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**THE PASS AND THE GUARANTEE  
IN THE SCHOOL  
The Ends of Psychoanalysis and  
the Procedure of the Pass**

**Eric Laurent**

*Freud's desire*

With this heading, we invite the reader to refer to the inaugural moment of the 'Founding Act' of the *École freudienne de Paris* by Jacques Lacan, where he affirms that the ends and the horizon of psychoanalysis in 1964 are entirely dependent upon the desire of Freud (*Seminar XI*). It is a strange formulation: not upon Freud's knowledge but upon the Freud's desire. I propose this formulation as an enigma to be deciphered.

In order to begin this commentary, let us bring this first assertion of Lacan together with the first sentence of the *Founding Act*: "I hereby found — as alone as I have always been in my relation to the psychoanalytic cause". A sentence like this immediately brings with it a question: would this not be a way of reintroducing the classical subject into psychoanalysis. Certainly not for Lacan. In order to be convinced of this, it is necessary to follow a path which takes its point of departure not from Freud but from Hegel.

In his last book, published in 1821, *Principles of the Philosophy of Law*, Hegel divides the law into three registers: the abstract Law, morality and the ethical life, *Sittlichkeit*. This latter, as opposed to morality, designates for Hegel a mode of being, a way of life, a principle which has been put into common practice, and not an ideal which opposes itself to life. It is this opposition itself which Lacan takes up in his seminar *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*. An ethics is not a moral ideal, it is that which permits the effective treatment of a mode of *jouissance*. This effectivity is

**THE SCHOOL; THE PASS**

the criterion which, for Lacan, from the beginning of his teaching, serves to distinguish the moral ideal from ethics. Let us refer ourselves to the end of *Family Complexes (Complexes familiaux)* of 1938, where, speaking of a moment of discontent in Civilisation, in which culture is becoming an empty ideal, he notes that the social consequence of the emptiness of the moral ideal is the promotion of homosexuality. Strange! but here is the text: *No link is more evident to the moralist than the one which unites the social progress of psychological inversion with a utopian turn in the ideals of a culture. The analyst grasps the individual determination of this link in the form of a moral sublime under which the mother of the invert exercises her most categorically emasculating action.* This quotation is in sum the development which will be condensed in the psychoanalytic adage 'Saintly woman, perverse son'. Psychoanalytic experience confirms the fact that the more ideal the mother, the more she turns the son away from relating himself to the *jouissance* of another woman. If she situates herself outside desire, then the ways of the son will become clandestine. It is because of this that psychoanalysis cannot situate its horizon as that of an ideal. The paternal position is only of interest in the transmission of desire in so far as it guards against the ideal. For psychoanalysis, the father is not the slave who works for the good of his family, nor is he there to forbid, if to forbid means to be the executive arm of maternal power. The father is the one who must reconcile the fundamental interdiction against enjoying the mother with the fact that effectively he does enjoy her. The paternal position is in fact a position of transgression with regard to the law, which is paradoxical.

Let us return to subjectivity according to Hegel and to his consideration of the State, of the state in so far as one can live in it according to an ethics. Hegel says: *The political state is divided into the following entities: above all, the power to determine what is universal, and this is the legislative power; in second place, the subsumption of the sphere of particular interests under the universal, that is to say the power of the government; and in thirdly, subjectivity as ultimate power of decision, that is to say the power of the prince.* This latter, is it arbitrary? When Hegel was writing, which was after the French Revolution and the Empire, he could say that the principle of the modern world was essentially the freedom of subjectivity. It is because of this that classical politics no longer suffices in his work. All the forms of examining

constitutions, which constituted classical politics as inspired by Aristotle, now had to include this new principle.

This is why Hegel concluded that nothing seemed to be more adapted to the modern world than constitutional monarchy. In constitutional monarchy, the Prince is entirely constrained by the law and to which he has to add nothing more than his 'I want', which, says Hegel, separates the time of deliberation from the time of decision. He adds: *What is most difficult to understand is that this 'I want' must be incarnated in a person. One cannot say that the monarch can act according to his whim, because he is bound by his Council's proposals. His role is limited to appending his signature, but his name is important, for it is the highest summit beyond which one cannot go.* Hegel writes more about this 'I want': *One could say that the beautiful democracy of Athens already offered the spectacle of a well ordered constitution, but the Greeks made the ultimate answer depend on purely external phenomena such as oracles, the viscera of animals and the flight of birds. They maintained the fact of behaving in relation to Nature as to a power which declared what was good. In this age, self-consciousness had not achieved the abstraction of subjectivity. This 'I want' marks the great difference which separates the antique world from the modern world and must have its own existence.*

This detour through Hegel has perhaps brought out the originality of the 'I want' of Freud and the 'I found' of Lacan. In both cases it concerns an 'I want' incarnated in a person, but no more than that of Hegel's Prince, they are not marked by an arbitrary seal. It is an 'I want', which is not marked by the logic of government, nor by that of the law, but by that of psychoanalysis; in this sense, it concerns an 'I want' entirely determined by the ends of analysis.

### **Lacanian deregulation**

Once this has been established, it is now necessary that we consider why, in order to examine the ends of psychoanalysis, Lacan believed it necessary to found a School of psychoanalysis. After all, it would have been possible for him to pursue his teaching alone, followed by a few people, and to refuse an institutional logic. After all, psychoanalysis has produced some examples of solitary psychoanalysts, marginal in relation to the International Association. For example, Bion, one of the most widely

read psychoanalysts of the English language, despite the time he spent in England or in California or his journeys in Brazil, did not for all that leave a school behind him. Someone like Donald Meltzer, also known and read, was deprived of the status of didactician by the British Psychoanalytic Society. Neither one nor the other of these two authors felt forced to leave the international Association and to found a school. Such was the responsibility that Lacan took upon himself only in view of the *ends* of the other psychoanalysis. The examination of this is inseparable from that of the *end* of a psychoanalysis.

Thus, as soon as Lacan founded his school, he immediately created what he called a 'section for pure psychoanalysis' or 'practice and doctrine of psychoanalysis properly speaking', which is nothing but the isolation of the problem of didactic psychoanalysis as such. From this moment, instead of forming his school upon the traditional circle of didacticians, instead of creating an *ad hoc* qualification committee of expert didacticians, he proposed, as a heuristic method, a confrontation between those who had experience of didactic psychoanalysis and the candidates in training. With one of the first institutional procedures which he created, he proposed to examine candidates — those who declared: 'I have completed a psychoanalysis' or 'I want to give an account of a certain end of my analysis' — by a jury composed of three didacticians and three candidates.

The novelty, in 1964, consisted in mistrusting the existing set of constituted psychoanalysts, those who already took themselves to be psychoanalysts, in order to examine the question of what guaranteed the being of the psychoanalyst. Lacan's fundamental intuition is that between themselves, psychoanalysts, like cardinals, understand each other without speech. Only the presence of candidates brings the necessity of developing arguments. It is starting from the exigency of reasoned justification that Lacan re-examined all the professional qualifications of psychoanalysis. In fact, some of these, those that do not put the ultimate ends at stake, are nevertheless part of its responsibility. It is from this same angle that an appraisal can be made of whoever wishes to take on psychoanalytic responsibility. The collective delivery of responsibility, which is what is called a guarantee, will have to be founded on these same principles, beyond professional standards.

At the heart of the International Psychoanalytic Association, one begins with what exists, that is to say from those who act as psychoanalysts. They are thus defined by the institution. But who are they? How are they defined? The response of standards is precise and forthcoming: they are defined as conforming to the others. That evokes this story which issues from the experience of marriage the English way: the husband dedicates his Saturdays to odd jobs, generally isolated and at a distance from his wife, who passes her time by asking him questions insistently and repetitively about the places he has found to put extremely diverse things. One of these English husbands pretended to have invented a universal response which allowed him to dispense with the need to concentrate on the exact object of the interrogation. His universal response was 'I have put it with the others'. This manifests a profound logic for the assurance of tranquillity. To the question 'What is a psychoanalyst?', one could always answer: 'It is whoever is with the others'.

But Lacan proceeded in the other direction and chose to centre entirely upon the question what is *a* psychoanalyst, departing from what no-one knows or ever knew, even Freud: what a psychoanalyst was. To examine this it is necessary to examine the result produced on a subject by an analysis pushed to its final term without any *a priori* except for the conviction that the final term has well been attained. It is from there that one will be able to understand what exactly it is that functions as a psychoanalyst, what the legitimate guarantees are, how to situate the use of psychoanalysis in a therapeutic register, which also exists. This effectivity must also be thought starting from the radically new creation which is the 'I want' of the psychoanalyst, introduced into the world by Freud.

In order to change the standards in play in the classic psychoanalytic societies, Lacan has done a lot. He has systematically deregulated the old system. But it was not merely a deregulation in the style of Reagan, a suppression of the rule for the sake of suppression itself. Starting from a perspective which is never out of sight, it concerned the introduction of all the necessary changes into the practice which organised the transmission of psychoanalysis, which articulated the teacher, supervisor and didactic analyst. In a classic organisation (*société*), one rigorously separates each of these three functions in the laudable concern to spread the risks of identification in order to avoid the poor candidate coming face

to face with the same tyrant in three registers. As the fundamental doctrine of the International Association is to submit the end of an analysis to the criterion of identification with the analyst — which is to say in reality to a 'he is like the others', it is necessary to reduce the transference, defined as the residue of each analysis, to zero. A good analysis should permit everyone to treat each analyst like all the others.

### *A singular community*

It is very precisely from this perspective that Lacan radically separates himself, independently of the fact that, through his adventures alone, he was not in the position of a psychoanalyst like all the others. He was wary of this identity of everybody with everybody else because it was exactly what Freud had denounced in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*. The only condition for such an identification is that the Ego Ideal be occupied by an object.

Lacan suspected that the operator which permitted the true justification of standards was nothing other than Freud as dead father. The founder of the *Ecole freudienne de Paris* took as his point of departure an observation opposed to standardisation. He noted that when his analysands assisted him in his seminars, each recognised in his elaboration the particularity of what they had said in their sessions. We have a number of testimonies on this point by students of different generations who had the experience of having their analyst as teacher. Those who reproach Lacan for this practice underline that the very fact of recognising oneself or one's own elaboration in the speech of the teacher indicates an effect of suggestion which is more or less perverse. To this Lacan retorted that they were constructing a poor clinic. The important thing was that they did not all recognise the same thing, that they only recognised the particularity of what was dearest to them, what was most intimate, that they all recognised diverse things. That they recognised something on the contrary signified only one thing: that Lacan was not losing his way.

Thus Lacan believed that he was able to collectivise a whole room while safeguarding the particularity of each; there where one wanted to denounce identification, the opposite effect was indicated. It was also this which permitted him an original practice, that of taking his own

analysands into supervision. This was only possible from the moment that supervision did not have the standardisation of a practice as its goal. In one sense, Lacan was restoring a practice of supervision which had been operating within the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society in the time of Ferenczi, and which had been defended by Vilma Kovacs. In another sense, he generalised it. The verification of these effects of the system can be seen in the variety of the students which Lacan was able to have. Laplanche, Pontalis, Anzieu, Manonni or Rosine and Robert Lefort are extremely diverse people and personalities in whom one would search in vain to expose standardisation.

From the very founding of his School, in *The Founding Act* itself, Lacan proposes to interrogate the effective consequences of the particular modalities of his practice. Where are we now in this discussion? Can we say that, in the *Ecole de la Cause freudienne*, or in the larger community of the European School, Lacan's practice is taken as a model to be imitated? We must answer in the negative. This practice of combating standards can only be singular. Its possibility had to be demonstrated and its responsibility assumed. On the contrary, it is certainly very difficult to generalise such a practice in a psychoanalytic community even in a community without standards.

Being formed as student, as practitioner, as analysand in relation to one only runs the great risk of producing isolated monads, clans with no relations between them. Moreover, one must not forget, in order to struggle against these effects, the accent placed by Lacan upon the invention of collective procedures such as the mechanism of the pass, or the modes of Bourbaki-like grouping characterised by the absence of personal signatures. It is thus that one can consider that the most widespread practice in the *Ecole de la Cause freudienne* or in the European School of Psychoanalysis is rather a practice of interlinking. As we have benefited from the establishment of a non-standard practice, especially of a procedure for the examination of the end of the anti-standards analysis, we can attempt to construct a community through the crossed examination of the final results.

The Lacanian deregulation is, in its foundation, the wish to refuse the barriers of isolation sought and maintained in the practice by the International Association. It is also the will to take into account the

particular way in which each incarnates the desire of the psychoanalyst. The stake thus becomes how to discern the unity of the desire of the psychoanalyst, beyond the diversity which it can present and outside *a priori* criteria.

The procedure of the pass underwent several variations, according to Lacan's negations with the analytic group and the inflexions of his own research. These variations always derived from the inspiration of the procedure proposed in 1964: of organising a confrontation between didacticians and candidates on the result of a didactic analysis, without it being defined in advance. Above all, it consists in examining the singularities of the desire produced and what it is that links them.

### *Some bearings for the Pass*

The guidelines of the experience will be defined from *The Proposition of 9 October 1967*. They rest on the binary symptom/fantasy, that Jacques-Alain Miller's course has made resonate in Lacan's teaching. If the entrance of analysis is defined in relation to the symptom, the end is calculated only in relation to the fantasy. This vigorous way of putting things allows Lacan to re-establish certain perspectives which other analytic currents had obscured. For example, the Kleinians have had a tendency to present the beginning of analysis as the inclusion of the psychoanalyst within the fantasies of the subject. In Italy, it is this that Fornari explicitly emphasises in his introduction to the works of Melanie Klein. From Lacan's perspective, the analyst does not introduce himself into the fantasy, he adds himself to the symptom, the transference being defined starting from this addition. It is a doctrine which preserves, at the beginning of the experience, the place of what Lacan called the preliminary interviews. It is there that the formal envelope of the symptom is explored and that it transforms itself into a symptom addressed to the psychoanalyst.

A number of our South American colleagues, who initially trained in a Kleinian perspective, have been able to testify to the novelty that this notion of this phase has been for them — and its necessity. The fact of the displacement of the symptom in the course of analysis appeared to justify the disinterest of Melanie Klein for taking its precise history into

account. If we refer ourselves to the case of Richard, *The Narrative of a Child Analysis*, published posthumously in 1960/1, we can note how little we know of the symptoms of the child, defined as a vague social phobia and so-called paranoid anxiety. One can notice above all the disinterest of Melanie Klein for this aspect of phenomena and her wish to enter upon fantasy as quickly as possible. For her, the beginning and end of analysis depends on this register. One could say that Freud made the beginning of analysis depend on the examination of the symptom, for which we have the most precise traits in the five case studies. By contrast, we know that for him the issue of the experience is determined by the impasse of the castration complex. This is what constitutes the historical importance of the Kleinian movement for inventing a way out through the fantasy and the object.

Lacan demonstrates that the accent placed by Freud on the impasse of the castration complex derives from his taking the place of the father in the transference. The inventor of psychoanalysis could identify the 'I want' of the psychoanalyst with an 'I want to be the father' [*je veux être le père*]. Hence the great facility with which Freud could decide the good of his analysands, marry them, separate them, marry them again, as one can see for Ernest Jones or Ruth Mac Brunswick. From his position, he authorised himself to decide which object suited the desire of each. But the secret lost itself with Freud. One no longer knows what a father is in the transference, nor if one must marry, nor if one must not do so. It has become quite simply impossible to occupy this place. It is very good that it is so and it is this that Lacan brought to light. In the place of the father, what each subject finds in the course of their analysis, is the repetition of the bad encounter with a *jouissance* which has a dimension beyond the pleasure principle. It is this which makes for the logical impossibility of treating the always bad encounter with the Ideal, whatever the ideal or the identification might be.

The logic of the analytic journey according to Lacan seems to take the paths of exploring the trajectories of this impossible reconciliation. But this does not make them an impasse. The topology of the surface allows us to represent the enumeration of the possible paths of a surface organised by a hole. It is the impossibility which organises these paths. One can thus understand this just as well with a logic of knowledge as

with a logic of paths. The advantage of the fantasy in relation to the symptom, in this perspective, is that it does not displace itself. Its own inertia permits the enumeration of a certain number of logical permutations. Freud was thus able to demonstrate the existence in paranoid delusion of variations on the group *Ich liebe Ihm*. Or, in neurosis with the formula 'a child is being beaten'. Thus, in the course of the treatment a way out is constructed based on the fantasy. It is this which, inert, transindividual, perhaps even transnosographical, reveals itself as the key to the most singular of journeys.

Thus, the program of work which Lacan has proposed to us is to construct a psychoanalytic institution which takes into account a horizon of destitution of identification obtained through the process itself, without, for all that, accepting the cynical perspective of a subject who is master of his *jouissance* thanks to a transference forever returned to zero. Lacan's ambition was to demonstrate to the analytic community, not only to that of his students, that the truth of psychoanalysis allows singularities to hold together, linked not through an ideal, but through a transference to psychoanalysis, a transference to the analytic discourse. This transference is another name for the desire of the analyst.

Translated by Philip Dravers and Vincent Dachy

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