

International Colloquium of Convergencia
Borders. Psychoanalysis and Displacements

Borders, frontiers, limits, displacements

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Translation between languages translates not only contents but also ways of thinking and organizing a reality; it puts together a framework in which the story being told is dyed with the translator's colors and by the coercion of the language; hence the famous saying *traduttore traditore*: there is no translation that is not an interpretation as well.

Barbara Cassin, champion of untranslatable terms, points out that even the way we greet each other in each language reveals different worlds: "Good morning" is not the same as "Shalom", may peace be with you, or "Khaire", enjoy your day. Each language frames a possible world, and our Movement is prepared not to dodge difficulties. Frontiers, borders, littorals between waters, between possible worlds.

Frontiers and displacements, as the title has been translated into French, evokes the geopolitical situation that has been taking place for some decades, and that continues today; a situation in which misery and war are results of the colonization by the countries richest in economic and political resources and arms, and involves the so-called poor countries, poor in the aforementioned resources, but rich in raw materials and cheap labour. This geopolitical situation induces, as a result, the displacement of bodies. And not just human bodies: today's news features the inexorable march of 15 elephants in China, after the transformation of their habitat.

From this perspective, the title suggests that psychoanalysis take sides or stands in relation to human displacements towards colonizing countries in search of more dignified conditions for survival. Surely there is already a clinical practice that can testify to that.

Borders, however, in the plural, and displacement, in the singular, as in the original call in English (Borders: Psychoanalysis and Displacement), bring into play another situation, that of displacement at the very borders of psychoanalysis. In this reading, the displacement does not involve bodies but a mechanism or operation inside the psychic apparatus (Freud) or inside language (Lacan).

What is displaced, in Freudian terms, *Verschiebung*, does not necessarily refer to a place or to something going from one place to another, but to something that moves away or is put off; the term can also be translated as postponement. Freud makes reference to psychic accent; Lacan to deformation (*Entstellung*).

The shift of emphasis, as an operation of oneiric elaboration, induces a change of the expected sense, as is the case in music with syncopation or when accents are placed on weak beats. Freud's example of the spinster who transfers her affection to her dog is clear: the accent is not placed where it is expected, on the lack of a child, but on what metaphorically symbolizes it. It is because of the change of accent, because of the accent placed on the little dog, or on the collectible item, or on the soldier's flag, that we can read that affection has been displaced, transferred, from the supposedly natural object to another one that symbolizes it. Such is the case with the obsessive who weeps before an unknown person's grave but does not shed a tear after his sister's death.

Among psychoanalysts, changes of accent, that is to say, displacements inside the discourse of psychoanalysis, have often resulted in fractures and institutional break-ups. For those who placed the accent on ritual, on the 50-minute hour, the sessions' cut oriented by a logical approach to time was unacceptable. Lacan was ousted by the IPA, among other reasons, for having interpreted and subverted the comfort of a ritual. Let's remember how the written text of the Proposition of 9 October 1967 ends. Lacan quotes an American analyst as having told him: "The reason I will never attack the established forms, (...) is that they provide me with a routine with no problems, and this makes me comfortable".

Displacement as change of accent -and as deformation, or detour- between the Ich as I -in post-Freudians- and the Ich as subject (*Wo Es war soll Ich werden*) produced by Lacan, created divisions between so-called ego psychology and the one we attempt to practice. The accent displaced with some "Lacanian"- from a Lacan who maintains, never to go back, that the unconscious is structured as a language, towards a Lacan who would concentrate on the assumed enjoyment in the one-all-alone, creates further divisions in which the river of transference appears in danger of drying up.

At present, the question of what it is that -at least- makes a practice truly psychoanalytical is, once again, commonplace. Freud called it *shibboleth*, let's remember: the analysis of dreams, or pushing a psychoanalysis to the very limit of its possibilities. With each turn in his theorization, this limit shifted, from hypnosis to reach the primal scene, passing through making the unconscious conscious, then to resolving the neurosis of transference, and later to articulating the effects of the death drive in the negative therapeutic reaction, to name just a few turning points.

In his seminar *RSI* Lacan wondered what the limit of the metaphor is. We could ask a similar question about the limit of discursive or theoretical displacements, or of praxis itself, which authorizes us to place ourselves on that surface with just one border, a surface with a single face, which is the one that concerns us when our path looks to the horizon of the passage from intension to extension.

It is easy to resort to that figure with a single border to assume we remain within the discourse of psychoanalysis as long as we use Lacanian jargon. It seems we

never run the risk of falling, of crossing a border, of getting out of our discursive territory. Is that so?

Convergencia, as a movement that upholds diverse positions regarding training in and the transmission of psychoanalysis, proposes multiple connections that allow us to question that routine and to resist the routine comfort to psychoanalysis Lacan alluded to. The Act of Foundation encourages working on the institutional creations and the paradoxes of divergence within convergence -the “fruitful differences”-, as well as on the effects of displacement, of change of accent, of local singularities- that the plurality of languages entails for interpreting and translating texts texts and transcriptions.

These are some of the various ways [to situate] ~~of situating~~ displacements in relation to the very borders of psychoanalysis, and their consequences.