

"Guitrancourt Prologue"

by Jacques-Alain Miller

This text clarifies what the teaching provided by the Clinical Section is, and what it is not.

Nowhere in the world can one do a degree to become a psychoanalyst. And this is not by chance or through oversight, but for reasons regarding the essence of what psychoanalysis is.

One cannot imagine what a test to determine the ability of a psychoanalyst would be, as the practice of psychoanalysis is private and restricted to the most intimate confidences that a patient entrusts to an analyst. Let us acknowledge, however, that the analyst responds by an operation — interpretation — that concerns what is called the unconscious. Couldn't this operation form the basis for a test, especially since interpretation is not the privilege of psychoanalysis? Any criticism of texts, documents or writing employs it as well. But the Freudian unconscious is only constituted in relation to the word I have spoken, cannot be confirmed without it and psychoanalytic interpretation is not probative in itself, but rather by the unforeseeable effects it has on the person who receives it and within the context of this very relationship. There's no escaping it.

The result is that it is only the analysand who should be recognized as being able to attest to the abilities of the analyst, were his testimony not skewed by the effects of transference, which are established from the outset. This shows that the only acceptable testimony, the only one that can give some guarantee concerning the work that has been done, would be from an analysand after transference, but who still wishes to serve the cause of psychoanalysis.

What I call here the analysand's testimony is the nucleus of the teaching of psychoanalysis insofar as it responds to the question of what can be communicated to the public of an essentially private experience.

Jacques Lacan established this testimony under the name of the pass (1967). To this teaching he gave his ideal, the *matheme* (1) (1974). A whole gradation exists between the two: testimony of the pass, still encumbered by the individual character of the subject, is confined to a small circle within the analytic group. Teaching on the basis of the *matheme*, which must be demonstrative, is for all, and that is where psychoanalysis meets the University.

This teaching has existed in France for fourteen years, and has made itself known in Belgium through the Freudian Field. Next January, it will take the form of the "Clinical Section"

It is important to state clearly what this teaching is and what it is not.

- It is academic; it is systematic and graduated; it is provided by qualified teachers; it is ratified by diplomas.

- It does not authorize one to practice psychoanalysis. Freud's imperative that an analyst must be analyzed was not only confirmed by Lacan, but radicalized by his thesis that an

analysis has no other end than the production of an analyst. In every case, transgression of this ethics carries a heavy price for the one who commits it.

- Whether in Paris, Brussels or Barcelona, whether these methods are public or private, the orientation is Lacanian. Those who receive it are defined as participants: this term is preferred to that of students because it highlights the high level of initiative given to them — the work they must complete will not be exacted from them. It depends on them; it will be guided and evaluated.

There is no paradox in stipulating that the strictest exigencies bear upon those who seek to take up a teaching function of an unprecedented kind within the Freudian Field, since knowledge (*savoir*), although it derives its authority from its coherence, only finds its truth in the unconscious, from a knowledge where there is no one to say “I know.” This means that we provide a teaching only provided that we support it with an unprecedented elaboration, however modest it may be.

We begin, in Spain as in Belgium, with the clinical part of this teaching.

The clinic is not a science, that is, a knowledge that can be demonstrated. It is an empirical knowledge, inseparable from the history of ideas. In teaching it, we not only compensate for the failures of a psychiatry, whose reliance on chemistry often causes it to neglect its classical treasure, we also introduce an element of certitude (the *matheme* of Hysteria).

The presentation of patients tomorrow will fill out this teaching. What is called in France the domain of “detailed study” [*études approfondies*] and which requires the writing of a doctoral dissertation will come later. In accordance with what in the past was under Lacan’s direction, we will proceed step-by-step.

Jacques-Alain Miller

15 August 1988

Translated by *Ian Curtis*

Reviewed by *Philip Dravers*

(1) From the Greek *mathema*, that which is learned.