

ISSN: 2525-0965

LADO REVISTA ANUAL DE LA MAESTRÍA EN TEORÍA PSICOANALÍTICA LACANIANA LAISU

SIXTH ISSUE

Take the desire to the letter



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DESIRE MUST BE TAKEN TO THE LETTER, TO OPERATE ON JOUISSANCE

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“He’d run to the café looking for us,
moved, exalted, almost crying,
he asked for a glass of absinth and he said:

-Yes!, inside the cage of my brain
a blue bird is prisoner and he wants his freedom...”

The Blue Bird. Rubén Darío

The fact that the number 6 of LAPSO chooses desire as its theme, is both a bet and a provocation. A bet because it departs from the series of all the previous numbers that privileged to take as starting points extracts from Lacan’s latest teaching. But also a provocation, because in the context of production in which we find ourselves around the last teaching, it invites us to elaborate by returning to a theme from the dawn of psychoanalysis and that can be taken for understood. What has not already been said about desire? Why dedicate a whole number to it?

The decision is there, to avoid the burst of desire from making that wet firecracker noise that Lacan (1958 [2008]) hears in *The direction of the treatment and the principles of its power*. Because that is the risk of confusing what desire means to psychoanalysis. This issue aims to achieve the right din by linking desire with psychoanalytic ethics. How? Taking the syntagma “Desire must be taken to the letter” that gives title to the fifth chapter of that writing. An ethic that includes the abstention from the use of a certain power that entails the assumption of knowledge that the patient grants the analyst. On that assumption, the danger is to give in to the good intentions of telling the patient what desires, or to mistake it for a longing or “the wish for”, so common today in market-responsive therapies: “don’t overthink it, indulge yourself, you deserve it”.

Although the phantom supposes an object to desire, it is about not letting ourselves fall into the temptation of believing that it could be found definitively, since it is unsatisfied by definition. That keeps it forever young. That the desire is metonymic means that it runs along with the movement of the signifying chain, or even more, it is what makes the chain itself move. That is to say that what is involved in the analytic experience in relation to desire, is to provoke the association of signifiers, through their interpretation.

Just the opposite of proposing an object that blocks, that stops the movement, but always produces a certain cut between the signifiers that relaunches the operation of the chain. If Buñuel taught that the object of desire is dark, we can add that it is so out of necessity. If there is an object to desire, it will always remain opaque ... or empty. Now, what can loom over the course of the analytic experience is a cause that can be articulated to a desire, a question that Laurent (2020) explained so well in his speech “The name and the cause” upon receiving in 2019 his title of Doctor Honoris Causa at the National University of Córdoba. From this notion of articulated desire to a cause, a line of development starts that could be traced towards the idea of a “know-how”.

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In the course “From the symptom to the phantom. And return” Miller (2018) takes up this famous phrase by Lacan that this year inspired LAPSO and formulates that “the question is to know how, taking desire to the letter, that is, interpreting, it is achieved and operates on *jouissance*” (p. 179). What makes the problematic link between desire and *jouissance* enter. Well, if we consider the symptom as a metaphor, that is, a signifier that is in place of an elided, barred signifier (\$, the subject) and the interpretation as what relaunches the signifying chain through the metonymy of desire, we have three of the elements of discourse of the unconscious or the master that Lacan (1975 [2010]) formulated many years later. That discourse produces the object a, fourth element. What is involved in interpretation, Miller teaches, renewing Lacan’s phrase, is that in addition to addressing the signifier, it must point to *jouissance*, as what always remains as a non-reabsorbable remainder by the symbolic. Here we return to the question of ethics, that of our orientation which does not neglect the object a, an orientation towards the not-all signifier.

We will find this reading operation carried out by Miller, updating the first Lacan with later developments, in some of the articles that make up the **Theory and Concepts** section of this issue. Irene Kuperwajs takes fragments of her testimonies to enlighten us about the emergence of the analyst’s desire in the future of an analysis, not without taking into account the void in terms of being and the real at stake. A question that concerns the training of the analyst and that is also taken up by Matías Meichtri Quintans, an article that gives an account of the School as its fundamental concept. Débora Nitzcaner proposes an animated hopscotch that jumps between desire, love and enjoyment. The dimension of the act and its intimate and risky relationship with desire is clearly specified by Pilar Ordóñez. In turn, the relationship between the phallic signifier and desire is rigorously placed by Andrea Berger, contextualizing it in Lacan’s first teaching. Natalia Bonansea, takes the tragedy of Antigone to establish a productive counterpoint between “pure desire” and “desire to the letter”. In **Intersections** you will find an interview with Mercedes Morán in relation to her artistic work and what drives it, a gem. Also, an exhaustive itinerary of the main philosophical notions on desire by Diego Fonti. In **Reviews** we find the commentaries of “Cause and Consent” (unpublished), the last course published by Miller in Spanish, of the issue “Desire” of Registros Magazine and of the book “Symptoms without unconscious in an age without desire” (unpublished) by Marco Focchi, each one in charge of Deborah Lazzeri, Micaela Parici and Ana Mecchia respectively.

As if all this were not enough, this issue also has a unique material: Bernardino Horne responds to the **LAPSO Interview** on complex issues making them transmissible, at the height of a life channeled by psychoanalysis.

Lacan takes the figure of the blue bird that makes Garcín, the poet in Rubén Darío’s short story, suffer and exalt, as a reference to figure desire. Our authors, as good birdwatchers, go in search of it in this timely issue of the LAPSO Journal.

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