

Declaration to *France-Culture* Concerning the 28th International Congress of Psychoanalysis, 7/1/73

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⁽³⁾FRANCE-CULTURE – Docteur Lacan, at this moment the 28th International Congress of Psychoanalysis is being held in Paris. You are not invited, you are not there.

LACAN – That I am not invited does not mean that I am absent. If my feeling about this has the least importance, I can say that my absence puts me in a privileged situation there. This is because of the weight of my teaching, which, with a delay no doubt, makes its way, among those themselves who exclude me, for they do not deprive themselves of borrowing from it most extensively.

A teaching I receive from my experience, from analysis that is, which is an experience sufficiently defined and limited to permit one to qualify it as such. Only, to be able to speak of it, one must at least have entered it, which does not exclude that in certain conditions it is difficult to leave. This is why it is preferable that the analyst, who, fortunately, does not have the only active part in it, knows what he is doing. Knowing what he is doing means knowing in what discourse he is taken, for it is this discourse that conditions the order of doing he is capable of.

I have pronounced the word discourse. This is a much elaborated notion, and elaborated starting from this experience; I must nonetheless admit that the twenty years in which I have let myself be taught by experience and in which I have forced myself to extract something--twenty years, that permits elaboration, which absolutely does not mean that I draw from it a conception of the world. What I define is what can be said starting from this experience, from this experience newly introduced into the field of human discourses, which is to say, from what constitutes a mode of social link.

⁽⁴⁾F.C. – You are however not the only one to be interested in discourse. Is it not the fact of the psychoanalyst that leans most particularly precisely on the formalism of analysis?

LACAN – One can pose the question in these terms, can't one? This is truly a point of departure; moreover, it is from there that what finds itself situated as my teaching takes its departure. Does or does not the analyst recognize what I teach, that the unconscious is structured like a language? This is the key formula, is it not? by which I have believed it necessary to introduce the question; this is the question: what Freud discovered and pinned down as he could with the term unconscious cannot, in any case, rejoin in any fashion what he himself found himself to have put forward: the life tendencies, for example, or the death drives; this cannot in any case be identified there; what Freud discovered is this: the speaking being does not know the thoughts--he employed this term--the thoughts themselves that guide him; he insists that these are thoughts, and when one reads him, one grasps that these thoughts, like all the others, are characterized by there not being a thought that does not function like speech, that does not belong to the field of language. The fashion in which Freud operates takes its departure from the articulated form that his Subject gives to elements like the dream, the slip of the tongue (*le*

lapsus), the witticism (*mot d'esprit*); he puts forward these elements, one must read the inaugural works that are *The Science of Dreams*, the *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, or indeed what he wrote on the witticism, to grasp that there is not a single one of these elements that he does not take as articulated by the Subject, and it is on this articulation itself that his interpretation bears.

The new form that he substitutes for it by interpretation is, I will say, of the order of translation, and translation, everyone knows what that is--one begins to be interested in it ⁽⁵⁾perhaps a little bit because of me--but what matters is that it is always a reduction and there is always a loss in translation; and indeed what it is a question of is, in fact, that one loses it; one touches, doesn't one, on this loss being the real itself of the unconscious, the real itself, period. The real for the speaking being is that it loses itself somewhere, and where? It is here that Freud put the accent: it loses itself in the sexual rapport.

It is absolutely incredible (*fabuleux*) that no one articulated this before Freud, when it is the life itself of speaking beings; that one loses oneself in the sexual rapport is obvious, is massive, it has been there since always and, after all, up to a certain point one could say that this no more than continues. If Freud centered things on sexuality it was in the measure where in sexuality the speaking being stammers (*bafouille*). For a long time this has not prevented one from imagining knowledge (*connaissances*) on the model of this rapport inasmuch as it is dreamed and, as I come to say it, dreamed here means: stammered, but stammered in words. A professor who has written in the margin of my teaching believed himself to have made a discovery in saying that the dream does not think. It is true, it does not think like a professor. Does the dream deceive (*trompe-t-il*) or is it mistaken (*se trompe-t-il*)? The professor does not want to pose the question to the dream lest the dream return it to the professor. This is what clarifies that for the biggest part of history the speaking being has believed himself entitled (*en droit*) to dream; he has not known he let himself be borne by the dream, in its direct line (*droit fil*). The annoying thing is that some totally fallacious things remain there, but which keep up appearances, and psychology foremost among them.

Let each refer to his life. Does he or does he not have the feeling that there is something that repeats itself in his life, always the same, and that it is this (*ça*) that is most him? What is this something that repeats? A certain mode of Enjoying (*Jouir*). The Enjoying of the speaking being ⁽⁶⁾is articulated, this is even why it goes to the stereotype, but a stereotype that is the stereotype of each. There is something that testifies to a truly essential lack. Even the philosophers--it is true that this comes late, with Spinoza--arrived at this, that the essence of man is desire. It is true that they do not measure well to what lack desire answers. To something, it indeed must be said, crazy. For which for a long time one has substituted the perfection attributed to the Supreme Being. This accent on Being is what is crazy therein; Being is measured against the lack belonging to the norm. There are social norms for lack (*faute de*) of any sexual norm; this is what Freud says.

The fashion of grasping the ambiguity, the slippage of any approach to sexuality favors that, to furnish it, one rushes in with all sorts of notations that pretend to be scientific and one believes that this clarifies the question; it is very remarkable, this double game of analytic publication between what biologists can detect in animals and, on the other hand, what is altogether tangible in the life of each of us, namely that each gets by (*se débrouille*) very badly in his sexual life. The two terms have no rapport: on the one side is the unconscious, on the other is a scientifically valuable approach, that of biology.

But what analysis gives us is that the question is personal for each of the speaking beings, which one would do better to call spoken beings, which indeed shows that it is in language that

the business is played out for each of us. Of course, as I have been reminded, there are affects, but it is always from the discourse we inhabit that proceeds the correct appreciation of each major affect for each of us, and, moreover, this is demonstrated by the progress obtained in the analytic field on an affect as important as anxiety.

Well then, let us say something more: analysis is not a science, it is a discourse without which the discourse said ⁽⁷⁾to be of science is not tenable for the being who has acceded to it for more than three centuries; besides, the discourse of science has some unbreathable consequences for what one calls humanity. Analysis is the artificial lung thanks to which one tries to insure what must be found of *jouissance* in speaking so that history might continue. One has not yet grasped this and this is fortunate because in the state of insufficiency and confusion where analysts are, political power would have laid its hand on it. Poor analysts, this would have withdrawn from them any chance of being what they must be: compensators; in fact this is a wager, it is also a challenge that I have sustained. I let it be given over to the most extreme chances (*aléas*). But, in all that I have been able to say, some happy formulas perhaps will float to the surface; all is given over in the human being, to fortune.

F.C. – You have founded this school; you have some students, a lot of who, moreover, have left you, some to found, quite recently, the 4th group. You are someone passionately listened to, passionately debated, passionately followed. According to you, who are your continuers?

LACAN – I have had, for some time now, the good fortune (*bonheur*) to grasp that some of those who have remained around me not only have known how to understand what I have just called some more or less happy formulas, but have already known how to give more than just an echo of them: a consequence (*une suite*). We will certainly soon grasp how my teaching can be taken up again or continued.

F.C. – Are you receiving at this moment precisely of congress visits from Congressists?

LACAN – Yes, I have of course received some, as is usual when I am in Paris.

F.C. – In the last few years in France, psychoanalysis has become what we call a fact of culture. I know that you contest the term.

⁽⁸⁾LACAN – Yes, I contest the term in the full measure where that of nature to which it is opposed appears to me just as contestable. What one calls a fact of culture is in sum a commercial fact-- why say that analysis sells well? I speak of publications, which have absolutely nothing to do with analysis; one can heap up as many of these colloquiums, these piles, these heaps of diversely literary productions as one likes: it is elsewhere that the work is done; it is done in the analytic practice . . . what I am trying to form in the light of an experience followed in the everyday is a School . . . that I have titled Freudian as such. This is a school inasmuch as it would be adequate to what is commanded by the so profoundly different structure of this discourse, the structure resulting from analytic discourse.