

## On the Formation of the Psychoanalyst

Moustapha Safouan

*Delivered in Strasbourg, November 2003*

I thank Jean-Richard Freymann for giving me the honor of concluding these meetings, even more so since it has been about thirty years since I left Strasbourg and it gives me pleasure to tell you the point where I am at concerning the questions which interest you and which have been the object of these meetings.

Three paths offer themselves to whomever wants to become an analyst; their necessity was recognized from the first day, that is to say, the didactic analysis, the control analysis and theoretical studies.

The didactic analysis is a re-audition necessary in that a subject wouldn't be able to mark the repressed desire of an other subject and less still the modes by which this desire signifies itself, if he himself has not gone through the same experience. The aim of the didactic analysis is supposed to be, according to this point of view, to permit the future analyst to become aware of unconscious phantasms, and in so doing, to persuade himself of the reality of the unconscious.

With Lacan, things get a little more complicated. That's because the division between unconscious and conscious is considered a division of the subject, between the process of enunciation and that of the enunciated, that is to say between the point, back before, where speech originates and constantly vanishes, and what is articulated within it as the enunciated. There follows in its wake a slew of other divisions: between signifier and signified; between common signification and meaning effect [effet de sens]; between desire and demand; between the truth which is truth only from its

refusal of knowledge and knowledge which is knowledge only through what it rejects as truth. All of this, while the subject himself becomes what a signifier, let's say the intentional signifier "familiar", represents for another signifier, the incongruent "famillionnaire". I'm referring here to a witticism that I assume everyone knows.

The subject is therefore an effect of the signifying relation [relation signifiante]. Where to find him as the subject who speaks and not as semblance [semblable], if it is not in the interval between signifier 1 -- "familiar" in my example-- and signifier 2? However, the distinction between the unconscious and conscious is no longer that of a topical distinction between two places differently situated in space, two rooms for example. It is rather comparable to the distinction between the obverse and the inverse in as much as they are found to be in continuity one with the other on certain surfaces with one single face.

Starting from there the reason for didactic analysis changes. It is no longer a question of gaining knowledge of the unconscious and its so called primary processes, a knowledge utilizable in taking on of other cases, it is rather a question of disencumbering oneself of the whole field of knowledge, and especially psychoanalytical knowledge, inevitably ready to function as an object especially made to block one's ears against the eruption of a constantly new truth. In other words, it is not simply a matter according to this Lacanian view of believing in the reality of the unconscious, but of assuming fully the whole extent of the subjective division.

As we can see, this assumption amounts to a break: a break from the subject-supposed-to-know. As a result, the end of analysis, far from consisting in an identification with the analyst, is more likely to be a reckoning of the existence of the

ignored object, whose contraband attribution to the analyst as subject-supposed-to-know, gives the former all his prestige.

In the case of Alcibiades, for example, who was, as everyone knows, the man held responsible for the scandal of the mutilation of Hermes, for Alcibiades this object, as stated in the Dialogue, was Socrates' cock. From which comes the question: a subject who has followed to its end an experience that undoes the identificatory foundation of his existence, an experience that allows him to glimpse that the seizure [prise] of being is in truth one of non-being, an experience that makes him live -- not without depression -- the incommensurable gap between the ideal and the phantasmatic object with which the ideal sustains itself, what would incite such a subject to return to this experience with others? Let us note that this question doesn't deny in any way the eventual therapeutic benefits of analysis, nor the profound satisfaction that the recognition of unconscious desire brings. In truth, the technique of Lacan as practitioner rests fundamentally on what can be called an accurate calculation of unconscious desire.

Which explains why most of his analysands remain grateful [sentiment de reconnaissance] to him, and it would be shortsighted to attribute that feeling to an unresolved transference love. Precisely, there is a question here concerning didactic psychoanalysis as such, that is to say to the extent that Lacan called "pure" an analysis that does not confine itself to a therapeutic motivation, but carries expectations that it will go to its logical end, beyond what could be realized, "in addition" ["par surcroit"], as a cure. Then the question can be reformulated as follows: what takes place at the moment that this analysis is about to end, ushering in a new desire, that of the analyst?

Not the desire to be an analyst, not even to do analyses, even less the personal desire to become an analyst, but the desire as a function that allows him to let an analysis come to its own conclusion without the interference of his personal desires. Or, to act “as a mirror” according to the jargon previously utilized and that irritated Lacan not because it was false, but because it didn’t mean anything without a fuller explication. It is in this manner that is repeated, for example, that “what is important is not what the analyst says or does, but what he is” while dispensing with saying anything whatsoever concerning the being in question. It is precisely in order to obtain the answer to the question thus formulated, or reformulated, that Lacan promoted the experience of “the pass”.

It is known that Lacan recognized the failure of this experience, not without imputing this failure at least partly to the state of un-preparation or non preparation of the members of the assenting jury. It remains certain, however, that this reasoning does not exhaust all the causes of that failure. The fact is that a candidate presenting him or herself to the pass fresh out of their analysis practically never happened. The quasi totality of candidates to the pass [passant(e)s], made up largely of Lacan’s patients, were still in analysis, and sometimes far from ending it. This state of affairs led Gisele Chaboudez, if I understand correctly her article in the review *Essaim* #11, to question whether being a candidate for the pass could be a function of resistance to the end of analysis! The same observation had led the assenting jury to issue a reminder that candidacy to the pass was supposed to be done in agreement with the other player, that is to say, the analyst. But the inopportuneness of this reminder is clear, since resistance for us is a function of proximity to the truth, and, coming from the

analyst, to counsel or to forbid this step could risk blocking an analysis that might have otherwise resumed its course. This finding, that most of the candidates hadn't yet terminated their analyses, or were still in the middle of their analyses, does not remove all the legitimacy of an eventual resumption of the pass, since this experience still keeps its primary function which is to lift the mystery that otherwise surrounds didactic analyses and becoming an analyst. But, then, it is necessary to consider it as an experience that teaches us about the effective passages to the exercise of analysis and that permits us to appreciate to what extent these passages give us the sense (sens) of the end of analysis, or of the pass considered as a criteria and not as an ideal. Not to forget though, that in the case of a resumption of this exercise, we must take into account another factor that had no small contribution to the failure (10) of the pass, namely group psychology. The latter meant that saying yes to a candidature was received in the imagination of some as a promotion in a hierarchical organization, with the understandably dramatic meaning attached to a negative or simply reserved response. All of Lacan's inventions that were meant to find a mode of organization other than a hierarchical one, ran aground on that rock.

The effects of group psychology concerning the teaching and transmission of psychoanalysis were more ravaging yet. The pervading atmosphere at the EFP during the last years of its existence could not be better described than Francois Roustang did in his book Un destin si funeste.

The first chapter of this book was a cry of alarm. Unfortunately no one paid attention. Except perhaps Lacan himself, who invited the author to explain his view to the members of the Ecole at a meeting for the vote on the dissolution. For that matter,

in the course of the last congress of the Ecole in Strasbourg, Lacan had already gone so far as to speak of his anxiety. He lacked the lack, he said, in place of serving as a reference in regard to which a critical responsibility was assured, to be Lacanian had become an identificatory trait permitting the members of the group to recognize themselves or to measure each other with shots of "Lacan has said". Lacan's conclusion was swift. He announced it at the meeting during which the dissolution was voted "Psychoanalysis isn't transmitted -- it's invented." This conclusion can indeed stop us in our tracks.

The fact is that Lacan had a passion for transmission, he really had it. This passion was for him indissolubly tied with the scientific status of psychoanalysis, a concern that runs like a red thread throughout his teaching, from beginning to end. That concern was what pushed him, ceaselessly, to invent "mathemes", graphs, optic or other schemes, to call on topology, and finally the theory of knots. Without pretending to cover the breadth of this question, let us note that the word constantly present in these inventions to designate what they strive to make visible, is precisely the word "structure". Now, if this word "structure" means a stable relation between variable elements without regard to their meaning, then structure will no doubt find in mathematics the field *par excellence* of its application, but it is not so for psychoanalysis analysis.

Let us take the simplest possible schema, known as the schema L, in which two lines cross -- that's simply all it is, two lines that cross -- those of the symbolic and the imaginary. We can wonder if it is simply a figure destined to fix our ideas, due to the feebleness of our mind [esprit], as Lacan said at the moment he presented it? Or rather

is it a representation of the structure, or even is it the structure itself, as Lacan asserted in the end? To respond to this question let us note that our experience is eminently auditory. Only the genius of a Freud, of a Lacan -- but others can also be cited :Bion, Winnicott, the Chilean Matteo Blanco, Nagy and many more--such genius allows the noting in the interior of the auditory experience of a constant relation or of a structure, like the crossing of the line of discourse by that of resistance, discovered by Freud. Now, who says structure, says something that takes a visible form and that isn't realized except through this form, whether it be one of writing or of a diagram. We can thus say that the schema L puts the structure itself of our experience in front of our eyes, once again according to Lacan's later view. It does not represent its structure, it IS that structure. But have we for all that reached the level of a formalized science, as it was no doubt Lacan's ambition? We have to answer in the negative. For the structured, structural schemas of psychoanalytic theory are not only about the relations between concepts whose construction calls for a discursive elaboration that distances them from all the significations and from the "concrete thinking" deposited in the language, (to the point of sometimes demanding the creation of neologisms of which Lacan was prolific), as it is the case in science in general; but also they are so rich in significations that it is not the meaning of a term such as that of *desire*, *the Other* or *jouissance*, etc. that determines the meaning of the context; on the contrary, it is the context that allows the ferreting out of the meaning of the term. From this point of view we remain faced with an analytic text at the same level of intelligibility as at the level of speech [parole]. In both cases, the seizing of meaning [sens] remains a question of interpretation. If psychoanalysis is a science, it is a textual science that concerns, that

requires, all the methods of exegesis. And it is not through the designation of a concept by a letter, *j*, big *A*, or small *a*, that we will accede to the univocity that conditions its formalized usage. What is most astonishing is that this lack -- lack of univocity in the concept -- doesn't forbid transmission, which is first of all that of signifiers. Thus that we have retaken from Freud, the signifier *unconscious*, while he himself was not up to explaining it except with the aid of a badly sketched topographical schema. The trouble that Lacan's first tentatives in view of defining the last term of his trinity formerly gave analysts seems to have been replaced now by the largely shared conception of the real as being that which resists symbolization or as the impossibility that bares itself in the interior of this symbolization itself, while reality has become not the place where the real is found, but where it is not found. As for *invention*, far from having to oppose it to *transmission*, it would be more accurate to say that it is not possible except thanks to a transmission of this nature, a transmission that can be called textual.

To conclude, I will say that the formation path most sheltered from group psychology and its effects is that of control analysis. Although it requires that the control analyst not take himself for a professor. Control analysis is an occasion offered to the analyst in formation see whether the habit he donned suits him, and if it does, to see what it is he is doing with analysis. For if a lesson is to be drawn from the whole history of the psychoanalytical movement, after Freud as after Lacan, it is the following: the principle according to which the analyst can only be self-authorized is a principle on which there can be no going back. Between an institution that fails for not knowing how to shelter itself from the narcissistic satisfactions fostered by a hierarchical organization, and an institution which makes of hierarchy the very

principle of its organization, I prefer the former. This is the point where I am at.

Applause.

*J.-R. Freymann:* Moustapha Safouan is quite ready to try and answer your questions.

*Audience member:* Why is it necessary to pass through the pass?

*M. Safouan:* I can't speak for colleagues, but it was never said that it is necessary to pass through the pass. None ever said that!

*Idem.:* Every group, every school...

*M. Safouan:* It is more a question for Mister Freymann. I'm speaking of the experience such as I knew it. I didn't witness... I explain myself based on the experience that took place. But, according to the experience that took place, the idea of the pass arose at a given moment for reasons the first of which was institutional. It was a question of lifting the mystery around the didactic analysis question, a question that, in the institutions of the IPA, was completely wrapped in a veil and it was the place of a messy power play. But all that was completely occulted, nobody knew what a didactic analysis was. So, the experience was offered for reasons which were firstly institutional, but it was offered for whomever wanted it. It was never an obligation.

*Idem.:* Why does every analytic group take it up again in an other manner?

*M. Safouan:* Ask the groups. The primary reasons for its validity remain. The first time, it was not without reasons. If you ask why, despite its failure, it is resumed now by groups and institutions? And why this failure was not ratified as definitive or

the equivalent to a condemnation of this experience? It is perhaps that each group has, if I may say, reason to hope... While waiting for something with the help of a modification, to remediate a little the causes of this failure like group psychology, to find the means to undertake it in a manner that this doesn't invade the institution....  
Voila! Each group can have reasons to envision such a resumption but they are reasons coming from a certain reflection, erroneous or just... They start from a certain reflection. It's not a crazy operation.

*J.-R. Freymann:* The problem of the passage still remains... It was a question that was already present with Freud, in his manner. What would move someone to want to be an analyst, for example? It's no small affair... To locate oneself within that, one tries to give certain means. One tries...

Other questions?

*Audience member:* In *la Troisième*, Lacan never says that he was in the transmission of the teaching of psychoanalysis, but he does say "of my teaching". The teaching of psychoanalysis, isn't it a lure?

*M. Safouan:* This text *la Troisième*, I got it only yesterday. A friend, Patrick Valas, sent it to me, which means that I am not finding Lacan's exact terms, but as far as I am concerned, if the idea is that psychoanalysis is a textual science, the most important for a teaching that considers itself analytical is that it be a critical teaching, that is to say that poses the problem on such or such question in a clear way that spares no response from a certain critique. It is only then that something new can appear. That is the condition for analytical teaching. It's no more than that... What troubles me is that I don't get what you say about what Lacan said: he said that he doesn't transmit

psychoanalysis? That seems obvious! No teaching can pretend to transmit the analytical act.

*Idem.*: He was speaking about his own teaching, but not the teaching of psychoanalysis.

S – It is one among multiple statements [paroles] that were meant precisely to bother the critics. He was saying: think a little! Use your critical faculties instead of just repeating! It was after the *Congress de Rome*! Right after that, here at the *Congres de Strasbourg* in 75-76, that's where he said: anxiety is making me anxious [l'angoisse m'angoisse], and that comes from a lack of critiques. So, if he said I don't teach psychoanalysis, I give my teaching of psychoanalysis, it was with the aim of bothering critics. Of, so to speak, squaring his teaching with another.

*Marie Pesenti*: I just want to ask the question of the difference between Freud and Lacan. You take up the metaphorical dimension found in Lacanian concepts, which let's say facilitates everyone's work, the work of interpretation that I personally call: "to put down one's own signifying markers". What could then account for the fact that Freud and Lacan have precisely not produced the same type of signifier. Freud, as you say in this text of *Lacanianiana*, being in fact someone who produced signifiers that don't in the same way implicate a work of metaphorization such as Lacan does?

*M. Safouan*: Psychoanalysis, as Freud says in *My Life and Psychoanalysis*, was first of all the discovery of repression. With the discovery of repression, analysis consisted in undoing repressions. With that work, called the undoing of repression, everyone opened up for the first time to knowledge in a richer way than ever, the knowledge of phantasms. From that point on, meaning [signification] has been emphasized. It is true

that through the signifier, someone who wants to say “s’offrir” [to offer oneself] says “souffrir” [to suffer], someone who wants to say “familier” says “millionaire”, someone who wants to say “embrasser” says “embarasser”... That’s what analysis is, that’s where the repressed gets ferreted out. But then, meaning was quickly emphasized as meaning arrived at in a certain room and not in another room. That’s the topographical model. And what’s worse –I don’t know why I say worse - naturally psychoanalysis was conceived as the communication of a knowledge having to do with the meaning hidden in another room. A room not entered. All of that was the sort of things that imposed themselves. But it’s the experience itself. Therefore your question does not take into account that experience can show the failure of a certain model. What some have seen is that to tell someone his phantasm leads nowhere. It’s from there that Lacan put the accent on the connection between the subject and the signifier, rather than on meaning. This is the impetus that Lacan gave to analytical theory and therefore to the practice itself.

*J.R. Fremann:* One last question?

*M. Safouan:* How much do I pay?

*J.R. Fremann:* For the question?

*M. Safouan:* Yes ! They are so tired that to have a question a price must be paid...

*Audience member:* Where controls are concerned, the one who controls is generally taken from a group of analysts and he is liable to suffer the effects of that.

*M. Safouan:* You are saying that the control analyst works in an institution, therefore is himself part of a group effect. In that case, you are right! That’s why I said: provided he doesn’t function like a professor...

*Idem..:* But even if he doesn't function like a professor, he is prisoner of a group effect. Ultimately even with the control analyst, the analyst is in a position of solitude.

*M. Safouan:* There is no solitude there. If he is in a group effect, that means that he is not in solitude. To finish, I am going to tell you a memory concerning control analysis. I recall it simply because it enables you to see a certain style that provokes understanding, that teaches, in the sense that it informs, even theoretically. It was an analytical moment with Lacan which goes back, if you can believe it, to no later than 51-52. I had at that time a very young man, a worker in a body shop, who during a session had the phantasm that someone comes in and asks him to perform fellatio on me. As this someone was presented without any identity –it was someone...– the hypothesis that came to my mind was simply that censorship was at work. And why would it be at work if it were not that the one to whom the phantasm was told, that is to say the analyst, was the true interested party. It was a time when the works of Wallon were very known, as were those of Charles Bourget... Nothing was more common in human relations than the idea of transitivity, the child and his image. The girl who punches someone and lives it as if the punch had been received rather than given, exactly as in a mirror...All of that was known, run of the mill knowledge at the time. I knew it also, but that did not necessarily mean that I knew anything about the patently libidinal character of the relation to the image. When I told this episode to Lacan and what hypothesis I had in mind, he said: Really now, you are not alone in that room !. Seeing my bewilderment, he said: " He is also there". From that moment on, I realized the impact conjured up in dealing with sameness. So it's possible, during a control analysis, to learn something. But what you see here is the difference between a

hint and giving a lesson...

*J.R. Fremann:* I would like to thank Moustapha Safouan.

*translated from the French by Marie-Claude Hays and Martin Winn*