



On passion[♦]

(a lacanian reading)

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We often tend to over-evaluate the sudden emotions that arise in our minds. “It’s stronger than me”, I catch myself thinking, walking through uncommon thoughts, contradicting my own rules of conduct. All of this is centered in the blind believe that the heart, opposed to logical thinking, possesses the most “truthful” truth.

Jacques Lacan refuses these rights to Affect and warns us that it tricks us even saying the truth. Could it be a paradox? The aim of this presentation is to unfold such paradox, based on the exposition of Lacan’s readings on Freud’s original literature about Affect.

What I’m going to present owes almost everything to my work as psychoanalyst of the *Escola Brasileira de Psicanálise*, in the movement of the “lacanian orientation”, the name of J. A. Miller seminar that gives the diapason to the World Association of Psychoanalysis.¹

Affect and Representation

To be sad, means that suffering exists. Even if an actor forces to shed some tears, even if his acting skills are horrible, whenever sadness is portrayed, it will always be sad. This is the truth about the Affect: it is what it is. Like Freud says: “It is the essence of the feelings to be recognized by consciousness”. This is its truth. It is always recognizable.² We may have doubts about its origins and sources, or maybe its reasons remain unknown – sometimes even against all logical assumptions. Although sometimes we don’t know exactly the reasons behind why we cry, we always know that if we do cry, therefore we are sad.

It tricks us, however, by making us believe it can be a guide reaching our deepest truths, that if we follow it we will reach the animal inside of us, for example. Lacan proposes that the feelings may also lie - intending to make us stop believing recklessly in feelings, as if they would lead us to find such internal truths without failing, more than the words themselves.³

As psychoanalysts, the truth we often have to deal with is not a feeling, neither primitive nor energetic – in Lacan’s words, the *real* we do seek is completely out of the box, outside the mainstream and commonsense. An analysis may not be seen as the search for a primary meaning for life but, instead, as a tool to deal with the real, that part of the life that have no name.

Based on such assumptions, we have to change our mental habits and common procedures regarding the world of feelings. Affect, as proposed by Lacan, “comes to the body” – it does never arise from the body itself, it is never primary but always secondary to the discourse. That is the Lacanian resumption of Freud’s definitive sentence that “there is no unconscious Affect”.⁴ For Lacan unconscious is a discourse. Though alternative to the official speech of the ego, fragmented and disperse, the unconscious discourse is still a discourse and, likewise, it may produce Affects or feelings, but it does not contain them. It is not inhabited by them, but by representations and associative complexes approached by Lacan’s theory of the *signifier*.

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An analysis goes deep finding out how much the life that one has does not fit in the life he actually lives. Let's assume it is what Freud portrays as drive – and Lacan defines as a disembodied pressure on the *ego's* house. It is according to Freud a “boundary concept”, “our mythology”, is a fiction, as points out Lacan, since it designates something outside the boundaries of what can actually be said.⁵

Hence, we can be sure that in the psychoanalysis process we will be confronted with the shortage of metaphors and long silences since – in the level of the speech – what pushes us forward is infinitely poor. However, the Freudian hypothesis sustains that even though the “real” cannot be represented in a day-to-day basis, it can represent itself, here and there by some particular language elements. They do it however like the diplomats represents their country, without any relation of resemblance to it. The Freudian's theory of representation has little to do with some kind of *mimesis*, copying, and in this particular meaning we can say, in Lacan's words that this elements, the signifiers, *represents* the drive.⁶

Signifier and Purging

Therefore, the unconscious is made of awe, but also of encounter. It does never reveals itself completely, but presents itself through surprise and silence, but also through fragmented speeches. That's why it is described by Lacan as “hiatus and text”.⁷ This text that represents *drive* is a special kind of knowledge. That's what Lacan approaches with his theory of the *signifier*. “Signifier” it's a word that, in French, can be placed between an adjective and a noun. Lacan, however, portrays the word exclusively as a noun, aiming on the concrete, tangible, support of the meaning. A good translation would be, perhaps, “significative”: just a mark, a registry (like a name, but also like a scar or a tattoo), and that can be charged with sense, but not necessarily bares any particular meaning.⁸ They are combined to compose fragments of a story, old photos, kaleidoscopic glows, things that we can never forget without (at the same time) being absolutely capable of saying that we truly lived them. Dreams, names, and tastes, they have not the thickness of the subjectivity for holding something else that insists on not being apprehensible and refuses to rest peacefully in our memory, since it is made off components that are not overtaken by the *ego*.

And what about affect – since it has been defined by Freud as something that also represents the drive? Affect will be considered as the effect of the fact that the real in one's life doesn't really fit in it. This real exceeds and sometimes collides with our own existence. When *this* real presents itself, when life is “*out of control*”, the affects come to take care of the intensity of what is being lived, and make it return to commonsense. They come as tears, laughs, or whichever other affective models that are predetermined by the culture. They are always available to stand for the drive draining away all the excess that doesn't fit in a singular moment. This is what has been historically defined as catharsis or *purge*.⁹

However, it is exactly this affective purge that drives us far from what is essential in one analysis (that doesn't moves towards finding one essential truth, but towards the real as something out of the commonsense). From now on, to make the discussion clear, let us call *real* by one of its most used nouns: *singularity*. Affect, as an universal way of purging the drive leads us far from singularity and make our bodies vibrate on the frequency of feelings that precedes us, that we find in our culture storage. The ways we cry or laugh are received by us alongside the desires and romances that, in fact, compose each and everyone. If this “cultural set” provided by the Other was a film, affect would be its soundtrack. The feelings act as the chorus of the Greek tragedy, sustaining one “emotional comment” for the action, as Lacan says. They modulate, amplify, and soften – in many ways – the absurd of our destinies and the deep contingency and randomness that composes us. This affect chorus within us fulfills the paradox we all live of being at the same time as close as possible to our body and, merged in the mass, as distant as possible from the nameless real that inhabits us. Let's see how.¹⁰

Emotion

The starting point is the pair *fear* and *pity*, affects that are defined since Aristotle as “tremble for itself”, in the case of fear, and “tremble for the other”, the pity. Lacan recognizes, in these definitions (that come to us through the centuries), a kind of relationship that he calls imaginary or specular. Fear and Pity are the effects in our body that translates, better than any other, the way we are affected by resemblance, by what is our own kind, what we see in the mirror. They shall be called from now on as *emotions*.¹¹

If I cannot imagine the danger, if I cannot realize it as an object of menace, then I cannot properly *fear* it. This is what effectively distinguishes fear from *anguish* or *panic*, because the fear has always a precise object. On the other side, if I cannot identify myself with the suffering one, I cannot have pity for him. As brutal as it might seem to be, it is exactly this imaginary capability of identifying ourselves with some situations that selects what will be print on papers as news – thus sometimes giving more place to the suffering of our closer neighborhood instead of thousands of Africans.¹²

More than just classifying such feelings, we’re turning them into true paradigms. We shall nominate emotions everything that our neighbor causes on us, everything that starts and finishes with him. These are the most common feelings available in the dictionary of the *Other*. It is true, though, that speaking of mankind, nothing can be totally reduced to the *specular* relationship and to the emotions that may arise from it. Our present time, however, shows us that it is possible to ignore a lot of the particularities of the species, when comparing, for example, mankind and lab rats. This is the scientific psychology path that makes our feelings and those of the monkey, two of the same kind. But it forgets that such procedure may grant us tangible knowledge of our feelings (which can be further examined, analyzed, measured or compared) at the cost of losing sight of this strange thing that inhabits us and makes of us humans.¹³

Passion

Thus, not everything can be described as emotion, because not every single component of the feelings is related to the images and resemblance: there is *passion*. This distinction, between emotion and passion, is essential and is pointed out by Jacques-Alain Miller and it is that we follow through this whole text.¹⁴ The passion shall be defined as something that mobilizes or bodies based on something else than just the image of the *Other*.

It can be true even in cases when we are captured by the images – like in “love at first sight”. This fulminating passion has, for Lacan, the emblematic image of the encounter between Werther and Lotte, from Goethe – which he defines as “fascination” or “imaginary capture”. Such is the case of love at first sight – it doesn’t exist without a power image that drives one out of control, stringless. But the loving capture seems to be linked to something that goes beyond the images. Could it be the details on Lotte’s dress? Or could it be the small pieces of bread that she was giving to the children surrounding her when Werther arrived? These and thousands of other details are parts of this “beyond the image” and they seem to concentrate and hold much more meanings than the very own image of the beloved one. About *passion*, by definition, we will always say that there is a primary blind spot in the heart of the *Other*, something that gives a powerful meaning to the fascinating image that captured our attention in the first place. That is the reason why Lacan states: “Love always [...] aims, beyond the imaginary capture, some particularity and detail that includes the maximum of opacity, the unthinkable.”¹⁵

Therefore, we shall nominate as *passion* everything that is somehow related to a *specular* sphere, related to the images and the body, but at the same time, that cannot be limited on this. This way, we can understand why passion takes us beyond – differently from the emotions, since it aims something different from commonsense, different from the predetermined forms. To

passion we reserve the title of the limitless role of Affect that moves us beyond – for better or worse, indeed.

It is not only love that has such power, as hatred can also drive one beyond his own boundaries. Lacan adds to the same list *ignorance* and with the subtle dance of these three, he defines *transference*. It is through these three paradigmatic forms that passion reveals itself in psychoanalysis. Thus, since we cannot demonstrate it here, let us assume that they all have their roles defined by their relationship with the opaque particularity pointed out by Lacan. An analysis begins at the moment that one renounces of the resemblance pleasures over someone else in the search for something else though still unknown; when we cross the boundaries from friend to stranger, from the contract to the wager, from the emotion to passion.

Ethics

By privileging passion over emotion, Lacan introduces ethics as a new tool for the analyst related to affect. It's a word that must be handled with care, since nowadays everyone tends to disregard whichever cannot be approached by comparisons or quantitative methods and to take it as some kind of obscurantism. But it is exactly what Lacan doesn't do: instead of analogy or physiology, to deal with this invisible details in the passion that mobilizes ourselves he promotes *ethics*.

Ethics and morale won't be used here as synonyms, just like Lacan starts his seventh seminary pointing out this distinction – stating that morale is the set of prescribed conducts accepted in a specific space and time, whereas ethics stands as a reflection over the action, without necessarily having a predetermined set of values. Distinguishing and privileging ethics over morale is sustained, if we follow Lacan, by the own psychoanalytical experience that, in many senses, is a “return to the meaning of the action” – as Lacan states – a return to the meaning of what the *Other* made to ourselves and what we have done whit it, thus creating a new relationship with our own actions.

It is important to change the emphasis of the quotidian morale to ethics for another – and much more important – reason: an analysis always progresses dealing with immoral components, “out of the moral realm”, as Lacan states. Morale is always inextricably related to consciousness, the realm of the *ego*, since it aims what seems to be the best for the individual within a collectivity, while an analysis deals at first with a “very large group things that comprises the set of sexual desires” in its most secret details. It is the kind of thing that according to Lacan, Aristotle describes as “literally, out of moral realm” or “within the realm of monstrous anomalies”.¹⁶

Monstrous? In Victorian times it was much easier to recognize this psychoanalysis extremism. Because everything that transcended the so called normal boundaries of sexual behavior – matrimony and reproduction, to be clear – was demonized. The times have changed but the Freudian radicalism remains present, since there's always something monstrous on each and every individual desire. It can be either insignificant or terrible, but on each case it will always be the things that does not fit for being incompatible with the *ego* and that, for this exact reason, went to disturb consciousness, through the unconscious, like a parasite.

As we know now, it wasn't really new to assume that we all have our private ghosts and demons. What is, in fact, revolutionary in Freudian analysis, is that our monsters always live in the realm of sexuality. This is what Freud states when distinguishing reproduction – serving the interests of the species -, in one side, from an strange form of intense pleasure called by Lacan *jouissance* in the other side – the moment when the individual has a satisfaction that resists the pressure of simply channeling the seeds of his kind, thus reclaiming a place and moment for his singular pulse of life in the world.¹⁷ Thus, we are always one *ego*, bound to interact joyfully with the world surrounding him, and at the same time one “thing” that carries the most intense vibrations, that tend to lead the ruin to this *ego*. During sex, lips, legs and hands are mixed, confusing themselves – there is no relationship, no “holding hands”. Sex is a realm of absolute

difference, always carrying a taste for destruction. Now we must add what has been called so far as singularity to this monstrous drive that arises, during psychoanalysis, deeply attached to the violence of a desire.

The ethics of “Well Saying”

Ethics is the name of a way of dealing with these monsters that resist to be domesticated with analogies or numbers. Lacan bets that with it they can be considered in the center of the action. But how can one give place to such peculiar desire, the Freudian drive, as a parameter of our actions since it is completely immoral? And since it is outside the realm of the ego and the logical discourse, how can one nominate the irrational as a guide without truly embracing mysticism? Lacan, at the closure of his seminar on ethics, places desire (very close to what we have been calling as drive), at the center of psychoanalysis ethics – but only at the expenses of this paradox. Ten years later, however he finds a solution to drive away the paradox, leaving desire in second place and defining psychoanalysis as the ethics of “well saying”.¹⁸

The ethics of well-saying is not *saying the Good*, it would be impossible for there is not a cure to the irreparable incapacity of the language to say the real. It is not also *Saying well*, making a perfect speech as our ideal. It is *to say*, because nothing can stand above it: we are what we say. Finally, the lacanian *well*, here, stands for the “saying” that gives a place for the monsters of desire – little devils full of life, always insisting without truly consisting.

To approach, in the limits of this paper, this “well-saying” we must quickly return to how affect relates to the signifier in an analysis. The particular way of dealing with the feelings in an analysis can be reduced only to the fact that we find in it at the same time love, hatred and ignorance, nor the fact that the analyst abdicates from using or involving its own emotions during the analysis. As a matter of fact, is that one will never leave without “something else”. In it, passion is exchanged, produces, *signifiers*.¹⁹

A signifier is not a meaning, but just a *trace*. It is the trail left behind during the encounters with the *Other*, or the tool used by him to trace its own cattle – using a metaphor of Lacan’s taste. It distinguishes and defines me, even without saying anything about myself. It is a letter, and as a letter it can be read and in this case it turns out to be a *knowledge*, even a *wisdom*. Or it can appear in the state of *trace*, merely a *guide*.

A psychoanalysis mobilizes the unconscious signifiers to accomplish, as Lacan says, the catharsis in a very peculiar way, defined by his alternative translation to the *Aristotelian Katharsis*: not purge but *purification*. This word should not be taken as an improvement, elevation, but rather as decanting. From the huge amount of messed knowledge that states in the beginning of an analysis, we will end up with its letters.²⁰

If during psychoanalysis one reviews the most crucial moments of its own life (like in a movie picture), such revival plays however an important reductive role that extracts, from the very epos of life its essential coordinates. For example, it can go from the daily struggle with the authoritarian boss to the acridities of childhood marked by an oppressive father, until it finds a repeated trace common to all these important situations. Names and colors almost at the border of the meaning realm – thus being the ones that free us from the affect associated with the drama of the starting point. The sadness of the mornings with a divorced father, oft instance, goes away when what was sustaining the melancholy life of these moments appears to have nothing of drama. A way of turning the keys in the locker, the knife cutting the bread comes to dissolve the nostalgic fog where the subject was living since then.

Therefore, it is a double-edged process: on one hand the excess becomes trace, while on the other what was converted in affect, glitters. This is what Lacan refers as purification – it goes alongside what happens in the sphere of narrative, when romance becomes haiku.²¹

The glimpse of light that follows this transformation is what Lacan defines as *enthusiasm*. It is neither emotion nor passion because it is located in the limits of the Affect field (just like

anxiety), and it won't be analyzed here. It is the fragment of libido that returns to us when we are freed from the meaning. When the trace changes its use, its function, marking the beginning of a "this is what really is" instead of a "maybe it's not exactly like this".²²

Laughter

This is just a consequence. The ethics of well-saying is not directly related to affects but to the speech. To demonstrate it we must conclude with the lacanian *gay-sçavoir*.

The ethics of well-saying points out some sins (like sadness, which I, unfortunately, cannot describe here) but at least one virtue, defined by Lacan as *gay sçavoir*, joyful knowledge, in reference to Nietzsche and also Spinoza. I will, however, follow another way with the counter-example that according to Lacan Dante offers us.

We know that the one and only moment when he saw Beatrice he fell in love for all eternity – due to one single divine detail, a "wink of the eye", as Lacan says, for his passion to last forever.²³ On the diametrical opposite side of Dante's obsession over his passion, *gay sçavoir* is, according to Lacan, to let oneself free to be dominated by the realm of meaning feelings without really entangling himself in it. Instead of finding a wider meaning for our details, just the roots of pure contingency of its signifiers elements.

This is not a skill or technique. Since one's analysis revealed how this traces are pure contingency but at the same time also what coordinates one's jouissance - the possibilities and impossibilities of his desire. That's why Lacan indicates that the ethics of well-saying is how someone situates himself within the *structure* of his desire.²⁴

From the beginning, we are free to wander on the edges of the meaning, but it just leads us to know its map and to assume how there is no way out from it. This task can be performed through different ways, from the scandal, to the shame, or the horror, but also as laughter.

It is not the laugh that comedy may cause. The comedy owes its strength to a triumph – it is the discharge that releases tension, but always taken in an epic context, the triumph over an oppression. But the laughter, in Freudian terms, is an unleashed joy released from the epopee, saving the drama, just pleasing itself.

It is only possible due to the freedom that characterizes the formations of the unconscious – that Lacan resumes as what in our lives "dreams, laughs and fails". They are composed not by the meaning that touches and affects us, but rather by the invisible cement of discourse, the signifiers, the raw components of language instead of the comic abstractions that they sustain.²⁵ Fitting this new satisfaction on life is the ethical requirement of the analytic process: to bet on the reframing of the raw components of the desire to the utmost consequences. The great surprise, however, is that if such requirement is taken seriously, it finds in the roots of the feelings the certainty that life only presents itself shrank between peculiar lines. The laughter marks here an ironic satisfaction with the consideration of how that we doesn't really fit in the limits of existence – always composed as surrealistic *collage*.²⁶

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¹ Cf. <http://www.wapol.org/> This text is based on the notes for the course *Paixões em análise*, held in the *Escola Brasileira de Psicanálise* of Rio de Janeiro. It is also based in my book *A ética da paixão* (Rio de Janeiro, JZE, 2001) and wrote to be presented in the *Lacan-Klein Lectures*, London, may 2011. The most part of the english version is due to Vinícius Ribeiro.

² Freud, S. [1923], p. 36. Cf. tb. Vieira, M. A., 2001, p. 51. A essência do afeto é ser consciente: Freud, S. [1915], pp. 203-206.

³ Lacan, J. [1967-68], 19/2/68 e Cottet, S. 1985, p. 74.

⁴ Lacan, J. [1972-73], p. 190, 132 e 149; Freud [1900], p. 620. For the "unconscious affect" Freud, S. [1923], p. 36. Cf. tb. Vieira, M. A., 2001, p. 51. A essência do afeto é ser consciente: Freud, S. [1915], pp. 203-206.

⁵ Freud, S. [1915], p. 140 and Lacan, J. [1963-64], p. 155.

⁶ Lacan, J. [1963-64], p. 167 for the diplomats: *Ibid*, p. 209 e Vieira, M. A. 2001, p. 91.

⁷ Freud, S. [1920], p. 78; "A pulsão é precisamente essa montagem pela qual a sexualidade participa da vida psíquica, de uma maneira que deve se conformar com a estrutura de hiância que é a do inconsciente", Lacan, J. [1963-64], p. 167.

⁸ For the lacanian theory of the signifier see: Arrivé, M. 1999, p. 95. Where does such representations live? The best answer is certainly: "it doesn't matter". If we want to work through a clinic analysis method, as created by Freud, we must attain ourselves to the fact than humankind's memory is simply astonishing, admirable. Putting aside a theory about our files and records, one that would certainly be so complex that certainly would lead to a countless number of paradoxes and questions. The only thing we need to assume is that the constellation of representations we often call "ego" will be perturbed, forcing itself to regroup with its own fragments that appears when we freely navigate inside the associative webs during an analysis. Those fragments are not subjectivized by the self and, therefore, this is what should matter for the therapist: the unconscious knowledge.

⁹ Freud, S. [1906], p. 325; Regnault, F, 2001, pp. 79-90, and Lacan, J. [1959-60], p. 297 e Vieira, M. A. 2008 (verbete "Catarse").

¹⁰ Darwin and Freud: Vieira, M. A. 2001, p. 106. Freud, S. [1920], p. 156, Lacan, J. 1998, p. 714, Vieira. M. A. 2001, p. 106.

¹¹ Lacan, J. [1962-63], p. 20.

¹² That is why Lacan defines *fear* and *pity* as affects arisen from the “world of goods”, the sphere of daily exchanges and demands. Lacan, J. [1959-60], p. 297.

¹³ Ferry, L. 2009, p. 25.

¹⁴ Miller, J. A., 1999.

¹⁵ The *Love-passion*, linked to these opaque elements, may never be capable of getting a glimpse of the whole picture. But it is truly visionary. Nonetheless, the *Love-emotion* only linked to what we can see, is in Lacan words: *Verliebtheit*, blind fascination (Lacan, J. [1953-54], p. 315 e 316), cf. tb. Vieira, M. A. 2001, p. 161 e 232 e Miller, J. A. 2010).

¹⁶ Lacan, J. [1959-60], p. 10; 14 and 374., Miller, J. A. 1988; since all human action is based on a symbolic context, there is no such things as “pure action”, for every single act has a specific meaning – inexorably – even more in the context of clinical analysis where narratives dominates. Here, defining and action will be even fuller of meanings, full of predetermined values. Any *reflection* over our own actions must be understood, here, as an action on itself, since it will always have a consequence, whereas not always a conscious one. As Lacan states, there is action on the two sides of the own definition of ethics.

¹⁷ Freud, S. [1920], p. 219.

¹⁸ Lacan, J. [1974], 508-543 and Vieira, M. A. 2001, p. 199.

¹⁹ It may even sustain any kind of meaning, but it will always be a meaning out of a proper context. In fact, it is a “*meaning without meaning*”, as Lacan defines through his peculiar taste for the use of paradoxes – again, it is important to note that this “*meaning without meaning*” is linked only to common knowledge.

²⁰ In fact, in a psychoanalysis, much of the meanings we have, agglutinate in fundamental scenes and sayings, as resumed by J.A. Miller when defining this part of the analytical experience as “reduction operation” Lacan, J. *Ibid.* p. 374, Miller, J. A., 1998, p. 59.

²¹ Freud, S. [1917], p. 287 e Vieira, M. A. 2001, p. 223.

²² Lacan, J. [1959-60], p. 298 e Miller, J. A. Cf. Miller, J. A. 1998, p. 32 e 2008 (26/11/2008), Laurent, E. 1988 e Vieira, M. A., 2001, p. 225. Since it is not related to a specific sense, there it doesn’t rest in the *Other* significant. It is impossible to recognize it using the predetermined forms of feelings that Culture has to offer us. For this same reason, it cannot last, since only things with meanings that transcend particular incidents, things that are collectively shared, are consecrated to long. It is not something that can be known or controlled, and can either be intense or discrete, visiting us – and returning to us – whenever it chooses, without any particular beginning or end. Even without a traceable essence, it is true that during clinical analysis, enthusiasm does have a specific address – the analyst himself. That is the reason why it presents itself as something more important than just a customary incident – which also leads us to the Lacanian joke stating that we should study the strange fact of why one rarely falls ill during clinical analysis (when Lacan often suggests that health insurance plans doesn’t charge that much for analysts). However, it is important to note that this sense is not related to commonsense happiness, nor euphoria, joy or vivacity – being impossible to capture Lacan’s enthusiasm into a specific emotional record, not even inside what culture calls enthusiasm.

²³ Lacan, J. [1974], 508-543 and: Vieira, M. A. 2001, p. 199.

²⁴ In this way, the freudien primary scene becomes, like the fundamental fantasy, the structure that “sustains” the desire. This way of wandering in the structure and not the sense that a discuss below, ready to hold onto something that Lacan calls *piquer*, which means “to steal”, but also “to pierce” is what J. A. Miller defines as a true “sense of opportunity” (cf. Lacan, J. Miller, J. A. 2007).

²⁵ “*ça rêve, ça rit, ça rate*” Lacan, J. [1968], p. 92 We are always dealing with the majestic and ridiculous aspects of our actions and pretensions. Apart from this basic human comedy, the different forms of the unconsciousness explored by Freud demonstrates that we are always capable of living something else – from the mistakes we perpetrate to the absurd we are capable of, from the nonsense we always flirt with to the jocosity often heard. According to Lacan the unconscious is to realized that is what in our lives : it dreams, it laughs and it fails [*ça rêve, ça rit, ça rate*]. The dreams shakes our beliefs built upon our quotidian reality by presenting us a real that, even sometimes crazy, can worth more than what we have. With our failures we have lot to gain, and the laughter marks that passion can also be pleasant. When we give up the obsessive search for the secret not because we’ve lost the faith in the ability to search, but in the secret itself, when the traces become mere boundaries, the relationship with otherness necessarily changes. Thus, the subject unties itself from the relationship with the analyst and starts to live within the limits of the new boundaries – creating, therefore, a new passion.

²⁶ Lacan, J. [1963-64], p. 161.