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Buenos Aires Lacaniano 2011-2012

Eric Laurent

Summer in Buenos Aires can be very hot. The city becomes sweltering in spite of its proximity to the sea, to which it turns its back for bizarre historical reasons. Beware of the air conditioning! One has always the idea of a lost Norwegian in command, wandering, trying to find the lost sensations of his distant homeland. The end of November and the first week of December were scorchers. The second week was ideal. Everything conspired for Buenos Aires to be Lacanian: the air, the light, the mild weather. On the one hand this happiness, on the other hand, those responsible for the EOL had a difficult challenge to overcome. The Study Days of the EOL were scheduled to take place on December 10 and 11 due to a series of unpredictable circumstances whose triggering event was the postponement of the IVth Enapol [International Encounter of the Freudian Field] in 2009 due to the H1N1 outbreak that shook the world. There was a residue of a commitment with the hotel that could only be settled for those dates. The annoying thing is that this was a special long weekend in Argentina. Argentina does not have the cumulative effects such as the RTT in France (Recuperation of the working time, a calculus that gives extra time out if one works more than the 35 hours work week), but has created "touristic" days to stimulate the service industry. Moreover, Saturday the 10th was also the day of the inauguration of the President, elected now for a second term of office. The exodus of the inhabitants of Buenos Aires for the beaches allowed the massive influx of South American

Presidents and their entourages to celebrate the event, as well as the arrival of young activists by all different means of transport. It also permitted the closure of certain critical streets in the capital that would bring traffic to a halt in ordinary times. But . . . would the promise of vacation cut down the public for the Study Days and the public events planned to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the death of Lacan? Or, conversely, would this break permit all those who, from neighboring countries, from the interior, and from the "provinces" who might be interested in new propositions to come to the capital?

Thus, the construction of a "Lacan Week" in the same spirit as the planned week in 2009 that had grouped together the Enapol and the Study Days of the EOL in a compressed event. So, from Tuesday to Sunday, every day, there were a series of work projects in different settings, culminating in the Study Days. The University schedule was such that the end of the academic year coincided with the first days of the week. Thus, the idea of a lecture at the University addressed to all available students of psychology (1500). Thanks to the benevolent attention of the Dean and her Office, for the first time, the theme of the 2012 Congress of the WAP could be presented in the midst of the Faculty. The fact that the Study Days of the EOL were considered "of cultural interest" by the Ministry of Culture helped with that. More than a thousand students thronged, into three rooms with video transmission, to participate in the event. Nihil obstat on behalf of the multiple and active student organizations in the life of the Faculty.

Tuesday night, the presentation of a book by Eric Laurent published by Diva, related to the theme of the Congress, was held in the beautiful premises of the National Library. Another place, with another audience, smaller but filling the room Horacio Etchegoyen, the former President of the IPA, who in the past broke the silence between the WAP and the IPA made the friendly gesture to attend. Wednesday morning saw the clinical conversation of the Clinical Institute of Buenos Aires (ICBA): interesting cases, participants living up to their name, a discussion rich with interest. Quite the buzz!

On Thursday, a break allowed everyone to continue analysis and controls, one by one. On Friday, the first day of the holiday weekend, events followed one another throughout the day. First, the Institute Oscar Massota (IOM) bringing together the teaching activities of the EOL in the provinces had its Study day, followed by a Colloquium-seminar celebrating the publication of a new book of the Course of Jacques-Alain Miller, *Donc*. At the end of the Colloquium, a round table dedicated to "Lacan in the Twenty-First Century" brought together contributions constructed as a tribute. The readers of *Lacan Quotidien* will hear an echo of this by the publication of one of these contributions, that of Juanqui Indart. Over six hundred people participated in the colloquium, whose registration was separate from that of the Study Days of the EOL, which bore witness to the successful wager for "Lacan Week." Everyone was there so as to miss nothing of the events. That evening, the General Assembly of the EOL unanimously adopted new statutes modernizing the procedures of the School, adapting them to the new spirit in the air. Surer of itself, the School no longer fears the chaotic results of elections or unresolved conflicts between groups. The Council will turn over more quickly. There was also a Presidential succession: Mauricio Tarrab, who followed the course of the statutory reforms gave his place to Adriana Testa. The new President gave a speech in which the School recognized itself. A great success! The next day, Saturday, the Study Days opened in a transformed city. The atmosphere was vibrant. Not too far from the hotel that welcomed us, the President took office in a newly designed wing of the Casa Rosada, the presidential palace. Bands of "young Peronists" filled the deserted avenues. They came by cars, trains, busses, trucks, etc. The Film industry also made the most of it. Buenos Aires became a setting for movies and series, becoming a convincing New York with the aid of a few yellow taxis and the uniforms and motorcycles characterizing the police there. It was also the international Day of the Rights of Man.

The Study Days of the School on "Lacanian Praxis" opened in an atmosphere of success, of participation and of "buena onda." [TN: in Spanish: good vibes]. President Cristina Kirchner took office at the same time. She received 53% of the vote. Certainly elected, then,

but a solid 40% were not for her. Women were honored in the ceremony. The President spoke of Ana Teresa Diego, a student of astronomy and a communist, who disappeared in 1976, and whose name was given recently by an Argentinian astronomer to a new asteroid. She noted that Dilma Roussef, the President of Brazil, present in the audience, was arrested and tortured for 22 days during the military dictatorship. A woman in the office of the President is an Argentinian tradition. Argentina had already been led by a woman, Isabel Martinez de Peron, in 1974, at the time of the death of her husband. Her weakness with regard to the strong man of the Peronist right, Lopez Rega, "el Brujo," [in Spanish in the original: the sorcerer] and the militia of his triple A (Alianza Argentina Anticomunista) left bad memories. Eva Peron, who died of uterine cancer at the age of 33, was briefly a candidate for the Vice Presidency. She had to give up her candidacy before becoming a mummified icon.

Cristina Kirchner had already been elected in 2007, while her husband, Nestor, was alive. His sudden death by a heart attack on October 27 2010, left open ended the historical situation for Cristina. Would she become Evita or Isabelita? Neither one or the other, she firmly took the reins of the country and was elected again in the first round of elections. The oath she gave at the ceremony is original. Normally, one swears to God and the Nation. She added to that "to Him" with a capital H. The "Him" refers to Nestor Kirchner.

This addition shows without doubt that she will have need of all of her supports to reinvent Kirchnerism in the coming months. The "Peronism, version K" is a mixture. At the cultural level, the accent is place on a return to left-wing political rhetorics accompanied by a constant reference to human rights. From the economic point of view, the plan was to refuse the neo-liberal practices that led the country to the collapse of 2001. It relied rather on raised taxes on agricultural exports (soybeans, meat) won through difficult negotiations with the organization of landowners, "El Campo," to then redistribute subsidies to the energy and transportation sectors. The system reached its limits. In Argentina as here [TN: France], the State wants to cut its obligatory spending to find room to maneuver

for investment and reindustrialization. Two months ago, subsidies were drastically reduced, leading mechanically to inflation due to the rise of the artificially contained prices. The battle is thus about the measure of inflation through various indexes and accusations of covering up. The reconstruction of an alternative project is yet to be done. It is accompanied, as everywhere else, by a fight against capital flight and tax evasion. The new Prime Minister Juan Manuel Abal Medina is forty three years old. He presents himself on his Facebook page as "Peronist version K, hincha de River." [TN: in Spanish, "fan of River," see below] The Vice President Amado Boudou cultivates the look of a rock-fan and shows up at meetings with his guitar. The Minister of Finance, Hernan Lorenzino, is 39 years old. The passing of generations is assured, even if it is dynastic. The Prime Minister, "Jefe de gabinete," is the son of a hardline leader of the party and a nephew of one of the founders of Montoneros. The multiple versions of the Peronist party are a world unto themselves where opposing views on many points coexist. It is an expanding universe, reconfigured by the K version, a small narrow core, young and close to Cristina, too narrow to the taste of many. Even if there are many groups, there are always moments where Argentinian politics are structured into two camps according to the Clausewitzian confrontation: elections, negotiations with the Campo, and football games. In Buenos Aires, Lacanian or not, one is a fan, "hincha," of River or of Boca, the two clubs that compete for the heart of the people. The video that was the most viral on the Internet during the pre-campaign showed a father of a family "hincha de River" in front of his television, filmed by his son. He gets enraged during a game, eventually screams, throwing whatever he can get his hands on at his television, exasperated with the defeat of his team. River was relegated to the second division in 2011. What will happen this year? It is a fast moving world that awaits the Congress of the WAP in April 2012. Brazil pulls ahead of the BRICS and Argentina wants to follow in mobilizing all its resources. The stakes are high. On this side of the Atlantic also, we are interested on the invention of the Buenos Aires Lacaniano to come, which will take shape in 2012.

