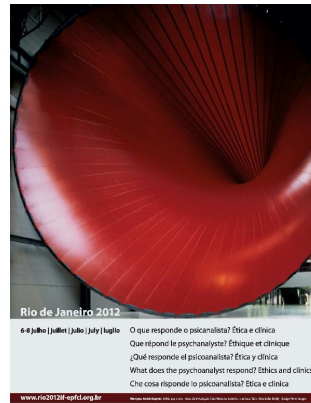


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VIIth Meeting of the IF-SPFLF

WHAT DOES THE PSYCHOANALYST RESPOND? ETHICS AND CLINICS

July 2012, 6th – 9th

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Preliminar 6:

THREE RESPONSES OF THE PSYCHOANALYST.

Vera Pollo

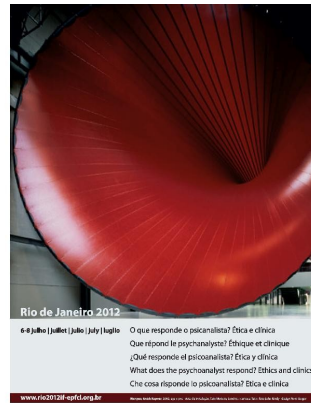
“What does the analyst respond? Ethics and Clinic”. This title seems to suggest two ways of approaching the same theme: the responses of the analyst may be understood in terms of the ethical or in terms of the clinical. There is no clinic without an ethics, this is obvious. But could one approach the ethics of psychoanalysis in a way other than that of the clinic? Is it possible to make a distinction between the path of epistemology and the path of jouissance?

If we start from Lacan’s article on “The Direction of the Cure and the Principles of Its Power” (1958), we can say that the Freudian apparatus implies at least three responses by the analyst. Colette Soler¹ has named them as follows: first of all, the promise; then, the

¹ « Interpretação: as respostas do analista », in *Opção Lacaniana. Revista Brasileira Internacional de Psicanálise*, n.13, août 1995.

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demand for speaking; and finally, the interpretation. The term “promise” is taken from a text of Freud and refers to the importance of the differential diagnosis between neurosis and psychosis. According to Freud, we cannot promise a cure of psychosis. But we can extend the term “promise” to the concept of the unconscious itself if, following Lacan, we take the unconscious as “that which is situated at that point where, between cause and what it affects, there is always something off.”² In this sense, transference is only a promise of analysis and, on the part of the analyst, a promise to be there as its support.

The analyst’s first response is the one which says: “yes, I accept you in analysis.” This immediately reminds us of Freud’s position in not making himself the guarantor of the analysis of Sidonie C., that is, Margarethe Csonka-Trautenege,³ the “Young Homosexual Woman.” If we consider that one cannot formulate a question without a non-knowledge that limits, like a frame, the field of knowledge, we could say that the analyst’s first response, the first yes or no, ratifies, rather than rectifies, the existence, or not, of a question, indispensable for entry into analysis.

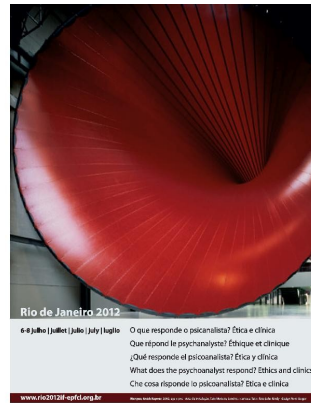
The response as “demand for speaking” is the enunciation of the analytic rule. By stating it, the analyst will give testimony regarding where he arrived in his own analysis. In return, the interpretation that will count as a response will directly depend on what the analysand “attributes to the analyst’s being.” This amounts to saying that the interpretative

² Le Séminaire, Livre XI, « Les quatre concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse », Paris, Seuil, p. 25. (Sem XI, W. W. Norton & Co. trans. Alan Sheridan, p. 22)

³ Cf. Ines Rieder & Diana Voigt, Sidonie Csillag. Homosexuelle chez Freud, lesbienne dans le siècle, traduction de l’allemand par Thomas Gindele, Paris, EPEL, 2003.

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effect of the analyst's intervention is rigorously conditioned by the place he occupies in a language structure that is not his but that of his analysand.

In 1971, in his introduction to the German edition of a first volume of *Écrits*,⁴ Lacan stated that “there is no dialogue,” and took this up again the following year in his lecture “L'étourdit”⁵ as what the subject grasps at the end of analysis, not necessarily at the exit, but in any case when the analyst has already become the agent of the analytic discourse, is already at the place of the objet a, semblant par excellence. For we know that free association operates in the discourse of the master and in the supposition of knowledge in the discourse of the hysteric. When one is in the link that characterizes the discourse of the analyst, a link between two, the subject confronts the three dimensions of the impossible: sex, meaning, and signification.

In the dimension of sex, we have verification of the impossible dialogue of one sex with the other. Indeed, “some inconveniences arise from it in the dialogue within one sex.”⁶ In the dimension of meaning, one discovers that what is serious is at once the serial and the comical. “Fala sério!” (“Speak seriously”), an idiomatic expression in Portuguese, always resonates between challenge and irony. The closest equivalent is: “tell the truth.” I wonder whether this isn't about the necessary return of the imaginary phallus in the production of meaning, which moves imperceptibly from the “sublime to the ridiculous.” Finally, in the

4 Dans *Autres écrits*, Paris, Seuil, 2001, pp. 553-559.

5 *Ibid.*, pp. 449-495.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 487.

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dimension of signification, what is revealed is that the insult is the first and last word of dialogue and that any judgment is a fantasm. There is no signification that touches the real.

It is worth remembering that in Freud, the cipher is the best and surest way to prove that something originates from the unconscious. By virtue of having undergone a series of determinations, albeit completely outside the ego, the cipher is not comical. It is a signifier without meaning, sign of jouissance.

Lacan inverted the precept “do well and let speak” into “speak well and let do.” In “Television,” we can say that this inversion is doubled in yet another inversion. In the text, Lacan subverts Boileau’s maxim, cited by Freud, “whatever we conceive well, we state clearly”⁷ into “whatever is well stated, that is what is conceived clearly,”⁸ in other words, it gets through. For, if the interpretation is well stated, then it is possible that it will “respond to the subject’s deepest question” because “what counts is that the subject understand it as a response peculiar to himself alone.”⁹

From 1953, Lacan noted that “in practice, interpretation had strayed far from its principles.”¹⁰ Transformed into a phlogiston, it flows without purpose or direction. This is why Lacan needed to warn analysts that interpretation is not open to just any direction, but aims for the drive and promotes the appearance of the signifier, interrupting the repetition

7 « L’interprétation des rêves »

8 « Télévision », in *Autres écrits*, op. cit., p. 544.

9 « Fonction et champ de la parole et du langage », in *Écrits*, Paris, Seuil, 1966, p. 291.

10 Ibid.

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and suddenly making “translation possible.”¹¹ Every interpretation has to do with the link between speech and jouissance. This requires work and consists in a signifier supplement that the analyst introduces into the discourse of the analysand.¹²

According to Soler¹³, there are two sides to deciphering: one constituted by the series of signs and one that leads to an adequate meaning, a meaning tailored to, precisely fitted to a given situation and which thereby puts a limit to the deciphering operation. As an example, that which allowed Freud to say regarding the analysis of Ernst Lanzer: the subject was a rat. It is a limit which does not necessarily correspond to the end of analysis, but which indicates the traversing of the fantasme, separating the subject side--forever indeterminate in the sliding of signifying chains, from the object side, in which the subject suffers an absolute determination. What remains is the knot of the uninterpretable. When we perceive ourselves there, it is a sign that we are outside. In this knot, the reiterated castration will also be a reiteration of the act of entrance, this time at the exit.

October 25, 2011

Translation by Devra Simiu

¹¹ « La direction de la cure et les principes de son pouvoir », in *ibid.*, p. 593.

¹² « Le savoir du psychanalyste », *Entretiens de Sainte-Anne*, leçon du 4 mai 1972.

¹³ « Interprétable et ininterprétable » in *Les feuillets du Courtil*. Publication du Champ freudien en Belgique, n.12, juin 1996.