

## WHAT CAN BE SUPPOSED OF A PASSER?

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I will present some reflections and questions which are important for me now as I am about to finish my time as a passer, during which I had the opportunity of meeting seven passants.

I would like to express the particularity of this present moment. Responding to the invitation to speak today allows me to exit the solitude in which I have exercised this function. I am thus very happy but also very concerned (feel rather uneasy) about sharing something of this work.

Drawing from my experience, I would like to begin to respond to the following question: what in the guidelines proposed by Jacques Lacan in the *Proposition of 1967*, which allow us to orientate the definition and the choice of a passer, makes this function operative? In short, to respond to the question: why does it work if one orientates oneself in such a way?

What are these guidelines?

The passer is an analysand who still is in a moment of the pass, “is still this pass”<sup>1</sup> or at least he is very close to it ‘it is still being lived’ — “what the passant will speak of is still present for the passer” —, and he is in the process of mourning it, unlike the passant for whom this moment has passed, ‘for him it has passed’ [*lui, ça lui a passé*], he has mourned it.

Two things stand out clearly in these statements, which render the function efficient: there is for the passer an ‘it is still present’, ‘like the passant’, and a ‘he is not yet there where the passant is’, thus ‘unlike the passant’. It is very precise.

I will situate three moments in my trajectory.

I have entitled the first one for the presentation ‘the event in the treatment’. I will not relate the coordinates of its emergence and I will be very brief as to its description. Something unveiled itself. A scene appears, the elements of which break radically with everything that precedes it. It is of the order of the unthought [*impensé*], of the unforeseeable. I discover myself as a stranger to myself, in profound discordance, and I remain motionless, stupefied. I have no knowledge of this event, rather it makes me say: nothing holds. I have only one quasi-certainty: it concerns me very closely, even if I do not recognise myself in it.

Secondly, the moment of ‘designation’. The analyst warns the analysand that he has proposed him as passer. What are the effects of this information?

1. First, the impression I had is strengthened: something has happened and has happened in relation to what has unveiled itself.
2. Next, this information decenters me from the place of the treatment by provoking what will later be formulated more clearly as a displacement away from the analyst, as the only place of transference,

since he now becomes the bearer of a demand and a desire that traverse him, those of the School. From then on the question of my relation to the analytical cause, in so far as a discourse serves it, poses itself.

3. Finally, a great worry, for I know nothing or next to nothing of what one calls the pass. All I knew was: the pass is an unprecedented procedure elaborated by Lacan which permits the reception of the testimony of people at the end of analysis.

The third moment, 'the encounter with the first passant'. Very rapidly, during the time of the encounter itself I hear in the testimony of the passant a point at which I am not; 'There I am not', which has several consequences:

1. First, to index and to investigate the point where I come from. What I hear pulls me beyond. There is an 'it is there' and at the same time I detach myself from it.
2. Then, in this newly opened space I can say that what happened for me fundamentally concerns my relation to knowledge. What the passant says shatters, in this moment, constructed knowledge, instituted knowledge, including that of psychoanalysis. The cause of this is very precise: I realise that what happened in the first time (the event in the treatment), was in fact the disappearance of knowledge about myself.
3. Thirdly, a new certainty appears: there is still for me something to know or something to say, stemming from the first time, even if it is impossible today. This knowledge is completely unforeseeable. I nevertheless know that fundamentally it has to do with the place I have occupied in the desire of the Other.

What has happened?

I think I can say — it is quite strange — that, in my experience, the first passant plays a part in the constitution of the first passer. It is this first encounter that constitutes the passer; and it is from this that I could hear those that followed. What came to operate was thus what was produced for the analysand, not yet passer, at time 1, the time of the event, in so far as he allows this time 1 to 'resonate' in the encounter with the testimony of the passer; it is necessary that he makes the choice to continue to believe that there is something in it for him. For the function to operate it is necessary that the supposition of knowledge should crumble, certainly, but it must, nevertheless, continue to exist. Only then, does a space in which the testimony can be deposited open for the passer, between point 1, where he is 'like the passant', and point 2, where he is 'not like the passant'. This demonstrates the precision of what Lacan indicated, but also its great fragility. It is not certain that this function can operate systematically for each encounter, and it is very difficult to predict the period of its unfolding because it is strongly linked to the unfolding of the treatment of the passer.

What does the opening of this space allow and what questions does it pose?

To listen, occasionally to intervene, and to transmit the testimony to the cartel from this position would indicate to the passer what must be avoided. There are certainly a number of things to avoid. I take note of three because they seem problematic to me.

1. It is not about making the case coincide with the theory, in other words to consider that the case comes to illustrate the theory, whether this be the theory of psychoanalysis on the pass and the treatment, or one's own theories, one's own myths. It is not about having an *a priori* grid, for this would bias the listener: either one would hear only what fits within it, or one would entice the passant to produce in this sense.

This is a very particular difficulty, it bears on the question of knowing how to hear and transmit something which is produced for another and which is too close for the passer in his own experience. This poses the question of the limit of the intervention of the passer, a limit which nevertheless gives the efficacy of the function. What the passer transmits, is logically what is beyond the position he occupies in his analysis and which motivated his designation; something passes that is unknown to him.

But how can he [the passer] draw a distinction between a testimony presenting zones of opacity because these have not been sufficiently purified for himself, and a testimony presenting zones of opacity linked to the fact that the passant himself is not sufficiently removed from the satisfaction he derives from relating his experience?

In his testimony, a passant exposes to me the point upon which he relies in order to leave the analyst. Not being absolutely sure that I have fully understood what he has said to me (it knots itself around a word), this uncertainty appearing to me as I am ordering my notes, I decide after many hesitations to ask the passant for a few clarifications. He then gives me a clear articulation of this point with the rest of the treatment, a clarity which greatly surprises me in view of an otherwise sometimes confused testimony, the internal threads of which were, in any case, very difficult to unravel.

So, can we say that this clarity is an *après coup* of the testimony? Could he have transmitted his testimony in this mode? Was my unease linked to my own difficulty or was the statement that came to my mind at the end of the testimony 'One last effort remains' justified? And if this was to be the case, couldn't this 'one last effort' have been made with the passer, had the latter been more present?

2. On another level, I do not think that it is about judging or evaluating the trajectory of the passant, and it seems to me that this risk increases with the very experience of the passer himself. He informs himself, reads texts on the pass, some testimonies, encounters the cartels, sometimes finds himself being asked to take sides in their debates. While I am absolutely not advocating the values of theoretical naivety, I nevertheless think that these encounters could lead the passer to prime his hearing with a particular expectation which no longer permits him to lend himself to the different uses that the passant may wish to make of the procedure.

For example, he could become preoccupied with knowing whether the testimony will lead to a nomination [as AE], or begin to expect something new for himself as analysand or for the cartel, fearing to bore the cartel. This slope, upon which I found myself, is harmful because it risks confounding two levels which, although they are intimately linked, are different.

All the passants that I encountered, with only one exception, had motivated their approach with the primary concern, indeed the necessity, of verifying the possibility of transmitting what had been produced for them. Nomination, however intimately bound up with the subjective mutation that has taken place and with the

concern for transmission itself, is situated in the passant's speech as a potential consequence, one which is sometimes hoped for and considered in advance as the impetus for future work, but not always, far from it.

To say for oneself, by oneself, the unheard of psychoanalysis which has now become a certainty: a knowledge unknown to the subject himself, that one calls unconscious, powerful in its concrete effects, is articulated, demonstrated, and transmitted. It must be said of the reception of this certitude, which passes through the strangest of discoveries, and which should find its proper place here every time, that the Other constructed by ourselves does not exist.

3. Finally, I will end by evoking a third difficulty, one which I experienced in the encounter with a cartel before which I had been invited to testify with the second passer. Unfortunately it was the other passer who spoke first. After he finished I was asked the question 'What have you got to add'. Only one answer came to mind: a testimony, I have got a singular testimony to add, the one I had been the only recipient of, no more no less. The difficulty then consisted in remaining closest to the latter, and closest to my own enunciation if I may say so, this always being difficult but even more so here, since I had heard the other testimony and, in effect, I hadn't been able to prevent myself from comparing, measuring the elements I heard with what I myself had to transmit, and that from then on something of what was supporting my speech was being disturbed.

Translated by Philip Dravers and Véronique Voruz

1. J. Lacan, *Proposition of 9 October 1967 on the Psychoanalyst of the School*, *Analysis* 6 1995, 10. This translation is of the version produced in *Scilicet* 1 1968. However, the remaining quotations seem to have been taken from the version published in *Analytica* 8, for which there is currently no English translation.

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