subject of the unconscious, of the desire and of the lack, the letter – in its symbolic efficacy – always reaches its destination. Thus, if it is up to the Other to transmit castration, to respond is up to the subject. At first, we could state that the subject's response to the lack of the Other is the fantasy, which sustains the symptom as metaphor. However, Lacan goes beyond the *sense pass* of the metaphor to the *nonsense* of *jouissance*. If, from the letter (meaning the kind of correspondence), while distinct from the signifier, we can write the discourse without words, that is because there is a logical impossibility on the part of the father. It is there where the father is an "empty place with no communication" [4] (with no response) that he plays his role of transmission, not only the sense which insists and consists, but also, above all, a direction that points at the real which ex-ists and at The woman who does not exist. To the truth of the parental couple – there is no sexual relation -, the subject, response of the real, co-responds with the symptom, a singular way of *jouissance*.

It is with this ace up one's sleeve that one gets to the psychoanalyst, that whose offer enables the writing of the only discourse which brokers the object *a* in the place of the *semblant*. Here is the unprecedented possibility of a device which, acknowledging the co-response between the subject and the Other, will, nonetheless, allow for the writing of a letter (meaning the kind of correspondence) which is no longer a « purloined » one. It is not that Lacan raises the analyst – as Derrida wanted – to the status of « postman of the truth ». By no means!

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What is then the analyst's response as to the reductive ways of the neurotic demand which operate the exclusion of the real as impossible? The analyst, with his or her act, responds with "the equivocality through which each *lalangue* distinguishes itself" [5]. Therefore, if the analyst's response – radically original in civilization – brings back, on the one hand, the lost correspondence between the subject and the Other, it does so merely to jumble its letters, disposing of its sense. It is the analyst's praxis that "must ensure that there be such flaws in discourse that change the structure which it originally bears [6]. This is the po(ethics) of the analytical act. In 1977, Lacan teases: would the Psychoanalyst be a good enough poet? Here, the response of interpretation finds the avenue through which homophony and puns are privileged. Such puns, according to Lacan, "poets figure them whereas the psychoanalyst makes use of them where it suits [7]. Therefore, the psychoanalyst's poetic proficiency has always lain in the tactical calculation and in the convenience of the response to the real direction of the Borromean knot which forecloses sense. To homophony, we could add homonymy and the interlanguage puns, whose paradigm is the text by Joyce. It is said that the text by Joyce makes no sense. Accordingly, on the semantic level, there is a patent failure in signification. Nevertheless, as far as sense goes, there is such a huge proliferation that it loses its value, thus pointing at the *ab-sense*. It is not, by any means, about an automatic writing. Each of Joyce's phrases was built as a sculpture, in a totally artificial and calculated way. Lacan makes it a kind of methodological paradigm: to go through sense, to wear it out, and to displace its weight to the weight of the real.

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Rio de Janeiro 2012

6 de julho (July) | 6 de julio | July | luglio

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Now, if the correspondence between language and real is impossible, if the full transmission is impossible, the question which remains burning is: what is the analyst's ethical response when the destination of the message gets to be the *ab-sense* of the human sexual relation taken by words? This is the clinical and ethical key question: psychoanalysis does not aim at the truth underlying what it means as much as it does at the fact that "it is said". Thus, the difference between the truth and the swindler is blurred. But, attention: this unpretentiousness towards the truth does not by any means justify the deconstruction relativism, since the "liar truths" all lead to the real that *jouissance* equals castration. Here is the clinical and ethical dare that Psychoanalysis brings forward: the bet on the well saying as a response from the psychoanalyst as to the "impossible to say everything" is what is expected from the clinical practice of the pass. According to Semprun: "Only the artifice of an account which one can control will manage to partially transmit the truth of the testimony". [8] The construction of an artifice, to lend the materiality of the letter to the testimony is not, therefore, something spontaneous and it requires a decided desire there where there is neither an Other who responds nor a subject who corresponds. There, where there is not a postman of the truth, there is, however, something that the letter (type of correspondence or the unit of an alphabet) carries: "The edge of the flaw in knowledge, is it not what the letter outlines?" [9]

We are, in our School, facing up to the challenge to answer the question about what consequences stem from sticking to this bet, by giving the testimony a say, by amplifying our whispers in the *Polis*, without resigning ourselves to the "afflicting dumbness" [10], as it has been very well illustrated by the magnificent photo of Anish Kapoor's installation in the poster of our Meeting.

[1] Baudelaire (1961). *Les fleurs du mal*. Paris, Librairie Marcel Didier.

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- [2] I owe this remark and the reference to this poem to Sílmiã Sobreira.
- [3] LACAN, J. Nota sobre a criança. (1969) In: *Outros Escritos*
- [4] LACAN, J. O Seminário – livro 17 *O avesso da psicanálise*.
- [5] LACAN, J. O Aturdido. In *Outros Escritos*, p.492
- [6] LACAN, J. O Aturdido. In op. Cit. p. 479
- [7] LACAN, J. O Aturdido. In op. Cit. p. 493
- [8] SEMPRUN, J. *A Escrita ou a vida*. São Paulo, Companhia da Letras, p. 22
- [9] LACAN, J. Lituraterra. In op.Cit.
- [10] SOLER, C. As condições do ato, como reconhecê-las? In: *Wunsch* n. 8

São Paulo, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

Translated by Fátima Milnitzky.