

In thanks to the young therapists I met in Chengdu and Shanghai.

These few pages deal with what I have tried to understand of my work in China, the surprises I have had, the questions that arose, all of which have conduced me to meet many interlocutors in France, either Chinese or Europeans with a connection to China. In the process, the extent of my ignorance of Chinese matters has been revealed, while I started developing the beginning of an intuition for them.

It seems to me that this questioning is linked to the current situation of psychoanalysis in France, and, even more interestingly, to the situation of psychoanalysis before 1920, before the invention of the “didactic” analysis, and before the formation of psychoanalysts became rigid.

I have led two one-week seminars in Shanghai University. I have also spoken during shorter interventions in Shanghai and outside of academia in Chengdu.

The formation and the functions of the participants to the seminars varied : they were psychotherapists, psychiatrists and psychologists, most working inside institutions, others in the private sector. I spoke in French, and my interventions were translated into Chinese (Mandarin) while the other participants spoke Mandarin and were translated into French. In each occasion, the Chinese translators knew French remarkably well.

The principle of my seminar is the following :

I present concisely a theoretical element, illustrated with clinical examples, not necessarily successful, that I draw from my personal practice. I sometimes present failures, and use them to show where I think I made a mistake, and why (the resistance to psychoanalysis is the resistance of the psychoanalyst¹). This part of the seminar generally takes about two hours, and the rest of the day (five or six hours) remains for the participants to present their clinical cases which I comment. I have tried to move beyond the extreme difficulty there is in importing analytical concepts into the Chinese language and culture. To do so, I have decided to work using only my actual practice with my patients, stating clearly a point of view and clarifying quickly the concepts I use, letting the participants ask questions. I absolutely refuse to discuss technique.

And what technique?

Only this: that one should not devour his or her patients, in any way, and consequently should not try to be loved or obeyed by them.

The formation of psychotherapists lasts a few months : based on dressage and Neo-Confucianism, the formation of psychologists is just as mediocre as in France. That of psychiatrists focuses on drugs. There are also more psychoanalytical formations (Sino-German, Sino-American, Sino-French, Sino-Norwegian, etc.), and some that take place only on Skype, sometimes in Chinese. Therapists undergo numerous formations that focus on technique. They also have the possibility to attend theoretical academic presentations. The Chinese and foreign professors (the *Laoshi*) most often introduce exotic and rigid techniques and never try to teach anything practical to the “students”. They adopt the missionary position. As a consequence, the clinical cases I dealt with should have been disastrous. I should not have been able to reach any authentic understanding despite all my questions and they should not have understood anything of what I was making from their stories.

But what happened was exactly the opposite : the therapists brilliantly withstood the transfer *without knowing it*, in the sense that psychoanalysis gives to it, meaning that the transfer is the only force behind a psychotherapy that respects the truth of the history of the patient and consequently his or her freedom. All the therapists withstood it, even those who were clearly incapable of dealing with it.

To put it more clearly, the therapists take upon themselves to become a part of the past history of the patients speaking to them. And they speak to their patients from the position that the history of their patients designates.

¹ Jacques Lacan. *The Seminar : Book II : The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis*, 1954. (originally in French as *Séminaire II: Le moi dans la théorie de Freud et dans la technique de la psychanalyse*. Éditions du Seuil. Paris, p.267).

This operation, by far the most difficult thing to withstand and to take, is withstood and taken by the participants in the seminar (not necessarily without suffering, anguish or emotions), and when I stress this fact, they are not surprised. They probably know something about this position, even if it is exactly the opposite of what they are taught.

It follows that the difficulties they encounter in their work are sometimes due not to inexact “natural” positions of the therapists but to pressure from the (Chinese or foreign) supervisors and to very strong pressure outside of sessions regarding the number of sessions or their price, both in institutional or private practices...

The position accepted by most of these therapists in their relation to the patient is the position that makes possible an effective intervention (an interpretation), and sometimes it is even an interpretation in itself, provided that the therapists' movement is allowed and that they have the possibility and the desire to sustain this movement.

This fulfils the general condition necessary for a psychoanalytical practice, although I would not say that this condition in itself is sufficient.

I was absolutely amazed by what I was witnessing. In a group of French therapists, the probability to find that everyone is willing to take part in the psychoanalytical transfer (knowingly or not) is close to null.

For example : one of the participants speaks about one of his patients, a woman in grave danger whose only mainstay was a friendship she developed with a boy her age when she was ten. I tell the therapist that he has been chatting with the patient exactly in the register of a ten-year-old child, and that this is exactly what he should have done. He had not noticed that he was addressing the patient in this way, but at the same time, he was not surprised to discover it – once again, I was the one surprised and amazed.

Another example : a talented therapist is speaking of a difficult case, that was going well until an “interpretation”, I believe suggested by a controller. When she asks the patient what he thinks that she thinks, the patient says : “You are very intelligent” and runs away. The transfer has been broken. The Lady Of Shalott is a poem by Tennyson², based on the Arthurian legend. The Lady of Shalott spends her life looking into a mirror, looking at the reality that is forbidden to her. She does not look at herself in the mirror, but at the images of others. The mirror hangs opposite the window, and she weaves a tapestry of what she sees. In love, she languishes. One day, she turns herself towards the window because she is interested in a man (Lancelot). The mirror breaks and things end badly, of course. Which is exactly what happened to the therapist and her patient.

What defines the position of the psychoanalyst and what separates it radically from any psychiatric or psychological position is his or her acceptance of the transfer as the driving force of analytical work. This is what Freud discovered and all the rest of the construction of the unconscious results from this¹.

The positions stated in the notes at the end of this text are the conditions necessary (but not sufficient) to the existence of the psychoanalyst.

At this point, two questions arise.

- a) It would be too easy to describe the gift for transfer remarkably shared by all these Chinese therapists as a miracle³ (effect without cause). So I wanted to understand a little more, and I would like to thank every one who accepted to meet me : Chinese colleagues and Chinese not-colleagues, sinologists, Kristofer Schipper, Taoist sinologist, Master at the École Française d'Extrême Orient, former professor at EHESS; Cyrille Javary, the best translator and commentator of *I Ching* in French; Chloé Ascencio, consultant in intercultural management for France Chine; Karine Chemla, Senior Researcher at the CNRS, who has done important research on ancient Chinese mathematics.

I eventually did not find the answer, but a way to reformulate the question.

- b) If there was no hesitation on the part of all these therapists about going into the

2 The Lady of Shalott. Poem by Lord Alfred Tennyson (1832).

3 Spinoza *Theologico-Political Treatise*, chap VI, miracles do not exist.

analytical transfer, some of them are psychoanalysts or could evidently become so (provided they are interested) while others could not, and this has nothing to do with intelligenceⁱⁱ or theoretical knowledge.

Let us put aside point a) for the moment and let us look at point b) in the light of Lacan's formulation: "As I now have come to think, psychoanalysis is in-transmissible"⁴.

Which does not mean that there is no formation for the psychoanalyst. It means that there is no teaching of psychoanalysis that will produce a psychoanalyst. And that one does not become a psychoanalyst because one has done an analysisⁱⁱⁱ. **Or to put it more clearly : didactic psychoanalysis does not exist.** At the same time, in the process of formation, it seems indispensable today to do an analysis, in order to become a little less dangerous for one's patients, to work on the validity of one's desire to become an analyst, and to experiment on one's own unconscious processes (also, sometimes, to get better).

And so, since after Freud psychoanalysts kept appearing, despite the fact that psychoanalysis is in-transmissible, one has to think that the transmission depends on the state of culture at a particular historical moment.

I believe that the chronicle⁵ of Sima Quian, the great historiographer of the Han, sheds considerable light on the possibility or impossibility of the psychoanalyst (I did not say of psychoanalysis) in China : Sima Qian tells the manoeuvres of Zhao Gao, a eunuch who wanted to seize the throne. Zhao Gao offered a deer to his master, saying "here is a horse". The young emperor laughed, but the crowd of courtiers assured him that the gift was indeed a horse. Zhao Gao was thus free to kill the emperor, because he had shown that he had the mastery of words, he had the authority to give their names to things, and so he had the real power.^{iv}

This tale shows a position which is just the opposite (as in a mirror) of the analytical position, and shows like the negative image of the possibility of the psychoanalyst through a story that is absolutely ordinary in Chinese culture. Like the trace that the engraver leaves in the wood outlines negatively the possibility of the engraving.

And so this side of the transfer has very old roots in China in what is absolutely symmetrical to practices of power, namely the radical mastery of language.

The psychoanalyst - who **supposedly knows**, according to his patient and for his patient – knows that he actually knows nothing – about the patient – and still has to maintain the fiction of supposedly knowing so as to maintain the transfer. And his aim is not to seize, to control the words of his patient the emperor, but really to enable the patient to seize again the forgotten words, the words erased from his/her history, to regain his/her freedom by renouncing the symptoms.

The practice of the therapists that I have met was based on the analytical transfer. And this demonstrates that psychoanalysis is possible in China.

In the Chinese world the position of a supposedly knowing subject is possible, and it demonstrates the possibility for the existence of psychoanalysts in China.

The Catholic Church has always mistrusted angels. Indeed, Christ came on earth to save men, not angels and angels can turn into demons at any moment.

Psychoanalysts are not angels, but at any moment, the risk for the analyst is to fall into the position of Zhao Gao, a risk I call the "laosharkization"⁶, which is more difficult to avoid in China than in

4 Conclusion of the IXth Congress of the Freudian School, Paris, June 1979. Published in *Les Lettres de L'École* n°25 volume 2, June 1979.

5 Jean Levi *Quelques aspect de la rectification des noms dans la pensée et la pratique politique de la Chine ancienne* in Extrême-Orient Extrême-Occident 1993 n°15, p 23-53 (A Few Aspects of the Rectification of Nouns in the Political Thought and Practice in Ancient China).

6 Translator's note : the author's play on words was untranslatable. In French, one only needs to add a few letters

France. Defending one's face and one's position is even more violent and difficult there than it is here.

That said, in France too many analysts dispense with analysis as they flounder in positions of power – **power is not the same thing as authority** – and the risk is always present. I often think of this for myself, and I believe that it is useful to have colleagues of my own generation with whom I can speak of what happens in our practice outside of institutions. **None of us can be certain that they will be capable of remaining analysts.**

The *laoshark* is only interested in the questions he/she has answers to, he thus strives to prevent people from being interested in the other questions. He does not have colleagues but competitors and Chinese or foreign accomplices who support him in his position, with or without illusions. The *laoshark* has students that he/she must maintain in the state of grateful, admiring and trusting students. It is a position that is exhausting, all the more so since the *laoshark* is no longer an analyst because he can not stand the transfer, and so he has to be fiercely selective of his patients to avoid problems. The easiest then, in France as in China, is to take on many supervisions or “didactic” analyses and get rid of the other patients they used to see when they were still analysts. With a little luck, you avoid problems and make more money.

The clearest example of this practice of the *laosharks* can be seen in the practice of skyanalysis. It is possible to believe, and it is commonly admitted, that the analyst will accept to have a certain number of sessions on the phone, without images, with a patient who is away for while. The condition is for the patient to come in person regularly and meet the analyst in his or her office, with the smells and noises, the possibilities for acting out, with the body in all depth, its style, gaze, sound of voice. “The psychoanalyst does not only pay with words, s/he also pays with his own person”⁷.

Without bodies, there are no drives. With Skype, there is a virtual Other, but no risk of desire, temptation, love, violence, or tears, neither for the patient nor for the analyst. Only the practice of a professor, of power and alienation. It is not possible to act out during the session, and so no analytical act is possible and no one is disturbed^v.

It is like a family where touching would be impossible, and no one even knew that touching exists. A family where the possibility for incest does not exist, and where the construction of desire is therefore impossible.

One can never be certain that the skyanalyst is not virtual. With today's programs of virtual reality, to design a virtual psychoanalyst should not be too difficult, and may even already have been done^{8vi}. One could even imagine a few sessions with a real skyanalyst, just long enough to gather data on the signs emitted by the patient and then the rest could be programmed, with some warning procedures. And the more rigid the theory used by the psychoanalyst, the easier.

I have heard about skyanalyses : “it's better than nothing”. No! It has nothing to do with analysis, and nothing *is* better. If some people are really eager to analyse Chinese patients in China, then it's very simple : they have to move to China.

- one sound - to transform a “Laoshi” into a dog (*chien*). Since it was not possible to translate literally into English, the author has suggested the shark, an animal that here should be imagined as thirsty for power.

7 Jacques Lacan. “The Direction of the Treatment and the Principles of its Power”, in *Écrits : A Selection*, transl. by Alan Sheridan, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1977, and revised version, 2002, transl. by Bruce Fink (originally published as “La Direction de la Cure” in *Les Écrits*, Éditions du Seuil. Paris, 1966).

8 Joseph Weizenbaum, *ELIZA—A Computer Program For the Study of Natural Language Communication Between Man and Machine* (ACM 1966).
Alan Turing *Computing Machinery and Intelligence*, *Mind* (en), Oxford University Press, vol. 59, no 236, October 1950, pp. 433-460.

Recommending skypanalysis is the criterion to recognize someone who, at best, has forgotten or misunderstood what psychoanalysis is.

Psychoanalysis has a history. Internet did not exist during Freud's time, and nevertheless psychoanalysis spread quickly in the West. It would be interesting to study how the first psychoanalysts proceeded, which is not a secret history.

In any event, many Chinese have come to the West, and continue to come, for an analysis (sometimes managing to avoid our local *laosharks*). Others are analysts and stay so, because their desire to be and to remain so is stronger than social constraints.

The formation of analysts has become more rigid since 1920 despite the efforts of Rank and Ferenczi⁹ to avoid it. But people in the polyclinic of Berlin, Eitingon first of all, decided that Freudian psychoanalysis would be easier to export and less frightening if it was properly packaged, even if it meant forgetting the conditions of the Freudian discovery and invention.

The passion for what is proper is not a Chinese idiosyncrasy.

Before that time, the “typical cure” had not been invented, and Freud wrote his text on the Gradiva¹⁰, inspired by a story by Jensen¹¹; this is a psychoanalysis, said Freud. In this text Freud is called Zoe, and the transfer is called : love. It is much closer to the analytical experience than any *laoshark* on Skype, and it is close to some stories I was lucky enough to hear in China.

Let us now read what Lacan wrote next. It gives some answers, and raises other questions :

“As I now have come to think, psychoanalysis is in-transmissible. It is quite annoying. It is quite annoying that every psychoanalyst is forced – he is indeed forced to reinvent psychoanalysis”.

The analysis depends for its existence and for the reproduction of its agents of a state of the society which shelters it. And so it can die.

China knows it well. Let's not forget that this country did not pursue a brilliant mathematical discovery, independent from arabic or western mathematics¹² or that it scuttled its fleet, the most powerful of its time.

And why would one want to become a psychoanalyst?

The only possible answer is political. People will tell me that the words “subject” or “freedom” can not be translated into the Chinese. Is it still true in 2013? In any case, psychoanalysis speaks and lives only with these notions.

The enslavement of people on drugs, behaviourist therapies, emotional re-education... this more or less functions as forms of social control and China has a millenarian experience of manipulating behaviours, of criticism and self-criticism, compared to which the psychological practices and drug

⁹ *On forme des psychanalystes*, Original Report on the 10 years of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute with a preface by Sigmund Freud. Texts translated into French from the German by Helen Stierlin and Marianne Henich with Tina Buhmahn and Patrick Salvain. Presentation by Fanny Colonomos, Denoël 1985, Paris. Originally published in 1930 by the German Society of Psychoanalysis.

Sandor Ferenczi, Otto Rank, *Perspectives de la Psychanalyse*. Translated from the German by Michèle Pollak-Cornillot, Judith Dupont and Myriam Viliker, Payot 1994, Paris. Original Title: *Entwicklungsziele der Psychoanalyse*, Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1924. Known in English as *The Development of Psychoanalysis*.

¹⁰ Sigmund Freud *Le Délire et les rêves dans la Gradiva de W. Jensen*. Translated from the German by Paul Arhex and Rose-Marie Zeitlin (1986), Gallimard, Paris. Original title: *Der Wahn und die Traüme in W. Jensen "Gradiva"* (1907), Known in English as *Delusions and Dreams in Jensen's Gradiva*.

¹¹ Wilhem Jensen: *Gradiva, Fantaisie Pompéienne*. Translated from the German by Jean Bellemeine Noël (1983) PUF Paris (originally: *Gradiva, Ein Pompejaniisches Phantasiestück*, 1903).

¹² Read for instance the online article by Karine Chemla “*Aperçu sur l'histoire des mathématiques en Chine ancienne dans le contexte d'une histoire internationale*”.

treatments from America look like veterinary medicine¹³.

Also, it is not entirely certain that the patients who chose skypanalysis are innocent victims, nor that the system of the *laosharks* is not entirely transparent to the younger generations. But the benefits are huge for some, and old habits die hard.

However, Chinese psychoanalysts are, by their very work, in the middle of the violent changes in the representation of the world that are happening today in China.

One only needs to see the disastrous situation of psychoanalysis in its IPA^{vii} version (nearly dead), or the Psychoanalyst Schools that came from the Freudian school of Paris^{viii} (only slightly better) to realize that what is happening in China reflects the pitiful position of psychoanalysis in the West today – only it does so with a sense of hope.

Analysis is not only threatened by causes internal to the discipline, but also by changes in society that could be temporary or definitive :

For example, I am surprised that people want to be re-educated emotionally, receive behavioural training, give Ritalin to their children, take anti-depressants as soon as their emotions seem incorrect or excessive^{ix} and with **no feeling of shame**, think that their happiness depends on dumbing themselves down. This is something I believe to be new, this proud desire for an absolute servitude, although La Boétie¹⁴ already talked about it^x. And I can't fail to see that it has become more difficult to bring my patients to enter the analysis, since for some of them the rule of *free* association does not mean anything any more. But I also see people for whom the meaning is clearer. It is a complex moment, but perhaps only a moment...

To continue with a lighter topic and go back to our point a) from before, I would like to tell you how I grappled with the question of how the Chinese therapists I worked with in China had developed this amazing ability to maintain the analytical transfer.

I started discussing it with a few Chinese and sinophile interlocutors and realized that my question, as I phrased it, had no meaning for my interlocutors and provoked a kind of stunned and awkward silence.

At that time, I no longer had any Chinese interlocutor, analysts who could speak French. I had finally understood in Shanghai and Chengdu that some supervisors had an inadequate conception of the transfer. For instance, I was blamed once in Shanghai for leaving the therapist and the public in a state of anguish. People needed to be reassured. While on the contrary the anguish of the therapist was the only position, the only honourable position from which to speak to the patient, if it was even possible.

So, finally I met mostly people who did not belong to the world of psychoanalysis. And it was not a mistake.

I discovered that all these Chinese interlocutors, even though their French was excellent, did not understand the codes of my culture^{xi} which provoked a number of funny or painful misunderstandings due to the fact that what was implicit for me and for my interlocutors was different and that they did not think it could be. What struck me was that most of my Chinese interlocutors did not seem to be interested in this question, as if it was obvious for them that what

13 Emily Martin: *Bipolar Expedition* Princeton University Press (2007). Translated into French from the American by Camille Salgues, *Voyage en Terres Bipolaires; Manie et dépression dans la culture américaine*. Ed. Rue d'ULM, Paris 2013.

14 Étienne de La Boétie : *The Discourse On Voluntary Servitude*. In French, *Le Discours de la servitude volontaire*. Text established by Pierre Léonard. Éditions Payot (1976). In this edition, the text of La Boétie is followed by essays on La Boétie and the question of politics (several authors).

was implicit was shared.

The intercultural consultant advised me to read Zheng Li-Hua¹⁵, which I did, and found his book remarkable. It seems that this kind of work is rather rare in China. He deals with and describes what happens and what is said in a business situation **between** Chinese people. I made some progress. Then, I met the Taoist expert, not knowing that he had been connected to the prehistory of French psychoanalysis in China. He confirmed my observations on the transfer, much to my relief! He advised me to read his interesting book¹⁶ which of course I had already read before our meeting (although I did not dare to tell him) and entrusted me to a perfectly silent woman, a Chinese Taoist analyst who accompanied him and whom, of course, I never met again. That said, what he wrote on Taoist churches and shamanist practices reminded me that the Chinese have a long tradition of using speech to cure^{xii}. And I knew nothing of these practices.

I realized that writing with logograms bears no relation to alphabetic writing. Besides the fact that alphabetic writing probably looks unbearably ugly, logograms make the mind move and think from image to image (a limited number of them), which is difficult with alphabetic writing, at least in a language which is as little poetic as French. At the same time, the imprecision of the Chinese statements and writing constantly calls upon the context, which for Chinese speakers is explicit.

Meetings between Chinese speakers immediately seem denser, give more conscious information and consequently more unconscious elements than meetings between French speakers. I found very useful Léon Vandermeersch's book¹⁷, which finds the roots of Chinese writing in the notation of divinatory practices, long before speech was notated.

I will quote in extenso a very clear email that I received from a Chinese friend. She gives an element of answer to my question. I changed neither her spelling nor her syntax:

“To understand unknown ideograms, the Chinese may tend to try and contextualise (new characters/signs) from situations (signs) that resemble (known) and at the same time they try and transpose well-known situations. So I think that one can be used to try to/imagine such and such situation that resemble something that has been lived (directly or indirectly) in order to decipher what one is trying to understand.

And for Chinese therapists, who have not been formed “formally”, when they try to move, to step in, to incarnate a role in the history of their patients, it may be the continuation of this habit of trying to place themselves in various positions.”.

At this point, I started thinking about writing, about divinatory practices in the *I Ching* in particular, and I remembered that if the *I Ching* has been used for so long it is probably because, independently from the technical validity of this practice, there is a finite number of occurrences that are described. In other words, the situations where Chinese people are likely to find themselves will be identified by other Chinese speakers much faster because they have been already described in detail.

I had a meeting with the translator of the *I Ching*¹⁸ into French. I did not tell him my hypothesis; he spoke of the *I Ching* and of the influence of divinatory practices on Chinese life. Then he said: “You know, Chinese people don't have first names”^{xiii}. No, I did not know! He explained that in most cases the first name of Chinese people is in reality a parental wish that one carries and has to honour. This is entirely consistent with my hypothesis that Chinese inter-subjectivity is very different from French inter-subjectivity

15 Zheng Li-Hua: *Les Chinois de Paris et leurs jeux de face*. Éditions L'Harmattan Paris. (1995)

16 Kristofer Schipper: *Le Corps taoïste: Corps social et corps physique*. Éditions Fayard. Paris (1982).

17 Léon Vandermeersch. *Les deux raisons de la pensée chinoise, Divination et idéographie*, Éditions Gallimard. Nrf. (2013).

18 Yi Jing. *Le Livre des Changements*. Translated by Cyrille Javary, with notes by the translator and Pierre Faure. Éditions Albin Michel (2002).

Finally, I spoke with the mathematician. Which in my history is important : mathematics are my original formation, and even if I have forgotten everything, they still give shape to my thought. My hypothesis on the finite character of describable situations seemed ludicrous to her but she eventually told me that sometimes, and quite regularly, even if she has spoken Chinese for a long time, she has noticed that her interlocutors understand something very different from what she meant, as if even her knowledge of the language...

To conclude :

In my discussion with the Taoist master, he told a joke that made him laugh, and whose conclusion was that “all Chinese people are Jewish”, although he is not Jewish.

I met by chance, in a seminar, someone I will call the grand-father of Sino-Lacano-French psychoanalysis in Chengdu. He told me jokingly, about something I said about the presentation of a Chinese participant : “You understand now, all Chinese people are psychoanalysts”. But he was no longer a psychoanalyst, if he ever was one.

The *I Ching* expert advised me to read a beautiful book of Chinese tales¹⁹ and explained to me that Chinese people live in a world that is still enchanted, where dragons can talk and so do stones. His world.

And when the mathematician tells me that the Chinese hear something different from what she meant, she is at the same time giving a definition of the unconscious (what escapes speech even when it is perfectly well defined).

I felt a great tenderness for the translator and for the mathematician when they told me about their China.

Everyone has their own China, and I let the reader find mine.

Alexandre Berlinski.

alexandre.berlinski@gmail.com

(translated by Ludmilla Barrand)

i A few elements on the psychoanalytic transfer:

1. The patient comes to the analyst asking for care (he suffers in his soul, his body, his wife or husband, his boss, his party, his children, his dog, his parents...) or asking for “intellectual” understanding about his position in the work, or asking for self-improvement (and if this expectation can not be changed, then analysis is impossible). In a nutshell: he is asking for something.
2. The position of the analyst consists in bearing what is asked from him while knowing that it is not addressed to him or her (the analysant knows and doesn't know that the analyst does not have an answer, while the analyst knows he doesn't have this answer, he is only **supposed** to know).
3. What is being asked, since there is no psychological or ideological answer (it does not mean that the analyst should remain silent : sometimes, many words are required to say nothing), becomes eventually addressed to those who are absent, those present in the history of the person speaking (and this is an effect of language).

19 Jacques Pimpaneau: *Contes chinois racontés à Helen*. Éditions Philippe Picquier (2007).

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4. The analyst accepts to take upon himself or herself the absent people to whom the patient speaks, literally, to be taken by this position and so to know that when he speaks, it is from the place of those absent – about whom, sometimes, he knows nothing consciously.
 5. And so the position of the analyst consists in accepting to be empty and full of life enough to be able to be influenced (as defined in hypnosis) by each patient, to be part of his or her history (for example: the analyst occupies the place of the father when the patient was three, or, during another session, the place of the mother who makes fun of undies soiled by the first periods, or the best friend from when the patient was eight, or his/her private god or a dog from when he/she was 4...). The analyst moves from one place to the other, sometimes within the same session, and only realizes it afterwards, often never if he does not discuss it with someone else. This movement is the movement of the cure, and it is neither linear nor continuous.
 6. The analyst speaks from this place. Nothing escapes it in his/her statements, interventions or breathing.
 7. The analyst finally has to accept that he will be shit, erased, forgotten at the end of the analysis.

ii If you had to be clever to become an analyst, it would be an extraordinary novelty. At best, one can say that stupidity is not compulsory.

iii It is possible to study mathematics and not become a mathematician, painting and not become a painter, music and not become a musician. Formation does not imply transmission.

iv A comparable story exists in France : a very famous tailor persuaded the king that he was wearing a splendid coat, lighter than a breath of wind, and sold it for a very expensive price. The king was naked but not courtier was brave enough to tell him, and it took a little child to reveal the deception. The power of the king is not undermined in this story, but the life of the tailor was.

v Acting outside of sessions is always possible, because there is no analysis. The skypanalyst is in a perverse position.

vi In artificial intelligence, **ELIZA** is a computer program written by Joseph Weizenbaum in 1966 that simulated a rogerian psychotherapist (Carl Rogers).

vii International Psychoanalytical Association.

viii The Ecole Freudienne de Paris was founded by Lacan in 1964, and dissolved in 1980. After the dissolution, the analysts of the EFP created several schools that claimed part of or the whole Lacanian heritage and later split up.

The average age of the members of these schools is pretty high, although possibly less so than in other schools whose members teach in university, and so it attracts the young.

ix Too sad, too happy, too strong, too weak, too tired, too excited, too sleepy, too insomniac, too active, too inactive...

x The Discourse on Voluntary Servitude was probably written in 1546 by a very young Étienne de la Boétie (16 year old). This text written in old French has been read and reinterpreted in every period of history as radically new and timely. It is still true today. The edition I refer to contains a critical apparatus that is absolutely fascinating.

The question asked by La Boétie is : “Why do men fight for their servitude as if it was their salvation?”

xi Which evidently goes both way, with the advantage that I don't speak Chinese, and so I can't think that I understand any code whatsoever.

xii At the Inter-Associative Clinical Seminary in Chengdu in 2004, I met several Chinese psychologists who did not belong to academia, and who told me fascinating things. We had a few drinks and the translator was very funny. During these days, what I perceived of the situation of psychoanalysis in Chengdu took me away from the Lacanian-psychoanalytical tradition in China, as it did most of my colleagues. A chance encounter in Paris, years later, temporarily brought me back to the topic.

xiii I think he meant that the personal name of a Chinese person always has a meaning that another Chinese speaker can identify. This meaning is linked to a parental wish or will that is imperative, and reinforced by the beauty or the arrangement of the logograms. Let us remember that French first names generally never have this function and that most French speakers are indifferent to the origin of their first name.