



**AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR PSYCHOANALYSIS**

**PROGRAM OF CLINICAL AND THEORETICAL STUDIES**

**YEAR 3 - SEMESTERS 1 & 2**

### **ETHICS AND PRAXIS**

Across the two semesters we study the question of ethics in analytic practice and more generally. This exploration involves themes and texts which are at the core of psychoanalysis and the formation of a psychoanalyst. Any study of ethics concerns matters that have occupied humans since the advent of civilization – not only philosophers and other thinkers, but also ordinary people across all times. Hence the significance of the ethical dimension of our praxis, brought to us in concrete forms by each of our patients and present in each of our own acts.

Within the topic area participants engage in an exploration of a range of themes such as:

- Ethical questions in the works of Freud.
- The moral law and the superego according to Freud.
- The Oedipus complex and the law.
- Kant's categorical imperative and the superego.
- The Oedipus complex and the prohibition of incest: the critique of Claude Lévi-Strauss.
- Melanie Klein and the analysis of the superego.
- The ethics of psychoanalysis according to Lacan: desire and the law, *jouissance*, the pleasure principle, the Thing.
- The Thing and the object *a*.
- Why Lacan sees Sade as the underside of Kant's categorical imperative.
- Ethics and tragedy: what *Antigone*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Oedipus at Colonus* and *King Lear* have to teach us regarding ethics.
- What are the moral goals of psychoanalysis?

We consider what lies beyond the limits of sense through an examination of the symptom. For Freud, the symptom acts as a substitutive sexual satisfaction. Lacan identifies it with the way in which the subject enjoys [*jouit*] the unconscious. The symptom is what makes up for the impossibility facing the subject to write the sexual relation. In making up for the lack of the sexual relation the symptom incarnates the particular mode of *jouissance* that represents the singular identity of a subject in its separation from the primordial Other.

The praxis of psychoanalysis is determined by an ethics of the unconscious that is bound to the enigma of what there is of knowledge in the real. What of the inscription of the symptom can be deciphered and what of the fantasy can be interpreted within a phallic logic? What are the limits implicit in the conceptualisation of the unconscious structured like a language? A psychoanalysis cannot begin until there is a signifier of the transference that is precursor to the subject's symptomatic formation. This allows the analyst to take up his place as partner to the symptom in the treatment.

The symptom is examined as an advent of the real beyond the limits of sense, and the implications this has for the clinic by looking at the place of trauma in the formation of the

symptom, and then at Lacan's definition of the symptom in *RSI* as belonging to the real outside sense, that is, to the Real of the Borromean knot.

## **GENERAL READING GUIDE**

### **SIGMUND FREUD**

- [1896b] Draft K, The Neuroses of Defence (A Christmas Fairy Tale). SE I, esp. pp. 228-229.
- (1950a [1895]) *Project for a Scientific Psychology*, Part I, Section 11 ('The Experience of Satisfaction'), pp. 317-319; The Hysterical Proton Pseudos. SE 1, pp. 352-356; Part III ('Attempt to Represent Normal  $\psi$  Processes'), Section 1, 360-371, SE I.
- (1905) Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality. SE VII, pp. 163-65.
- (1912e) Recommendations to Physicians Practising Psycho-Analysis. Papers on Technique. SE 12:111-120.
- (1912-13) Totem and Taboo. Part IV, Sections 3-7. SE 13:126-161.
- (1913c) On Beginning the Treatment, pp. 134-139. Papers on Technique. SE 12.
- (1917e) Mourning and Melancholia. SE 14: 239.
- (1919a) Lines of Advance in Psycho-Analytic Therapy. SE 17:159-168.
- (1923b) *The Ego and the Id*. Ch. III ['The Ego and the Super-Ego (Ego Ideal)']. SE 19:28-39.
- (1924c) The Economic Problem of Masochism. SE 19:159-170.
- (1926d [1925]) Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety. SE XX.
- (1917 [1916-1917]) Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis. Lecture XVIII, Fixation to Traumas—The Unconscious; Lecture XXIII, The Paths to Symptom Formation, SE XVI, pp. 273-285 and 358-377.
- (1930[1929]) Civilization and its Discontents SE Vol XXI, 57 – 145.
- (1926) The Question of Lay Analysis, SE Vol XX, 179 – 258. (1933 [1932]) The Question of a Weltanschauung, Lecture XXXV of the New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, SE XXII, 158-182.

### **JACQUES LACAN**

- (1992) The Seminar, Book VII, The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959-1960. Chapters I-V. New York, Norton. London, Routledge.
- (1977) The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis. Ch. 20. London, Tavistock
- (2006 [1953]) The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis. *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*. Trans. Bruce Fink. New York and London, W.W. Norton & Company. Pages 231-33
- (2006 [1958]) The Direction of the Treatment and the Principles of Its Power. *Écrits*. Section V, Desire must be taken literally.
- (2006 [1960]) The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious. *Écrits*. Pages 690-700 in particular.
- (1981 [1964]) The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XI, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis. Trans. A. Sheridan. London, W.W. Norton & Company. Chapters 14, 16 and 20
- (2006[1966]) On the Subject who is Finally in Question. *Écrits*.

- (1974-1975) The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XXII, R. S. I. Lesson IV, 21 January 1975. Unpublished transcript available at <http://www.lacaninireland.com>
- (1980) Television. Transl. D. Hollier, R. Krauss, A. Michelson. Chapter VI, pp. 35-44.
- (1989 [1975]) Geneva Lecture on the Symptom. Analysis 1, pp. 7-26.
- (2007) The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book XVII, The Other Side of Psychoanalysis 1969-1970, Trans. R. Grigg. Chapter V: The Lacanian Field.

### **FURTHER READING**

- Aristotle, The Ethics of Aristotle: The Nicomachean Ethics. Trans. J.A.K.Thomson, Penguin Classics Series, Penguin Books, London, 1976.
- Bentham J. (2000 [1781]) An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation, Batoche Books, Kitchener, U.K.
- Kant, I. Critique of Practical Reason. Book I ('Analytic of Pure Practical Reason'), Chapter I ('Principles of Pure Practical Reason'), § 1-7 Trans. Lewis White Beck. Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1956, pp. 17-33
- Klein, M. (1975 [1927]) Symposium on Child Analysis. The Writings of Melanie Klein. Vol. 1. London, Hogarth and The Institute of Psycho-Analysis, p. 139.
- Klein, M. (1928) Early Stages of the Oedipal Conflict & (1933) Early Development of Conscience in the Child, both in Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works, 1921 – 1945, pp. 168 – 198, pp 248 - 257
- Lévi-Strauss, C. (1969) The Elementary Structures of Kinship. Chapter XXIX ('The Principles of Kinship'). Boston, Beacon Press, pp. 478-497.
- Heidegger, M. (1971) The Thing. In Poetry, Language, Thought. New York, Harper & Row, 1971.
- Shakespeare, W. (1623) *King Lear*. \*
- Sophocles, The Oedipus Trilogy: Antigone, Oedipus Rex, Oedipus at Colonus.\*
- Rodríguez, L. (2005) Some reflections on the last three sessions of Lacan's *Seminar VII*. Web Journal of the Centre for Freudian Analysis and Research, London. <http://www.cfar.org.uk>
- Tóibín, C. (2012) The Testament of Mary. New York, Scribner.
- (\* Various editions available)